

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings October 2011
Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio
NBN Co Limited

Question No: 505

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Satellite/fixed wireless rollout

Senator Birmingham asked:

In answer to question on notice 375 from the 2011 budget estimates, NBN Co states that “under the long term satellite and fixed wireless products, end-users will have access to a VOIP phone service”. How long will it be before this is the case?

Answer:

NBN fixed wireless and long term satellite product releases include traffic class one capability to support Service Providers to offer a Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) service. The fixed wireless product release is planned for June 2012. Long term satellite product release is planned for 2015.

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Question No: 506

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Satellite/fixed wireless rollout

Senator Birmingham asked:

In answer to question on notice 370 from 2011 budget estimates NBN Co stated that the satellite service would deliver peak speeds of 12Mbps download and 1Mbps upload. What will the average speeds be?

Answer:

The Long Term Satellite service is planned to deliver peak speeds of 12Mbps download and 1Mbps upload.

The average access speeds will depend on many factors including the dimensioning of individual Retail Service Provider networks and service configurations, end-user usage profiles and usage volume.

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Question No: 507

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Satellite/fixed wireless rollout

Senator Birmingham asked:

How is the tender process for the satellite service progressing? What is the timeline for the process? How many tenders have been received?

Answer:

Please see Mr Quigley's response to questions around the satellite tender process at the 18 October 2011 Supplementary Estimates hearings, Hansard page 119-120.

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Question No: 508

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Satellite/fixed wireless rollout

Senator Birmingham asked:

Has NBN Co evaluated the cost and risk of operating its own satellites as compared to leasing satellite capacity currently available in the Ka-band at potentially less cost and risk?

Answer:

Please see answer to Question on Notice 411 from the Environment and Communications Legislation Committee Budget Estimates Hearings, June 2011. Mr Quigley also addressed this issue in his evidence provided at the 18 October Estimates hearing, Hansard reference page 120.

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Question No: 509

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Satellite/fixed wireless rollout

Senator Birmingham asked:

Will NBN Co consider the Implementation Study's recommendation to consider a leasing model utilising third-party next satellite infrastructure?

Answer:

See answer to Question on Notice 508.

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Question No: 510

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Interim Satellite Service

Senator Birmingham asked:

Are customers on this service receiving a free trial period? When will those on a free trial start paying? How many customers does NBN Co expect this service will serve? What are the initial take-up figures?

Answer:

201 end users were connected to a Trial Service which commenced May 2011. The services were connected via a retail service provider (RSP) and NBN Co did not charge the RSP. The trial service concluded on 16 November 2011.

Commercial services have been available since 1 July 2011. As at 30 November 2011 there were 1,154 connected services.

The NBN Co Corporate Plan indicates 33,000 end users will be connected in the first two years of service.

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Question No: 511

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Interim Satellite Service

Senator Birmingham asked:

How many providers are offering services via the interim satellite service? What is the scope of their offerings and operations?

Answer:

Please see the NBN Co website:

<http://www.nbnco.com.au/our-network/fibre-wireless-satellite/satellite.html>

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Question No: 512

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Multi-dwelling cable installation

Senator Birmingham asked:

- a. How many tenders have been received?
- b. Did all of these tenders meet the budgeted costs of NBN Co?
- c. What was the cost/budget tenderers were asked to meet?
- d. When is a decision on the preferred tenderer likely to be made?

Answer:

The MDU (multiple dwelling unit installation) procurement process for the engagement of contractors to install equipment into MDUs is currently open. This tender process is being conducted on a 'commercial in confidence' basis and therefore to comment on it further at this time may cause harm to the process and to the value for money to be achieved for the Australian taxpayer.

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Question No: 513

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Communities less than 500 premises

Senator Birmingham asked:

How many communities does NBN Co's modelling assume there are in Australia?

Answer:

NBN Co estimates that there are 1755 communities.

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Question No: 514

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Communities less than 500 premises

Senator Birmingham asked:

How many communities under 500 premises does NBN Co believe there are?

Answer:

NBN Co estimates that there are 207 communities of less than 500 premises within proximity of the transit network.

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Question No: 515

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Communities less than 500 premises

Senator Birmingham asked:

How many communities between 500-1000 does NBN Co believe there are?

Answer:

NBN Co estimates that there are 315 communities between 500 and 1000.

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Question No: 516

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Communities less than 500 premises

Senator Birmingham asked:

How many communities under 500 premises will be passed by fibre backhaul but not connected to the fibre network?

Answer:

This will depend on a number of factors that will be apparent as the rollout progresses. Please see answer to Question on Notice 379 from the February 2011 Additional Estimates hearing.

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Question No: 517

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Communities less than 500 premises

Senator Birmingham asked:

How many communities of between 500-1000 premises will be passed by fibre backhaul but not connected to the fibre network?

Answer:

Please see answer to Question on Notice 516.

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Question No: 518

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Communities less than 500 premises

Senator Birmingham asked:

How many communities between 500 and 1000 premises and under 500 premises that are within each of 5kms, 3kms and 1km of fibre backhaul are not being connected to the NBN?

Answer:

Please see answer to Question on Notice 516.

