

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Additional Estimates Hearings May 2014

Communications Portfolio

NBN Co Limited

Question No: 269

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: NBN Rollout Tasmania

Senator Urquhart asked:

An article was posted on the ABC news website dated 13 May 2014 under the heading 'NBN's Tasmanian rollout problems continue.'

- a. The article states '*The company says in some cases it has taken longer than the national average to connect Tasmanian homes.*' Is it possible for all installations to take less time than average? What proportion of Tasmanian connections have taken longer than the Tasmanian average connection time? What is the national average connection time and the Tasmanian average construction time?
- b. The article states '*So we've changed the construction model so that when we build that new network we will run what we call the lead into the side of the house, which will make the installation a lot swifter and a lot cleaner moving forward.*' Was this change (to build-drop) announced in the Corporate Plan 2012-15? If so, why is it being reported as if it is a new decision?
- c. The article states 'We've learnt that the way that construction has taken place in the past isn't good enough.' Apart from the "build drop" change, what other lessons have been learned?

Answer:

- a. In June 2014, the national average connection times for Service Classes 1 and 2 were 36.6 business days whereas the Tasmanian average was 56 business days. Of these Tasmanian connections, 28 per cent took longer than the state average and 66 per cent took longer than the national average. Average Tasmanian construction times (343 days) are generally in line with the national average (335 days).
- b. The change to incorporate build drops was not specifically announced in the Corporate Plan 2012-2015.
- c. Other lessons learned include the need to:
 - Move to a field based, collaborative design process including improved incentives to reduce quantities.
 - Reduce remediation times by working closer with Telstra.
 - Implement a more pragmatic approach including resource based scheduling, reporting and work allocation.
 - Introduce field efficiency initiatives including increased automation, training and pre-scoping.
 - Revise key commercials.