

Understanding your Mobile Phone's VoLTE and Emergency Calling Capabilities when Roaming Internationally

When traveling abroad and using mobile networks overseas, it is crucial to understand your mobile phone's Voice over Long Term Evolution (VoLTE) capability and how it relates to emergency calls. This article explains VoLTE and emergency calls in the context of international roaming to ensure you can stay connected and seek help during emergencies while traveling overseas.

What is VoLTE?

VoLTE stands for Voice over Long Term Evolution (LTE), which is another term to describe a 4G network. VoLTE refers to a technology that allows voice calls to be transmitted over a 4G network, instead of relying on traditional 2G or 3G networks. By utilising the data network, VoLTE offers sharper and clearer call quality, faster call connection times, and the ability to simultaneously use voice and data services.

What is VoLTE International Roaming? VoLTE International Roaming refers to the capability of using VoLTE services while traveling abroad. To use VoLTE while overseas, your Australian mobile network operator must have a VoLTE roaming agreement in place with the operator(s) in the country you are visiting. This ensures that you can continue to make and receive traditional voice calls while abroad.

Important: If your phone does not support **VoLTE** and you travel to a country where both the 2G and 3G network(s) have been shut down, you will **not** be able to make voice calls. Further, if your phone does not support the **VoLTE Emergency Call** capability (even though it may support VoLTE), and you travel to a country where both the 2G and 3G network(s) have been shut down, you will **not** be able to make an emergency call (e.g., to 911 or 112).

VoLTE and International Roaming

When roaming internationally, it is important to consider the following factors regarding VoLTE and emergency calls:

1. **Having a VoLTE capable handset:** As network operators around the world progressively close down their legacy 2G and 3G networks, it will be increasingly important to have a handset that can make and receive VoLTE calls and make VoLTE Emergency Calls when you travel. If your handset does not support VoLTE or VoLTE Emergency Call capabilities, and you travel to a country where there is no 2G or 3G network available, you will not be able to make voice calls, including calls to emergency services. Fortunately, most recent makes and models 4G of mobile phones sold in Australia are activated for VoLTE roaming. Please see links below to each of the three mobile network operators for more information about whether your device is VoLTE and VoLTE Emergency Call capable. You can also check with your service provider or device manufacturer.
2. **Emergency Call Numbers:** Check before you travel and familiarise yourself with the emergency call numbers in the country you are visiting. Emergency numbers vary by country, so in an emergency it is essential to know the correct local emergency number, such as 999 in England, or 110 and 119 in Japan. Dialling 112 is part of a global standard and should also work in most countries.
3. **Network Coverage:** Check the network coverage of the network operator you have roamed onto in the country you are visiting.

The importance of having a phone capable of VoLTE Emergency Calls

In addition to having a phone that is configured for VoLTE Roaming, it is important that your phone also supports the **VoLTE Emergency Call capability**.

Emergency calls are given the highest priority in mobile networks to ensure they receive the necessary resources and bandwidth for clear and uninterrupted communication. This requires support for VoLTE Emergency Call capability in your handset as well.

Most recent makes and models of 4G mobile phones sold in Australia support VoLTE Emergency Call capability, but it pays to check that your device is VoLTE capable and supports VoLTE Emergency Call capability. We recommend you check with your service provider, network operator or device manufacturer.

When roaming internationally, having VoLTE Emergency Call capability on your mobile phone is vital for making emergency calls. Remember to check with your service provider or mobile network operator about VoLTE roaming availability, activate it if necessary, and familiarise yourself with local emergency call numbers. Stay connected and prepared for emergencies while travelling.

Further information

Please see links to the three mobile network operators for more information:

TPG: <https://www.vodafone.com.au/support/network/volte?accordion-id=can-i-use-volte-while-roaming%3F>

Optus: <https://www.optus.com.au/mobile/plans/international-roaming/volte>

Telstra: <https://www.telstra.com.au/support/mobiles-devices/enable-volte-mobile-phone#roaming>