



14 March 2018

Hon Nikki Kaye
MP for Auckland Central

Dear Nikki

Thank you for your letter sent last week in relation to telecommunication issues on Great Barrier Island.

I've reached out to our operations team for a full investigation and have been informed that there have been multiple issues with Chorus equipment that links Great Barrier to the mainland, some of which are ongoing. I understand Chorus are sending you a full report outlining all these issues in detail.

Please be assured that I share your frustration, on behalf of our customers, and agree that it's totally unacceptable. We have been asking Chorus to address these issues for some weeks. The dates for fault restorations have been repeatedly pushed back which drives more calls from frustrated customers into Spark service channels. And in some cases, we've been informed that repairs have been made, when the work has been unsuccessful.

Unfortunately, Chorus doesn't have an enforceable Service Level Agreement (SLA) with service providers that specifies individual customer faults should be fixed in a certain time frame. We simply notify them of a fault and hope for the best for our customers (the SLAs are set by the Regulator as overall averages, not customer-specific measures).

I appreciate that it may seem a little insincere to be told that the root problem is in the hands of Chorus. But the reality is that the way the broadband industry has been structured in New Zealand means service providers, including Spark, do not have control over the Chorus lines network. This is not just a Spark vs Chorus issue; it is the same for every service provider, including Farmside who also have many customers on the island.

For our part, we're doing everything we can to communicate updates to customers and to help keep them connected where possible. In most circumstances, the widespread usage of mobiles and call diversion technology means we can divert a customer's landline to their mobile phone when there's a fault. However, in this case, as you've highlighted, many of the elderly residents on Barrier Island do not own a mobile phone which has prevented us keeping these residents connected.

We have suggested to Chorus that we should go with them to the island to personally apologise to our impacted customers once the issues are resolved. You can be assured we will continue to push hard to achieve this resolution on our customers behalf.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Simon Moutter", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Simon Moutter
Managing Director

Cc: Izzy Fordham, Great Barrier Island Local Board Chair