

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Additional Estimates Hearings February 2016

Communications Portfolio

nbn

Question No: 87

nbn

Hansard Ref: Page 102, 9/02/2016

Topic: List of towns that will be serviced by satellite

Senator Urquhart, Anne asked:

Senator URQUHART: In response to question on notice No. 91, nbn co declined to list the towns that will be served by satellite. We asked in that question for the towns that were going to be served by satellite and we asked for a list. I think your response was, 'Because of their typically small and dispersed nature it is likely to be extensive and you could not do it.' I would have thought that a simple database export would have dealt with that issue and I was disappointed not to be told that I would have to wait for the website, which is what you have said, to be upgraded, to learn this information. Notwithstanding that advice, that some towns may include both fixed-line and satellite internet in their footprint and that there may be some changes, can you name any town that is expected to rely solely on satellite internet that is larger than Queenstown?

Mr Morrow: I do not have that information with me. Part of the problem is that until we have physical inspections of the entire country.

Senator URQUHART: But surely you know the towns that are getting satellite?

Mr Morrow: The issue is that we may have a snapshot in time of what is going to receive satellite services today. This is predicated on some high-level desktop assumptions and some modelling in a computer system that we use. This is just a first-pass to give us an aggregate of what we think the total cost of nbn is going to be. As we get closer to the deployment some of these premises will end up, when we look in far more detail, being far more economical to put fibre to the node in. Or maybe copper is insufficient so we have to put fibre to the premises.

Senator URQUHART: But as we are here today, are you saying that you cannot provide me with a list of the towns and regions that are going to get satellite?

Mr Morrow: Let me take that back on notice. On the surface I do not see why we would not be able to.

Senator URQUHART: I cannot either. I am absolutely astounded that you cannot provide that.

Mr Morrow: I want to caveat that by are saying there is a lot of detail that goes into a lot of the questions that are behind there. I assume you are not aware of anything at this point as to what was behind that, so let me take that back. I understand your question and what you are trying to get at, and perhaps what we can do is say which ones are initially targeted for it, but that could very well change. Maybe that could satisfy what your curiosity is.

Answer:

Queenstown is the biggest town that will be served with satellite. Some other large towns covered by satellite include Halls Creek (WA), Mount Buller (Vic), and Maitland (SA).

As at 1 March 2016, the table below sets out the larger towns expected to be served with satellite. The technology solution is subject to review as the deployment approaches and some towns may include both fixed-line and satellite services in their footprint.

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| State | Town |
|--------------|-----------------|
| NSW | Wooli |
| NT | Jabiru |
| QLD | Cunnamulla |
| QLD | Normanton |
| QLD | Tara |
| QLD | Taroom |
| QLD | Thursday Island |
| SA | Kimba |
| SA | Port Vincent |
| SA | Stansbury |
| SA | Maitland |
| TAS | Currie |
| TAS | Queenstown |
| TAS | Rosebery |
| TAS | Zeehan |
| VIC | Dinner Plain |
| VIC | Kaniva |
| VIC | Marysville |
| VIC | Mount Buller |
| VIC | Sea Lake |
| WA | Bruce Rock |
| WA | Corrigin |
| WA | Halls Creek |
| WA | Leonora |
| WA | Meekatharra |
| WA | Mount Magnet |
| WA | Onslow |
| WA | Quairading |
| WA | Wyndham |