

## NBN hails 4000<sup>th</sup> customer

### NBN Co marks year of progress as rollout moves up a gear in 2012

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More than 4000 homes and businesses were connected to Australia's National Broadband Network at the end of 2011 and work is already underway on extending the network to towns and suburbs covering a further half a million premises in 2012.

The figures were released today by NBN Co, the company established to deliver the essential upgrade to Australia's telecommunications infrastructure.

They comprise 2315 premises using the fibre optic service and 1700 in rural and remote Australia receiving broadband via the interim satellite service, which was launched only six months ago.

NBN Co announced in October plans to extend the fibre to an area covering half a million premises in every state and territory. The company intends to announce plans to roll out the NBN to a further three million homes over the next three years. It also plans to switch on the first rural communities to be served with a fixed-wireless connection by mid-2012.

NBN Co's Head of Product Development and Industry Relations, Jim Hassell, said:

"We will look back on 2011 as a pivotal year for the NBN which saw us move from planning and designing the network to ramping up the rollout of a key piece of telecommunications infrastructure that over the next decade will reach every Australian.

"Indeed, the biggest challenge we face is managing the expectations of communities who want the NBN – and want it now. The key question we hear is not 'Why do we need the NBN?' but 'When am I going to get it?' A crucial task for 2012 will be to educate and inform Australians about the principles that dictate the rollout."

Mr. Hassell said key achievements in 2011 included:

- Locking in the fundamental commercial agreements that underpin NBN Co's role as a vital piece of telecommunications infrastructure of long-lasting national benefit. The agreement with Telstra took more than 18 months to negotiate and is one of the biggest and most significant corporate agreements in the country;
- Signing agreements with construction contractors in every state and territory;
- Opening the nerve centre of the network – the National Operations and Test Facility in Melbourne;
- Signing the first commercial contracts (the Wholesale Broadband Agreement) with telcos and ISPs, and lodging with the ACCC the framework for how the NBN will be regulated over the long term (the Special Access Undertaking)

According to Mr Hassell:

“We’re under no illusions. This is a complex project – not just in size and scale, but because it is fundamentally reshaping the telecommunications landscape in Australia. That will have huge implications for the way we live and work and help Australia compete in an increasingly online world.”

**- Ends -**

#### **Notes to Editors**

- NBN Co’s fibre optic broadband service offers telcos and ISPs wholesale speeds of up to 100 Mbps\*. It aims to serve 93 per cent of Australian premises by 2021. The remaining 7 per cent of premises will receive high-speed broadband via fixed-wireless and satellite, with the rollout of both services expected to be complete by 2015.
- The network has so far been rolled out and activated in areas passing 18,200 premises – three sites in Tasmania and the five mainland First Release sites.

\*NBN Co is designing the NBN to be capable of delivering these speeds to NBN Co’s wholesale customers (RSPs). Speeds actually achieved by retail customers (end users) will depend on a number of factors including the quality of their equipment and in-premises connection, the broadband plans offered by their RSPs and how their RSP designs its network to cater for multiple end users.

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