



Network disaster recovery trial taking place in Traralgon

Tuesday 15 November, 2022 - Traralgon is at the centre of a **nbn**® trial of temporary network infrastructure that can be deployed at times of emergency to restore and maintain critical broadband and communication services.

A Point-of-Interconnect On Wheels semi-trailer has been setup at the local exchange and is being tested as part of **nbn**'s emergency preparedness to respond to natural, or other disasters that may occur and damage critical infrastructure.

Within the **nbn** network, the Point-of-Interconnect is a critical component, joining other retail service provider networks to the **nbn** network. From there the **nbn** network carries all customer traffic from the POI to customer homes and businesses. Each POI serves tens-of-thousands of customers, and in some cases, entire regions, and regional cities and towns.

There are 121 POIs which serve the entire **nbn** footprint and the 8.5 million homes and business connected to the **nbn**.

nbn Executive General Manager, Network Management Darren Mills said the trial, running through late October to November, is testing the ability to restore and maintain services should damage occur to critical infrastructure (like an exchange building).

The trial is also testing the functionality of the equipment, and that it can work at all 121 **nbn** POI network sites.

"We have invested in assets that can be deployed relatively quickly to restore services while we complete network recovery," Mr Mills said.

"This forms part of our national emergency and disaster preparedness plans. This is the first trial of this type we have done in Australia."

The Point-of-Interconnect on Wheels semi-trailer could support anywhere between 192,000 to 500,000 customer services for as long as necessary.

Additionally - **nbn** is urging communities, if they haven't started already, to begin planning and testing residential evacuation and business continuity plans.

"Our network is built and designed to be as resilient as possible," Mr Mills said.

"Where physical damage is caused by extreme events, we have assets that can be mobilized quickly to help restore **nbn** services as quickly as possible.

"However, the majority of outages on the **nbn** network during emergencies are caused by power outages so it's important people have a plan to stay connected and updated by other means should power outages happen and disrupt connectivity."

nbn is asking households and businesses to take four simple steps to prepare:

1. **Stay mobile:** Keep a charged mobile phone and portable mobile battery pack ready to use in a power outage, or if your nbn connection is disrupted in an emergency event. Turn off mobile data when not needed and unnecessary apps to save battery.
2. **Stay updated:** Local radio is a good source of information during an emergency, so include a battery powered radio in your emergency communications kit. Also follow emergency services, including your state Fire and Rescue and Police Services, as well as utility companies and nbn (@NBN_Australia) on social media for updates.
3. **Back up:** To make sure you can access important information and essential documents from anywhere, including insurance policies and financial documents, consider creating a digital back up on a USB or in the cloud.
4. **Test** residential evacuation and business continuity plans, including considering investing in alternative communication and power options to keep your business or community group operating – these need to be tried and tested regularly as part of your Business Continuity Plans.
5. Large emergency events the past few years mean **nbn** is prepared for what the 2022-23 summer season may bring.

Among initiatives to bolster and prepare the network in times of emergency include:

- Building upon a well-established and existing capability, in late 2021 nbn boosted its temporary network infrastructure fleet with the addition of 58 new purpose built and innovative pieces of mobile temporary infrastructure, which will be rapidly transported and stationed in different locations across the country for potential deployment when needed during an emergency.
- The \$6 million-worth of new infrastructure, which was partially funded by the Australian Government's Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters (STAND) package, joins nbn's fleet of Sky Muster® Trucks and portable satellite kits which also help provide communities with connectivity in the aftermath of emergencies.
- Investments in network resiliency - The nbn network is resilient and designed to withstand disruption to one part of the network, without affecting the entire network.
- Moving infrastructure – The devastating flooding of Lismore and areas of South East Queensland in 2022 has meant critical infrastructure has been raised (where possible) to prevent flooding damaging the same infrastructure again
- Building back better – Lessons from the Victorian Dandenong Ranges storms of 2021 mean we are better prepared to restore services quicker where infrastructure is damaged through improved and more efficient designs and equipment preparedness and stockpiles.

“Our teams work closely with emergency services and power companies to prepare for a potential disaster and ensure we can repair and restore the network as soon as it is safe to do so,” Mr Mills said.

“Where there has been an outage, we will prioritise reconnecting essential services, such as hospitals, fire, police and emergency services.”

There are also a range of assets that can be deployed to emergency evacuation centres and other community hubs to provide temporary access to voice and broadband services.

These include mobile satellite trucks, and satellite ‘fly-away’ kits that are easily moved and setup to where the need is greatest. Temporary emergency management solutions are only available for deployment in emergency situations and can be requested by emergency services via the state/territory emergency management processes.

“We know how important access to broadband services are for homes and businesses across Australia,” Mr Mills said.

“Now is the time to begin planning and be prepared for what could happen.”

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NOTES TO EDITORS

- On social media, the [@NBN Australia](#) provides the most up-to-date information and advice concerning network outages and restoration as they occur.
- We have a range of localised spokespeople available for updates. For requests, and to ensure it is captured by anyone on-call out of hours, email media@nbnco.com.au
- **nbn** is not responsible for the operation of mobile networks. If you have questions concerning mobile network connectivity and outages (including restoration) you will need to speak with the telco operators themselves (Telstra, Optus, Vodafone).
- The majority of outages on the nbn network during emergencies are caused by power outages.
- Equipment connected via the nbn network will not work during a power outage. If the network is not working due to a loss of power this does not automatically mean the network itself is damaged
- **nbn** has a number of generators on standby to support connectivity to critical infrastructure and services in areas where power outages occur. These are deployed in emergency situations where it is safe to do so, and in co-ordination with emergency services and authorities where need is greatest.

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