

Joint Committee on the National Broadband Network
Answers to Questions on Notice
Public Hearing 24 October 2011
Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio
NBN Co Limited

Question No: 1

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: NBN Rollout Delay

Senator Xenophon asked:

How much delay to the NBN Rollout has been caused by construction tender delays?

Answer:

Mr Quigley said to the Committee on 13 October 2011: "...I was not convinced we were getting the right outcome for the taxpayers' money. So I suspended those and went into a new process. That did in fact delay us by some months as well."

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Question No: 2

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: NBN Rollout Delay

Senator Xenophon asked:

How will this time be accounted for in regard to the future NBN rollout?

Answer:

NBN Co will proactively manage the construction timetable over the life of the project to minimise and overcome any delays caused by the suspension of the tender process.

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Question No: 3

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Public Education Activity

Senator Xenophon asked:

How will the Public Education Activity be promoted? Is there a national strategy or will it be implemented by area as the NBN is rolled out?

Answer:

Details of these activities are yet to be finalised.

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Question No: 4

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Public Education Activity

Senator Xenophon asked:

How much funding has been allocated for the Public Education Activity?

Answer:

The budget has not yet been finalised.

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Question No: 5

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Wholesale Broadband Agreement

Senator Xenophon asked:

When is NBN Co expecting to finalise its Wholesale Broadband Agreement?

Answer:

On 30 November 2011, NBN Co published the final executable version of its contract with telephone and internet companies (the Wholesale Broadband Agreement) following extensive industry consultation.

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Question No: 6

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Wholesale Broadband Agreement (WBA)

Senator Xenophon asked:

What has been involved in the WBA consultation process, and over what period?

Answer:

The WBA consultation process commenced in October 2010 and was designed to provide prospective customers with information on NBN Co's approach to developing its terms and conditions, to facilitate early engagement with its prospective customers and to gain important industry insights through customer feedback.

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Question No: 7

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Wholesale Broadband Agreement (WBA)

Senator Xenophon asked:

What changes have been made to the WBA as a result of industry consultation?

Answer:

NBN Co has received formal submissions from 22 organisations, and in response to those submissions has completed in excess of 150 hours of face-to-face to discussions with those customers wishing to further discuss the content of their submissions. This has led to a number of changes as the WBA has evolved. Where appropriate and possible, documents have been made available on the NBN Co website in both clean and marked-up form to assist readers readily identify the nature of the changes.

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Question No: 8

Hansard Ref: Pages 7-8

Topic: Technology choices for building the National Broadband Network

Senator Cameron asked:

In discussing technology choices considered in examining what would be the most efficient way to build the [NBN] network ..." Senator Cameron asked, "Is there a paper that could nail this?" In response Mr Quigley indicated that there was a paper and that he would "look at what NBN Co had produced" noting that "It was a little while ago, but perhaps there is something that we could table".

Answer:

NBN Co is considering this request and will provide a response to the Committee as soon as practicable.

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Question No: 13

Hansard Ref: Page 15

Topic: Rollout Planning

Mr Husic asked:

- a) What are the criteria for selecting suburbs in the NBN rollout, particularly where there are “clear blackspots”?
- b) Does NBN Co take into account network blackspots in making decisions?

Answer:

(a) and (b)

There are a number of factors that are taken into account when selecting sites for the rollout. The most important criterion in the early stages of the network is completing the construction of the sites previously announced and the availability of Telstra infrastructure. This infrastructure allows NBN Co to build Fibre Access Node (FAN) sites and points of interconnect, which are used not only for the fibre network but also for the fixed-wireless network and for connection to satellite earth stations.

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Question No: 14

Hansard Ref: Page 18

Topic: Definitive Agreements – provisions restricting promotion of wireless services as a substitute for fibre based services

Senator Macdonald asked:

Can you provide the actual wording in the Agreements that states that Telstra and Optus will not promote wireless services as a substitute for fibre based services for 20 years from the Commencement date?

Answer:

NBN Co and its counterparts to the respective agreements have expressed concerns about the provision of these clauses to the Committee given the commercially sensitive and confidential nature of these clauses. As such, the Department and NBN Co would be happy to discuss with the Chair of the Committee, possible mechanisms for providing this material to the Committee on a confidential basis.

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Question No: 16

Hansard Ref: Page 20

Topic: Broadband Networks

Mr Oakeshott asked:

Can you provide a jurisdictional (international) comparison on what is happening to retiring networks, where wholesale platforms are being rolled out on a monopoly basis alongside existing networks?

Answer:

No. NBN Co has not been tasked with undertaking a study of international examples of legacy networks.