



Media Release

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NBN satellite network extends to the outback

Bourke chosen as location for satellite service ground station

The outback town of Bourke in the north-west of NSW has been selected as the location for a new facility that will help deliver high speed broadband to remote communities across Australia.

The satellite ground station gateway forms part of NBN's Long Term Satellite Service, designed to bring broadband at speeds of up to 12 Megabits per second* to homes, farms and businesses in outback and remote parts of Australia, including communities in the Bourke Shire such as Louth, Gumbalie and Fords Bridge.

Following extensive consultation with Bourke Shire Council, the new facility is planned to be constructed on an existing industrial development, approximately eight kilometres north of the town centre.

Once built, the ground station will comprise a single storey building with up to three 13-metre-in-diameter satellite dishes. Construction is expected to begin next year with the facility scheduled to be up and running by 2015.

Matt Dawson, NBN Co's Program Director, Satellites, said:

"We chose Bourke because it was an ideal location with an ideal climate. The town is also located close to reliable power and other infrastructure including the NBN's core fibre transit network – the main fibre transmission lines linking towns and our exchanges.

"The Bourke facility will link up with other satellite ground stations across the country to deliver broadband to some of the most isolated communities in Australia by 2015 – including many in Bourke Shire itself."

Welcoming the announcement, Mayor of Bourke Shire Council, Andrew Lewis, said:

"The new NBN ground station is set to give Bourke an economic boost, which is great news for the area and an important initiative that has actively been pursued by Council staff. We welcome NBN Co's investment in our region and we look forward to playing a part in connecting Australians living in rural and remote parts of the country to the NBN."

Councillor Lewis added that when the development application is lodged, NBN Co plans to make more information available about the construction of the site. Community members will then be welcome to make comments and ask questions during the DA process.

In the meantime, an Interim Satellite Service is available now to eligible homes and businesses in rural and remote areas. While there is more detail on the eligibility for this service on our website, it is designed for those who don't currently have access to metro-comparable broadband services. Please see www.nbnco.com.au/satellite, or call our Contact Centre on 1800 881 816.

The Bourke facility is the second site to be chosen for an NBN satellite ground station. Last month NBN Co announced the construction of a similar facility in Wolumla on the Far South Coast of NSW. The township of Bourke has been earmarked to receive broadband via fibre optic cables. Mr. Dawson said NBN Co would provide more information about the rollout in Bourke itself at a later date.

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Notes to Editors

- The Long Term Satellite Service is a key part of NBN Co's national broadband network to deliver high-speed broadband to every Australian. The satellites, which are planned to launch in 2015, are designed to provide high-speed broadband coverage to around three percent of homes and businesses outside the reach of the NBN's fibre optic and fixed-wireless services, including outback areas and Australia's external territories.
- The wholesale high-speed broadband network should be available to internet service providers on non-discriminatory terms, allowing them to offer a range of plans and packages to consumers and businesses.
- Currently, NBN Co provides an Interim Satellite Service that delivers a high quality, reliable, high-speed broadband service to eligible homes and businesses in rural and remote parts of Australia. It offers wholesale speeds of up to 6Mbps download and 1Mbps upload* to internet service providers.
- The Interim Satellite Service is expected to operate until 2015 when NBN Co plans to launch two satellites of its own which will see wholesale speeds offered to internet service providers increase to up to 12Mbps* download. The facility in Merimbula should operate in support of this service.
- For more information visit www.nbnco.com.au/satellite

*NBN Co is designing the NBN to be capable of delivering these speeds to NBN Co's wholesale customers (telephone and internet service providers). Speeds actually achieved by retail customers (end users) will depend on a number of factors including the quality of their equipment and in-premises connection, the broadband plans offered by their service provider and how their service provider designs its network to cater for multiple end users.