

Senate Select Committee on the National Broadband Network
Answer to Questions on Notice
Hearing 8 October 2009 (Hobart)
Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio
NBN Tasmania Limited

Written Questions on Notice to Aurora Energy

Can Aurora Energy detail for the Committee:

- 1. The ongoing maintenance costs of aerial cabling, as opposed to underground cabling, including pole maintenance and replacements?**

Answer: From our experience pole mounted optical fibre optic (FOC) cable systems maintenance costs are comparatively similar to the maintenance costs of similar underground optical fibre cabling systems.

- 2. The cost of extending/upgrading/reinforcing existing power poles to support the additional aerial fibre optic cable?**

Answer: In most cases overhead pole networks provide a very suitable environment for the installation of optical fibre cable systems without significant re-engineering. The design process requires a preliminary survey and engineering study to ascertain the impact of the FOC installation on the distribution network; in some cases these surveys reveal the need to "augment" pole structures to accommodate the new FOC. The cost of these works is typically relative to the specific deployment area and the varying electrical topologies between rural and metropolitan environments.

- 3. The comparative cost of aerial cabling relative to underground cabling?**

Answer: In general terms installing optical fibre cable on overhead structures is substantially cheaper than installing the same infrastructure in a new underground environment.