

Addition to original submission

Additional information

Additional information has come to light concerning medical emergency alert systems. NBN has acknowledged that not all devices are compatible with the nbn and also state that equipment will not work in a blackout.

They suggest calling providers to ask:

1. *Will my alarm work properly when connected to the nbn™ network?*
2. *Will my alarm be able to dial out during a power blackout when connected to the nbn™ network?*

Anecdotally, users are being told that their equipment is compatible and will work in a power outage, as it their devices are fitted with extensive battery backup. However, what providers fail to reveal to customers is that power is also required at the node.

Some providers have migrated from fixed lines to mobile technology. However, that too will also only work if there is an uninterruptible power supply at the mobile base station—from our experience, the mobile network lasted for only 4 hours.

It must be understood that many of those using medical emergency alert systems are the most vulnerable in society and frequently lack understanding of the technology involved: they will therefore continue to rely on their devices in life-threatening situations.

Summary

Adelaide Hills' communities experience frequent power outages. They are also some of the most vulnerable communities in South Australia, subject to risk from bushfires, storms and flooding. The ability to make outgoing calls is vital for the safety of individuals. As nbn fixed line will mean that nbn communications will be lost in the event of a power outage and given that mobile communications provides insufficient duration of backup, it is imperative that the Joint Standing Committee consider individual and community safety as paramount in any rollout. Furthermore, mobile coverage is essential, not only as a backup, but also in order to receive emergency warnings.