

Media Release

NBN Co launches Interim Satellite Service for rural and remote Australians

New service available to eligible customers from today

1 July 2011

The first commercial services offered over the National Broadband Network become available from today via NBN Co's Interim Satellite Service.

The service is designed for residents, small businesses and indigenous communities in rural and remote Australia who can't currently access broadband services comparable to those available in metropolitan areas*.

At launch four retail service providers are offering NBN Co's Interim Satellite services. They are Bordernet, Clear Networks, Harbour IT and SkyMesh. A further two will commence in mid July – Activ8me (Australian Private Networks) and Reachnet.

Australians living in rural and remote areas who may be eligible for the service can now apply by visiting the NBN Co website www.nbnco.com.au/satellite or calling 1800 881 816 between 8:30am and 5:00pm, Monday to Friday.

When their eligibility is confirmed, applicants will be able to order a service via participating retail service providers.

Under the Interim Satellite Service, the satellite equipment and installation will be provided by NBN Co at no cost to the customer for a standard installation.

"Our objective is to deliver high-speed broadband access to every Australian, not just those who live in our cities and towns. The Interim Satellite Service will ensure broadband will reach those who need it the most so that they too can become active participants in the digital economy," said NBN Co CEO Mike Quigley.

"The retail service providers running the trial Interim Satellite Service with some of their existing customers have reported some very positive responses. For those eligible people on copper-based dial-up services, the Interim Satellite Service will be a whole new experience.

"I look forward to seeing more people in rural and remote Australia using the National Broadband Network to gain improved access to education, health, business and government services," Mr Quigley said.

NBN Co's Interim Satellite Service aims to offer retail service providers a wholesale broadband service designed for peak access speeds of 6Mbps downlink and 1Mbps uplink.** Consumers

and small businesses should look through the plans and offers from participating RSPs to select the service that suits their needs.

The Interim Satellite Service will be in a ramp-up phase until November when additional capacity, a wider range of plans and more service providers are expected to be available.

The eligibility process will be similar to that used for the Australian Broadband Guarantee (ABG) program which finished on 30 June 2011. Under this process, applicants can use an on-line broadband services locator to see whether there are “metro comparable” services in their area and so determine whether they are eligible for the Interim Satellite Service.

The Interim Satellite Service is scheduled to run until 2015 when NBN Co plans to launch two of its own high-capacity satellites to provide a Long Term Satellite Service that will aim to offer retail service providers a wholesale broadband service designed for peak access speeds of 12Mbps downlink**.

The satellite and fixed wireless services are intended to serve the seven per cent of Australian premises that fibre optic cable cannot reach.

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Editor's note:

The full eligibility criteria is available online from the NBN Co website www.nbnco.com.au/satellite or by calling 1800 881 816.

**“Metro comparable” in relation to the eligibility criteria means a commercial service with minimum data speeds of at least 512/128 kbps, a 3GB per month data allowance, and a total price to the end customer of no more than \$2500 over three years. The full eligibility criteria are available online at www.nbnco.com.au/satellite together with other information about the service.

** The speeds actually experienced by end-users via satellite will depend on a number of factors including the retail broadband plan they choose, their equipment, their in premises connection and the usage of the service at the same time by other users.