

Senate Select Committee on the National Broadband Network
Answer to Questions on Notice
Hearing 1 October 2009
Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio
NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: NBN 64

Topic: Geographic coverage of the Last 10%

Senator Nash asked:

Could that rough idea (of the geographic spread of the Last 10%) be provided to the Committee so we could have a rough idea?

Answer:

Providing consolidated information on the “geographic spread” of what is meant by the ‘last 10 per cent’ is extremely difficult. Ultimately, the final details of where the ‘last 10 per cent’ is located will not be known until at least the final report of the Implementation Study, and likely not until NBN Co has had the opportunity to undertake detailed planning of its fibre rollout and conduct necessary engineering and business analysis. In preparing this, information drawn from a wide variety of sources including Australian Bureau of Statistics data, government publications such as the State of the Regions report and information sourced from the private sector will provide important inputs.

Also, further information will eventuate from other Government processes currently underway, including the Regional Backbone Blackspots Program. As these processes are currently still underway, and information was provided as part of commercial submissions, this information cannot be made available at this stage.

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Hansard Ref: NBN 70

Topic: Competitive neutrality principles and GBE status

Senator Birmingham asked:

As a GBE, would you expect to have to operate, in a sense, on competitive neutrality type principles in accessing spectrum, or do you think the government can give you a leg up in that regard?

Answer:

As a GBE we expect to operate subject to competitive neutrality principles and are required to operate on a commercial basis. Of course, the Government as shareholder may impose price conditions or specify CSO goods and services on our operations.

The Australian Government Competitive Neutrality Complaints Office is an autonomous unit within the Productivity Commission which administers the Australian Government's competitive neutrality complaints mechanism. All GBEs and their subsidiaries are automatically subject to competitive neutrality requirements

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Hansard Ref: NBN 79

Topic: Universal wholesale pricing

Senator Fisher asked:

Can NBN Co deliver on the Minister's promise and, if so, what processes you would put in place and what actions you would take in order to deliver on his promise to see one wholesale price averaged across the country and his promise that the same wholesale price will be offered for every household for the same speed across satellite, wireless and fibre to the node?

Answer:

The Minister has indicated that the National Broadband Network will offer uniform wholesale prices for the fibre network and that the Government has an ambition to have a single price for the same speed across satellite, wireless and fibre.

It is too early to comment on 'actions and processes' required in this regard as the company is still working through the construct for its pricing arrangements.