



Media release

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\$750 million investment to 5G-enable nbn® Fixed Wireless to deliver faster speeds to regional Australia

- **\$480 million investment in the nbn® Fixed Wireless network by the Australian Government, supported by an additional \$270 million from nbn.**
- **The investment will help to deliver faster speeds¹ to homes and businesses across semi-rural, regional and remote Australia.**
- **Funding will allow nbn to fast-track and scale the integration of the latest 5G millimetre wave technology across the Fixed Wireless network, following extensive testing already completed by the company.**
- **Enhanced data allowances on nbn's Satellite services – nbn® Sky Muster and nbn® Sky Muster Plus.**

NBN Co welcomes the \$480 million investment announced today by the Australian Government in the **nbn®** Fixed Wireless network. NBN Co will commit an additional \$270 million to the program designed to deliver faster wholesale speeds² for regional Australia, benefiting thousands of homes and businesses.

NBN Co will use the funding to 5G-enable its network of more than 2,200 Fixed Wireless infrastructure sites and more than 22,000 cells in semi-rural areas and across regional and remote Australia. **nbn** will use the very latest 5G technology to vastly extend the range, speed and capacity of its existing Fixed Wireless network, while reducing latency to deliver the best possible customer experience.

Importantly, as a result of recent advances in 5G technology, and in particular **nbn's** extensive testing and future implementation of 5G millimetre wave technology, the enhancements will be primarily delivered using the existing network of **nbn** Fixed Wireless towers.

The investment forms part of the government and **nbn's** response to the 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review³ which recommended enhancements to **nbn®** Fixed Wireless and Satellite services after it found there has been a step-change in demand for data and broadband in rural and regional areas.

The investment aims to deliver four major benefits to homes and business across regional and remote Australia:

- **Extended Fixed Wireless:** Enhanced coverage and extended maximum range for some **nbn®** fixed wireless towers resulting in expansion of the **nbn®** Fixed Wireless footprint coverage by up to 50 per cent enabling approximately 120,000 former satellite-only eligible premises to access **nbn®** Fixed Wireless services.

- **Faster Fixed Wireless wholesale speeds¹:** Following consultation and launch, **nbn** proposes that homes and businesses in the expanded **nbn**® Fixed Wireless footprint will be able to order retail services via their service provider over **nbn**'s wholesale tiers proposed to offer potential maximum wholesale download speeds of up to 100Mbps. **nbn** is aiming that up to an anticipated 85 per cent of the expanded footprint will also be able to order services with potential maximum wholesale download speeds of up to 250 Mbps, which is up to three times faster than the highest wholesale speeds available on **nbn**® Fixed Wireless today.
- **Improve Fixed Wireless typical wholesale busy hour speeds⁴:** **nbn**® Fixed Wireless network improvements are expected to allow **nbn** to implement a new measure to indicate the network's capability to achieve 'typical wholesale busy period speeds' of at least 50Mbps (download).
- **Enhanced data limits and network performance on **nbn**® Sky Muster:** For the homes and businesses that remain on **nbn**® Satellite, **nbn** is proposing to unmeter **nbn**® Sky Muster Plus data for the majority of the day with the off-peak period for unmetered data increasing to 16 hours (12am - 4pm) per day, from the current six-hour window (1am – 7am). This is anticipated to be applied from mid-2022. In addition, for regular Sky Muster, **nbn** is aiming to increase average monthly data allowances to 55 Gigabytes (GB), increasing to 90GB once the **nbn**® Fixed Wireless upgrade is complete in around two and a half years' time.

Gavin Williams, **nbn** Chief Development Officer for Regional and Remote, said:

"Access to fast and reliable broadband plays a vital role in the lives of people across Australia and is critical for the nation's economy – and 5G will be core to enhancing and accelerating our **nbn**® Fixed Wireless capability.

"This investment will also support the regional Australian economy with an additional \$6.1 billion in regional Gross Domestic Product over 2022 to 2026 financial years.

"Broadband demand in regional and remote Australia has been growing rapidly and as Australia's digital backbone, this ongoing and growing demand requires continued investment in the **nbn**® network.

