

AUSALERT · CONTINUITY · EMERGENCY COMMS

AusAlert Launches 1 October. Is Your Plan Ready?

At 2pm on 27 July every compatible phone in Australia went off at once. AusAlert goes live on 1 October, and it is a real improvement.

AusAlert launches 1 October 2026, replacing SMS-based Emergency Alert with **cell broadcast**: messages transmitted to every compatible device in a target area at once, targetable to about **160 metres**, working when networks are congested, with **no phone number or location collected** and no way for a criminal to fake one. The **national test on 27 July 2026** reached devices across the country, with roughly **94% of mobile towers** broadcasting successfully. Good news, and beside the point for your business, because AusAlert tells people a hazard exists. It does not tell your customers you are closed, move your calls to somebody who is safe, account for your team, or handle the hundred people ringing to ask if you are open. That is the communications half of a continuity plan, and it is the half most businesses have never written.

■ The short version

Used for	Examples
Natural hazards	Bushfires, floods, cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis
Security threats	Serious public safety incidents, terrorism
Biosecurity incidents	Animal or plant disease, biohazard outbreaks
Health emergencies	Pandemics and other major public health events

■ Also worth knowing

AusAlert handles	Still entirely yours
Telling everyone in the area to evacuate now.	Telling your customers you are closed, and for roughly how long.
Reaching your staff wherever they physically are.	Knowing which of your staff are safe and accounted for.
Describing the hazard and the required action.	Getting your calls answered by somebody who is not in the affected area.
Being an official, trustworthy source.	Reassuring the clients whose own obligations depend on reaching you.
Covering a geographic area.	Reaching people outside that area who are affected because you are in it.
Warning once, updating if things change.	Absorbing three hundred calls asking the same three questions.

The one thing NEMA asks everybody to do

Keep device software current, and restart after updating. That is the main determinant of whether a phone can receive an AusAlert at all. For a business it is a five-minute addition to your device policy and your new-starter checklist, worth doing in August rather than discovering the gap during a real event in summer.

■ Questions the full guide answers

- ☐ What is AusAlert and when does it launch?
- ☐ What happened during the 27 July 2026 national test?
- ☐ Why is cell broadcast better than emergency SMS?
- ☐ Will AusAlert tell my customers that my business is closed?
- ☐ What should we do before 1 October?
- ☐ Can scammers send fake AusAlert messages?
- ☐ What happens to our phones if the power or internet goes out?

This is the summary. The guide has the detail.

Every point above is worked through in full on our site, with the Australian context, the numbers and the exceptions. If you would rather talk it through, call 1300 663 222 or visit vocphone.com/about/contact-us.