

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a supplementary submission. I trust this further information supplied will assist your enquiry.

I have previously made submissions to this Joint Standing Committee (Submission # 6) and Committees on the NBN in previous sittings of Parliament (Submission# 172: <http://www.aph.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=6d39f684-6b2c-4c0d-9576-732adadfd018&subId=511593> )

Nothing much has changed from my previous submission. NBNCo still falsely claim that “rock beds” prevent them from installing a fixed line service to us. (See my previous submission on why this is a false claim. NBNco are yet to prove there is actually rock!)

They refuse to even consider (cheaper) alternatives such as aerial deployment, instead shoving us onto the Skymuster service that we are still unable to connect to due to Line of Sight issues.

My neighbours across the valley on the other hand, have been moved off Skymuster and onto FttN. To do so, NBNCo had to trench for over 1km to install the required infrastructure and installed a micronode to service the same amount of premises on my road that have been shoved back onto Skymuster (about 15).

For our road, a 400m trench was required, but that was too difficult due to “rock”. It's “funny” that rock wasn't found in a 1km long trench in exactly the same geological conditions one street away isn't it?

Anyway, I digress. There is much more important information you need to be aware of. Developments since my last submission are as follows:

1. We now know our premises are only one of hundreds within 5-10km of the Adelaide GPO that have been shoved onto Skymuster, and only one of thousands within 25km of the Adelaide GPO. Adelaide has more Metropolitan premises within 25km of the GPO shoved onto Skymuster than all the other Capital Cities combined. See NBN's FOI disclosure logs.
2. We were advised of the possibility to apply for funding to “upgrade” us from Skymuster via the Regional Connectivity Program. Unfortunately we are ineligible as we are surrounded by fixed line services. Technology Choice is not an option due to the exorbitant cost (Let's face it, if NBNco with all their resources think it's too costly to rollout fixed line internet to our premises, how on Earth can the average household be expected to fund it?)
3. In an email sent from NBN's Senior Advisor dated 17 February 2020, NBNCo advises that:
  - (a) We have the option of maintaining an ADSL service;
  - (b) when co-existence concludes in an area, the Downstream Power Back-Off (DPBO) is switched off and my observation that this change can result in interference to ADSL services within an area is valid;
  - (c) NBN Co has investigated options and found that there will not be a need to turn-off the DPBO, and therefore does not intend to do so.

Out of all of the above points, #3 should be of the most interest to the Committee.

We've now gone from "our ADSL service will need to be disconnected"  
(<https://www.itnews.com.au/news/nbn-co-finally-reveals-satellite-users-who-will-lose-adsl-473766>) to we have the option of maintaining our ADSL service.

The option of us maintaining our ADSL service (which we fully intend to do) now comes at a cost to our neighbours using NBN's fixed line service in our area, all the way back to the exchange (as our ADSL service shares the copper cabling with hundreds of premises between our house and the telephone exchange ~7km away).

That is, their NBN fixed line services will "forever" be in co-existence mode as NBN has found there is no need to turn it off and doesn't intend to do so.

This means hundreds of premises will only ever be guaranteed a 12/1Mbps NBN service, as that is all the speed NBN will guarantee while their copper lines are connected while co-existing with legacy services. (Actually, potentially thousands of premises within the Stirling exchange area alone will be affected, as there are hundreds of us shoved onto Skymuster that can still order and maintain an ADSL service. We all share copper cabling in the street with NBN FttN services.

(Refer to Page 5:

<https://www.nbnco.com.au/content/dam/nbnco2/documents/nbn%20%E2%80%93%20the%20challenges%20of%20transforming%20an%20industry.pdf> )

I wonder if NBN have actually thought about the ramifications of their decision to shove so many premises in the Metropolitan area of Adelaide onto Skymuster?

Have they actually considered or even realised there are now thousands of premises just within one area alone that will always only ever be guaranteed a peak data rate of 12/1?

How many other premises are there across the network in the same boat?

But what does all this actually mean for those now affected by NBNCo's poor network design around Metropolitan Adelaide?

1. Thousands of fixed line premises within the Metropolitan area of Adelaide are now only guaranteed a 12/1 service. This does not meet the Govt's Statement of Expectations and is actually slower than the Skymuster service the nearly 3000 premises NBNCo have shoved onto Skymuster around Adelaide!
2. Working from home in the current pandemic with only a guaranteed 12/1 service to rely on would be impossible for most users. Upload speed is critical.
3. Working from home from one of the premises shoved onto Skymuster would also be difficult and very, very costly. Even taking into account Skymuster Plus, where some data is un-metered, VPN data is not. (A lot of WFH requires the use of a VPN to ensure security of the data being sent/received). EG: If we could even connect to Skymuster (which we can't), we would have to spend \$200 p/month to receive 150Gb to use during peak times (work times). That would be used within a week working from home, leaving us 3 weeks with no/throttled access.

Of course, this could all be easily remedied by actually building out the fixed line network to move all of us off Skymuster. If the fictional "rock" in the ground is an issue, there are power poles (Stobie Poles made of concrete and steel) outside each of our premises that

could be utilised for an Aerial deployment.

NBNco appear to be more than capable of doing this in rural areas East of the Great Dividing Range with premises being moved off of Skymuster onto FttC or even FttP!

NBNco somehow can't manage this in the Metropolitan area of Adelaide.

It was easier to shove premises 25km from the Adelaide GPO onto Skymuster on 1 July 2020 and brush their hands together and state "well done, our job here is complete".  
(<https://www.itnews.com.au/news/nbn-co-shows-distribution-of-sky-muster-premises-within-25km-of-adelaide-gpo-551243> )

No doubt NBNCO's solution will be something along the lines of overbuilding all the FttN services with FttC or FttP, leaving the Metropolitan premises already shoved on Skymuster exactly where they are now.

We have been shoved, not just onto the wrong side of a Digital Divide, but onto the wrong side of an ever increasing Digital Chasm.

Matt Wilkinson