"For households across regional Australia faster speeds² will make it easier to work remotely, access digital services as well as connect with loved ones and access entertainment. For businesses, faster speeds¹ will enhance and expand participation in the global digital economy and benefit from innovative technology such as the Internet of Things and smart farming.

"We will commence detailed planning shortly. After that is completed, we expect the roll out will take around two and a half years (subject to further assessment through the detailed planning process)."

The investment announced today follows the \$4.5 billion dollar network investment announced by **nbn** in September 2020, which is driving fibre deeper into communities and delivering wholesale speeds of 500Mbps to close to 1 Gbps⁵ on demand to 2 million homes and businesses – or around 75 per cent of the **nbn**® Fixed Line footprint by the end of 2023. Around half of the premises announced to date under that program are located in regional Australia.

ENDS

1 **nbn** is a wholesaler and end customers should contact their preferred service provider to ask about availability. Any new speed tiers or changes to Fixed Wireless products is subject to consultation with industry which may alter the design, contractual terms, product specifications and/or go-to-market approach. The planned wholesale download speeds for Fixed Wireless Home Fast and Fixed Wireless Home Superfast are potential maximum Information Rates. They are not Peak Information Rates or Committed Information Rates. **nbn** expects it will operate similarly to how the Fixed Wireless Plus product operates today but with potential maximum wholesale speeds up to 100 Mbps for Fixed Wireless Home Fast and up to 250 Mbps Fixed Wireless Home Superfast.

2 Your experience, including the speeds actually achieved over the **nbn**[®] network, depends on the **nbn**[®] access network technology and configuration over which services are delivered to your premises, whether you are using the internet during the busy period, and some factors outside **nbn**'s control (like your equipment quality, software, broadband plan, signal reception, and (with the exception of Sky Muster Plus™) how your service provider designs its network). Speeds may also be impacted by the number of concurrent users on the **nbn**[®] Fixed Wireless network, including during busy periods.

3 [2021 Regional Telecommunications Review | Australian Government Regional Telecommunications Review \(rtirc.gov.au\)](#)

4 This measure will be an estimate based on a sample of **nbn** Fixed Wireless wholesale services and will measure the average speed at certain points in each hour of the busy period between 7-11pm to identify a 'typical busy period speed', in line with the methodology outlined in the ACCC's Broadband Speed Claims Industry Guidance Paper (October 2020). For each sample measured it will take into account factors outside of **nbn**'s control such as environmental impact on radio signal strength, but will not take into account retail level, in-premises or user factors that could impact the end user service. Actual end user speeds will differ as a number of factors influence this, including the particular end user applications in use at the time, end user equipment and software, and the number of concurrent users on the **nbn**[®] Fixed Wireless service. This means that this measure is not the same as, but is likely to be similar to, the connection's capability (if retail level and end user influences are minimal). Currently **nbn** publicly reports on a network design metric that influences its cell upgrade program (which prioritises cells for upgrades to ensure a minimum 30 day average busy hour wholesale download speed of 6Mbps on at least 99% of cells), but which is not referable to end user experience.

5 Regardless of the retail service you purchase, the actual wholesale speeds delivered by **nbn**'s highest wholesale speed tiers of 500 to close to 1000 Mbps will be less than 1 Gbps due to equipment and network limitations and the peak information rate may fall anywhere in this range. In addition, the HFC Home Ultrafast bandwidth profile downstream service provided to retail providers is a ranged profile with a maximum sustained information rate of 750Mbps. Reference to speeds are not end user speeds; they are wholesale layer 2 peak information rate bandwidth provided to retail providers. An end customer's experience, including the speeds actually achieved over the **nbn** network, depends on some factors outside our control (like equipment quality, software, and how your retail service provider designs its network) and the **nbn** technology used for your connection.

Media enquiries

Nicole Davey

Email: nicoledavey@nbnc.com.au

Mobile: 0477 365 159

Greg Spears

Email: gregspears@nbnc.com.au

Mobile: 0406 315 014



For further information, visit www.nbnc.com.au