



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

“From the
General Manager’s Desk –
24 October 2024”

Closure of 3G Mobile Network

As of the publication of this column, it is only four (4) days till Telstra and Optus close down their 3G networks, effective 28 October 2024. Time is rapidly running out for existing 3G users in the community to act and ensure they stay connected once the 3G network is closed.

To their credit, both Telstra and Optus have been active for an extended period of time in seeking to raise public awareness of the impending 3G network closures. Whilst it is understood that following upgrade works across the nation, 4G coverage now matches the 3G network, the final public awareness step is to make sure that phone users aren’t using 3G network only devices or have a 4G mobile phone that require a 3G network to make calls to Triple Zero.

Mobile phone users are reminded that they can check their device compatibility by visiting <https://amta.org.au/3g-closure-old/check-my-device/> or by texting the number ‘3’ to 3498, whereupon they will receive a text back advising if they need to take any action.

Over recent months it is further understood that telecommunication companies have been contacting customers that they have been able to identify as using one of these devices to let them know they will likely need to upgrade. Using the SMS checker will help confirm this. Additionally, in a small number of cases, some people may already have a 4G voice and data capable device, but they have their network settings locked to 3G only, meaning they won’t be able to access 4G coverage. This can be easily resolved by changing the phone network settings to include 4G.

In addition, in recent months, some 17,000 free mobile phones have been provided to Telstra customers who are in difficult situations, live rurally or are elderly. These are customers who may need some external support transition when the 3G network closes, to ensure they’re able to stay connected after the 3G closure. More details can be found at the following link:

<https://www.telstra.com.au/exchange/helping-customers-say-goodbye-to-3G>.

Back O’ Bourke Booklet

The Back O’ Bourke booklet has just been revamped, and it's looking better than ever with the second edition booklet now including an additional 14 new advertisers with the size of the booklet now expanded to 138 pages. It's the perfect guide to help visitors explore all the amazing attractions and services our area has to offer. Whether you're a local or a visitor, this booklet is your go-to resource for discovering the hidden gems of Bourke and its surrounding villages. The new booklet is a result of collaboration between local tourism and hospitality businesses and Council with this new edition packed with fresh and exciting content.

If you wish to obtain a copy of the booklet, simply call into the Back O' Bourke Information and Exhibition Centre where you can pick one up for free. With the Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) market being such an important component of Bourke tourism, a copy of the book at your home will allow you to spread the word about the attractions in the Bourke Shire and show everyone why the Back O' Bourke is such a special place to visit.

Bus Flashing Lights

By law in NSW, to protect children that are being picked up or dropped off by a bus, drivers must not overtake or pass a bus with flashing lights at more than 40km/h. Lights on the bus begin to flash when the bus stops and the doors open. The lights keep flashing for about 20 seconds until after the doors close. Children are most at risk in the minutes after they get off the bus.

Young children are often unpredictable in their movements. They are still developing the skills that help them to judge the direction of sound and the speed and distance of vehicles. Motorists can help reduce the risk of a crash and keep children safe by:

- slowing down to 40km/h when bus lights are flashing, unless a lower speed limit applies.
- looking out for children crossing the road near bus stops, in school zones or along bus routes.
- giving way to buses when they merge back into traffic.

Carers and families have a most important part to play in keeping children safe around roads. Please don't drop off or meet your child on the opposite side of the road to the bus stop or call them across the road. Always drop them off or meet them on the same side of the road as the bus stop. Remind your children to always wait until the bus has gone before choosing a safe place to cross the road.

Talk to your children about Stop! Look! Listen! Think! every time they cross the road:

- Stop one step back from the kerb.
- Look continuously both ways.
- Listen for the sounds of approaching traffic.
- Think whether it is safe to cross and keep checking until safely across.

Bourke Promotion

Regular Readers of this Column may recall an article from one of my columns in July 2024 where I wrote of the power of both social and mainstream media, as Council sought to fill the then vacant position of Captain of the PV Jandra. In response to the positive national exposure that Council received from the media, former Bourke resident, Amelia Mansell, the granddaughter of Russell Mansell who built the PV Jandra, reached out to the Council's Economic Development Manager, Mel Milgate with a proposal to write a feature article on the Back O' Bourke for Caravan World magazine. Caravan World is Australia's longest running caravan magazine. For over 55 years it has provided readers with reviews on caravans and tow-vehicles and provided advice on caravanning and camping gear along with advice on destinations across the Nation.

Under the headline banner, "Back O' Bourke: An iconic New South Wales adventure" Amelia's article highlighted the Shire's attractions, and provided insights on caravan camping, ideal visiting times, and other noteworthy highlights.

After the successful publication of the Caravan World feature, Amelia again contacted Council staff advising that her publication had received a last-minute cancellation of an article intended for the Camper Trailer of the Year Signature Edition and expressed interest in creating a similar feature on Bourke for the Camper Trailer of the Year magazine, set to be published from August to October 2024.

This was viewed as an excellent chance to again shine a light on the region and the opportunity was taken up.

Both articles celebrate Bourke and its many tourist attractions, including the Back O' Bourke Information and Exhibition Centre, Bourke's River history, the PV Jandra cruise, and Toorale and Gundabooka National Parks. They also recommended accommodation spots in town such as the Mitchell Caravan Park for easy town access, Kidman's Camp for proximity to the Jandra, nearby bridges, walking trails, Mount Oxley, the Percy Hobson Mural, and various local farm stays.

These two articles were notably featured across social media platforms and the Caravan World website.

Quote: "But it doesn't mean you're not resilient and or not tough just because you need to talk it through." – Four (4) NRL Premiership Coach, Ivan Cleary opening up about his battle with depression back in 2019.