

# CommsWire

Essential daily reading for the communications industry executive

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Editor: Stan Beer

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## MASSIVE TELSTRA OUTAGE PUTS ATMS OFFLINE



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# BIG TELSTRA OUTAGE TAKES DOWN ATMS, EFTPOS MACHINES

**A massive Telstra outage has impacted ATMs and eftpos terminals around the country on Thursday, with the problems beginning at about 3pm Eastern Australia time.**

The telco said in a message on its Facebook page at 6.49pm AEST that most services had returned and it was working on the remaining few that were still offline, along with its business partners.

The outage affected the big four banks — NAB, ANZ, Commonwealth and Westpac — as well as the Bendigo and Adelaide Bank.

Additionally, big retailers like Woolworths, Australia Post, Coles and Caltex were all unable to accept payments by card.

Announcing the issue, Commonwealth Bank [said](#) at about 4pm on Thursday: "We are impacted by an issue with one of our telco providers. It's affecting some of our services. CommBank app and NetBank are up.

"There are issues with the following services: CBA ATMs, CBA EFTPOS terminals, some in branch services as well as issues logging onto CommSec."

Later, at 9pm, the bank said: "Services have returned to normal including our ATMs. We apologise and thank you for your patience today as we worked to restore services."



**Telstra** @Telstra · 19h

Replying to @Telstra



Good news. Many of our services are starting to restore. We're sorry if this issue has messed up your night. We'll provide another update when we know more.



**Telstra**   
@Telstra



Most services are now back online and we're working with our enterprise partners on the remaining few. We're continuing to keep an eye on all services as this happens. Thanks for your patience.

♥ 23 6:51 PM - Jul 11, 2019



Sam Varghese

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# ASC SYSTEM OPERATING AT 50% MORE CAPACITY, SAYS VOCUS

**The Vocus Group says its Australian Singapore Cable system is now operating with a total capacity of 60Tbps, 50% more capacity than when it launched.**

The ASC system was [switched on](#) in September 2018, nine days ahead of its scheduled opening, because of a major disruption on the Sea-Me-We3 submarine cable between Perth and Singapore.



It has four fibre pairs offering different connection points on its 4600-km run from Perth and Singapore and also extends to Christmas Island and Indonesia.

A statement from Vocus said apart from the increased end-to-end capacity, the Singapore to Indonesia leg had a capacity of up to 44Tbps while the Perth to Indonesia connection had 33Tbps.

Vocus chief executive, Wholesale, Mark Callander, said with the Asia Pacific region continuing to be the epicentre of global growth, the ASC would provide valuable opportunities for governments, businesses and consumers for years to come.

"The ASC is a perfect example of how secure, reliable, high speed, high performance networks are amongst the most critical pieces of infrastructure in our world today," he said.

"Businesses around the world, and particularly in Asia Pacific, are well attuned to this, which has resulted in strong demand for ASC.

"Since launch, we have nearly sold 10 times the entire capacity of the Sea-Me-We3 cable system on ASC. Based on the current demand, we expect to see capacity on ASC exceed 4Tbps within the first 12 months of launch, and there is increasing demand across all paths to the west."

Callander said the ASC also meant Vocus could make further strategic investments in its fibre network.

"The ASC provides valuable future options, such as a connection to our existing North West Cable system that extends from Port Headland to Darwin, servicing Australia's oil and gas and mining sectors," he said.

"It also gives us more options into Indonesia, the fourth most populated nation in the world, and with the seventh largest economy that is growing at about 5%."

**Sam Varghese**



## John de Ridder

**Telecommunications Economist**

**strategic management • wholesale and retail pricing • regulatory issues**

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# HUAWEI ESTABLISHES PARTNERSHIP WITH REPAIRER HAPPYTEL

**Huawei has announced a services partnership with Australian mobile phone and tablet repairer Happytel, which the giant Chinese telecommunications vendor says has "reinforced its commitment to customer service".**

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Both companies say the partnership will deliver "an unrivalled service centre network for customers with 56 collection points and two service centres to service customers across Australia".

Commenting on the announcement, Larking Huang, managing director of Huawei Consumer in Australia, said: "Our customers come first and we are excited to partner with Happytel to ensure Huawei consumers have peace of mind and the convenience of Happytel's nationwide authorised service centres."

Happytel Director, Elizabeth Ryu, commented on Happytel's partnership with Huawei, stating: "Happytel has a strong commitment to service, solution and experience. Partnering with Huawei was an easy decision to make with such aligned values."

On a separate but related note, I've seen advertising in Westfield Shopping Malls on video screens that promotes Huawei's commitment to its users and its smartphones, in particular the P30 Pro, as can be seen in the photo below – and which you'll presumably see in stores, too.

It has the same messages that you can see on the [Huawei Answers page](#), which seeks to reassure customers that Huawei phones will continue getting updates as normal, continue with full compatibility with Google Play apps, that Android will continue working as normal, and that Huawei offers a two-year warranty as normal.

The company also notes its "continued commitment to customer experience comes after the company [recently broke sales records](#), with over 100 million smartphones shipped globally so far this year. Huawei's flagship P30 Series played a significant role with the sales volume hitting 10 million just 85 days after launch, 62 days less than the P20 Series".

Huang stated: "It's been a record-breaking year for Huawei flagship devices. We are committed to Australians and will continue investing in R&D to ensure we meet their needs by developing innovative yet nimble devices that push the boundaries of what a smartphone can do."

