

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**

**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**

**Additional Estimates Hearings February 2016**

**Communications Portfolio**

**nbn**

**Question No: 95**

**nbn**

**Hansard Ref: Page 111-112, 9/02/2016**

**Topic: Central Coast issues**

**Senator O'Neill, Deborah asked:**

**Senator O'NEILL:** My question to you is: have you had contact from these people, and how do you propose to resolve the multiple issues of the same nature on the Central Coast? All people see is a mess, and their communication with nbn co is also a mess.

**Mr Morrow:** I would have to investigate the details behind this, but we do want the three customers that you speak of to have good service. There is not anything other than just satisfying them that is the focus of the company. It is a complex environment, and I am sure that there are a lot of things that we could have done better behind that. We will investigate that. As I pointed out earlier, we have installed over 1.7 million connections into homes, and some of those do not go as smoothly as we would like. We are focused on those and are improving every day to make sure that it is better and better as we move forward into the future.

I want to correct you on one thing: I was not pointing the finger at the RSPs and saying it was not nbn's fault. The reality is that these are multiple companies that are involved to make this service happen. We work together, taking the responsibility, regardless of whether it sits within RSP, nbn, a delivery partner or otherwise. But, again, for these three customers we will take it on board to find out what is happening and see if we cannot get their issues resolved.

**Senator O'NEILL:** What about Mr Manton and the placement of the pit and the FTTN node?

**Mr Morrow:** I will personally follow up on that one to see what has happened.

**Senator O'NEILL:** How many people have contacted you, nbn co or the minister with problems such as Mr Manton's, with these boxes in the wrong spot?

**Mr Morrow:** I would be happy to take that on notice.

**Senator O'NEILL:** What is a secondary node? Just give me a clear understanding of what a secondary node is.

**Mr Morrow:** I am not sure what a secondary node is. Does anybody back here know? No.

**Senator O'NEILL:** As I understand it in lay terms from people on the Central Coast who have been speaking to me and my office, they indicate that given some of the failure rates, which we discussed the last time I was here—up to 14 per cent failure rates, and we are seeing them manifest themselves in these communications with our offices—nbn co is going back, where the copper has proved to be inadequate, and putting in secondary nodes.

**Mr Morrow:** I am not aware even of the terminology of a secondary node.

**Senator O'NEILL:** Do you have a different terminology for the same thing that I have described?

**Mr Morrow:** No, not that I am aware of.

**Senator O'NEILL:** Could you take that on notice.

**Mr Morrow:** I certainly will, of course.

**Senator O'NEILL:** I am keen to know: where there are failures, are you putting in additional nodes? What is their purpose? If you are, what is the cost of those?

**Mr Morrow:** I will take that on notice, but I would be highly surprised if we are putting in additional nodes because there are failures on copper.

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**Answer:**

1. In order for nbn to confirm contact from the people Senator O'Neill referred to in her question, nbn would need to obtain their names and/or addresses so that it can identify their specific issues and confirm resolution status.
2. Following further investigations into Mr Manton's case, nbn have determined that the pit located on the Council road reserve adjacent Mr Manton's property will be relocated by nbn. A design variation for the location of the pit was raised during field work, however this design variation was not updated in the construction plans to the Council prior to the build. The updated location of the pit has now been updated in Council construction plans. nbn can confirm that there is no 'nbn Node cabinet' located at, or nearby Mr Manton's property.
3. As far as nbn is aware, this is the only complaint relating to Development Approvals for works in road reserves resulting in a request for the relocation of nbn infrastructure in the Gosford Local Government Area (LGA).
4. nbn are not clear what the term 'secondary node' refers to. In the Gosford LGA, there have been a number of technologies rolled out, including both fibre to the premise (FTTP) and fibre to the node (FTTN) and associated aerial works.