



Australian Government
Department of Communications

Our reference: MC20131100377

Mr Damien Ivereigh
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Dear Mr Ivereigh

National Broadband Network - Copper disconnection

I refer to your email to Mr Barry Jarvis, concerning the transition of business telecommunications services to the National Broadband Network (NBN) and switch off of the copper network in George Town and Deloraine, Tasmania. Your correspondence was referred to the Minister for Communications, the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, as he has portfolio responsibility for the matters raised. The Minister has asked the department to respond on his behalf. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

The Australian Government is committed to completing the construction of NBN and in doing so ensure that all Australians have access to very fast broadband as soon, as cost-effectively and as affordably as possible.

NBN Co has advised the Government that to deliver fast broadband sooner, at less cost to taxpayers and more affordably for consumers, the NBN should be completed using a multi-technology mix. This will match the right technology to the right location and make use of existing networks where possible to deliver very fast broadband.

This is forecast to save taxpayers \$32 billion, get the NBN finished around four years sooner and to enable nine out of ten Australians to get access to download speeds of up to 50 megabits per second or more by 2019.

In coming months, the Government will be undertaking further reviews into the NBN to refocus the rollout around the policy objectives identified in the Strategic Review to connect homes and businesses to the network sooner.

The Government has asked NBN Co to complete construction in areas where construction contracts have been signed and where detailed design work is underway. However, in areas where work has not commenced, decisions about actual construction in these areas will be taken on the basis of review findings.

In those areas such as George Town and Deloraine, Tasmania, where NBN Co completes construction of the NBN fibre-to-the-premises network (and NBN Co declares the area to be 'NBN ready'), the NBN fibre optic network will replace the existing copper network.

The decommissioning of Telstra's copper network and migration of services to the NBN is governed by processes in the Definitive Agreements signed between Telstra and NBN Co

in June 2011 and Telstra's Migration Plan (accepted by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission in February 2012). Under the Migration Plan, Telstra (or another Retail Service Provider) cannot supply new services over its copper and HFC networks to NBN serviceable premises in 'NBN ready' areas (known as the 'cease sale' provisions). Further information about the cease sale provisions is available on Telstra's website at <http://go.telstra.com.au/helpandsupport/-/what-is-cease-sale>.

Under current arrangements there are only limited circumstances where the switch off date for the copper network in George Town and Deloraine may change from May 2014. Some special services used for business telecommunications other than a standard phone line or internet connection (such as, ISDN, frame relay, ATM, Megalink and DDS), have been identified as exempt from being switched off in May 2014 and will continue to work until further notice. A list of these special services is available on NBN Co's website at www.nbnco.com.au/nbn-for-business/specialised-telecoms.html. Further information for businesses about the transition of services to the NBN may be found on NBN Co's website at www.nbnco.com.au/nbn-for-business.html.

It may take longer for some businesses, located in multi-dwelling units, shopping centres, office buildings or other commercial premises to be able to connect to the NBN. This is because these buildings require a specific design solution and greater engagement with building owners and bodies corporate.

When homes and businesses are able to order NBN services in ready for service areas, NBN Co directly notifies end-users about the switch to the NBN, advises of the disconnection date for copper-based services and has an active program in place to resolve issues that prevent some premises from connecting. NBN Co will soon be undertaking further communications activities in areas such as George Town and Deloraine about connecting to the NBN before the copper switch off date in May 2014.

Further information regarding the NBN rollout will be published by the Government and NBN Co as soon as possible. NBN Co will publish this information at www.nbnco.com.au on its website.

Thank you for raising this matter. I trust this information will be of assistance.

Yours sincerely



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