Huawei also reminds us that its P30 Series "has been celebrated across the world since its launch in March", with **CommsWire's** review of [the P30 Pro here](#).

The company also just launched its new P30 lite, which retails at A\$499 from JB HiFi and Harvey Norman.

**Alex Zaharov-Reutt**

# GOOGLE STAFF LISTEN TO HOME SPEAKER, ASSISTANT RECORDINGS

**Google employees are listening to audio files recorded by the company's Home smart speakers and the Google Assistant smartphone app, the Belgian website VRT NWS has reported, adding that it was able to listen to more than a thousand recordings.**

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The website [said](#) that most of the recordings it had heard had been made consciously, but Google also listened to conversations that should not have been recorded, some of which included information that would be regarded as sensitive.



It said the fact that Google would record every word uttered to Google's smart speaker or Assistant was clearly mentioned in the terms and conditions provided by the company.

But what was not mentioned was the fact that Google employees could listen to parts of these recordings.

VRT NWS said it had been able to listen to recordings through the help of a Google sub-contractor who gave its staff a look at the system that collects voice data from Google Assistant.

Thousands of Google employees use the same system to listen to voice recordings.

VRT NWS said among the conversations it listened to were ones where the command "Okay Google" was never given.

But if anyone close to the Home speaker said anything that sounded even vaguely like "Okay Google", then the recording was triggered.

"This means that a lot of conversations are recorded unintentionally: bedroom conversations, conversations between parents and their children, but also blazing rows and professional phone calls containing lots of private information," the website said.

"Mistaken recordings can also occur when someone presses the wrong button on his or her phone or unintentionally gives a command."

**CommsWire** has contacted Google for comment.

**Sam Varghese**

## TWITTER HIT BY GLOBAL OUTAGE, USERS NOWHERE TO COMPLAIN

The social media site Twitter has gone down around the world, with the outage beginning at 2.46 Eastern Standard Time (4.46am AEST Friday).

*Update: Twitter has come back again, about an hour after it went down this morning.*

In a statement on [its status page](#), the company said: "The outage was due to an internal configuration change, which we're now fixing.

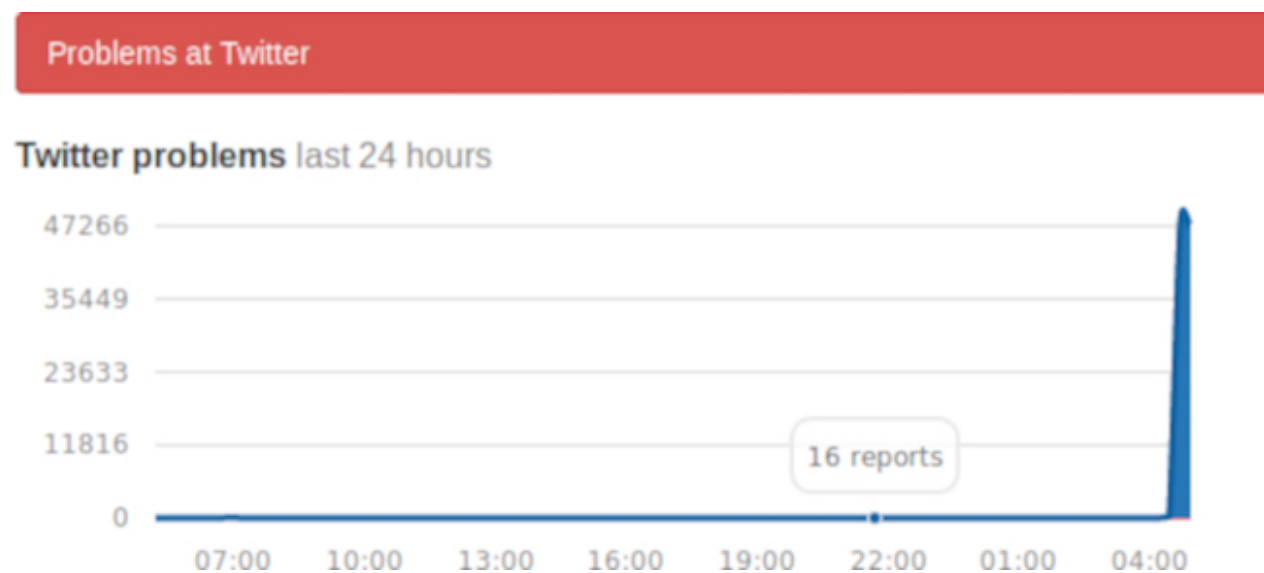
"Some people may be able to access Twitter again and we're working to make sure Twitter is available to everyone as quickly as possible."

*Earlier story continues:* The main site offered this error message: "Something is technically wrong.

"Thanks for noticing – we're going to fix it up and have things back to normal soon."

Users normally vent on Twitter when any service they use is down but in this case they lacked a space to express their frustration.

There was no indication that any other popular social media sites were down.



*A screenshot from Downdetector at 5.20am AEST on Friday.*

The company has given no indication of what is causing the outage. Any announcement would normally be on its own platform – but that is down at the moment!

There is no announcement on [its Facebook page](#) either.

The latest Facebook post by Twitter is the graphic below. But comments alongside this indicated the frustration of Twitter users.

**Sam Varghese**

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