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Question No: 519

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Debt Financing

Senator Birmingham asked:

What are the timelines and arrangements for NBN Co's debt financing plans?

Answer:

Please see Corporate Plan 2011-13, pages 141-144.

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Question No: 520

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: UMR

Senator Birmingham asked:

- a. Has NBN Co at any stage purchased any services from the polling group UMR Research, or any associated company?
- b. If so, what exactly was the nature of the service?

To be clear, this is the same UMR as provided polling services for the Australian Labor Party in:

- New South Wales in 1999 and 2003;
- Queensland in 1992, 1995, 1998, 2001 and 2004;
- Victoria in 2002;
- South Australia in 1997 and 2002;
- West Australia in 1993, 1996, 2001 and 2005;

And at the Federal level in 1996, 1998, 2001 and 2004

Answer:

- a. and b. Yes, UMR has provided NBN Co with external research related to rollout activities.

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Question No: 521

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: UMR

Senator Birmingham asked:

Exactly what process was used to determine UMR was the most appropriate recipient of this work? What role was played by Mr Kaiser?

Answer:

UMR was engaged in a procurement process which involved benchmarking against other service providers. Mr Kaiser was not the decision-maker in this process.

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Question No: 522

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: UMR

Senator Birmingham asked:

Has NBN Co at any stage purchased any services of any kind from the Hawker Britton group or any associated company?

Answer:

No

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Question No: 523

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Staff

Senator Birmingham asked:

According to NBN Co's 2010-11 Annual Report the company had 207 employees in June 2010 and 855 in June 2011 – on average, the number of employees over the financial year was 531. The total amount spent on employee costs, according to page 43, was \$119 million. That is an average of \$223,900 per employee.

Exactly what benchmarks are NBN Co's board and management comparing the company with as they determine the appropriate level of compensation for management and staff of an early-stage venture with no paying customers?

Answer:

NBN Co does not agree with the above calculation.

As a start-up company commencing from a single employee, NBN Co first hired the senior management team and their executives who would design the network and build the organisation that would deliver it. The average salary will continue to decrease as we fill in the organisation towards a steady state.

NBN Co has implemented a governance framework that includes an independent board committee that focuses on remuneration issues. The Committee charter was developed to be consistent with other large Australian business enterprises and best practice models. The governance model requires multiple levels of internal approval for determining individual remuneration.

An equitable role evaluation rating system is used for determining the appropriate pay band for all employees at NBN Co. Pay bands within the framework have been set with reference to the external market, both in terms of relevant industry and relative accountability.

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Question No: 524

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Staff

Senator Birmingham asked:

Please provide details on the number of staff earning, per annum:

- a. over \$1 million
- b. between \$500,000 and \$1 million
- c. between \$400, 000 and \$500, 000
- d. between \$300,000 and \$400, 000
- e. between \$200, 000 and \$300,000
- f. between \$100, 000 and \$200,000
- g. between \$50,000 and \$100,000
- h. less than \$50,000

Answer:

Information on salaries and wages will be available in the Annual Report.

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Question No: 525

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Hospitality

Senator Birmingham asked:

Please provide a full breakdown of NBN Co's hospitality and entertainment expenditure for 2010-11 including industry briefings and seminars hosted by NBN Co. Please provide details of all events incurring over \$1,000 in hospitality/entertainment expenses.

Answer:

NBN Co's industry briefings and seminars expense items include Customer Collaboration Forums in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth at a total cost of \$46,100; and workshops for industry representatives and access seekers at a cost of \$5,500.

A further breakdown of items would be a significant diversion of resources.

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Question No: 526

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Media Monitoring

Senator Birmingham asked:

How much does NBN Co spend on media monitoring?

Answer:

The average monthly spend on media monitoring is \$10,400.

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Question No: 527

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Non-Current receivable

Senator Birmingham asked:

On page 62 of the 2010-11 Annual Report there is a non-current receivable of \$2.2 million listed, and a note which states: "These amounts arise from transactions outside of the usual operating activities of the NBN Group." Please detail what this receivable is.

Answer:

The receivable of \$2.2m relates to the contracts acquired by NBN Co for those customers of Austar United as a consequence of the acquisition of the 2.3/3.4 Ghz spectrum in February 2011. In accordance with accounting standards the value of these contracts was required to be fair valued on acquisition.

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Question No: 528

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: NBN – Jean Pascal Beaufret

Senator Birmingham asked:

Why was Mr Beaufret interviewed by only one member of the NBN Co board?

Answer:

It was considered appropriate that, in the appointment of the Chief Financial Officer, the Board member who was also Chair of NBN Co's Audit Committee should interview Mr Beaufret.

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Question No: 529

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Travel

Senator Birmingham asked:

For financial year 2010-11:

1. How many NBN Co staff travelled overseas? Please detail by staff member, including their name and position and their total travel expenses. How many staff travelled first class? How many staff travelled business class?
2. What was the total cost of overseas travel for NBN Co? Please include a list of all international travel itemised by trip, detailing the number of NBN Co staff involved and the cost of each trip including the total amounts spent on accommodation and meals, cities or other destinations visited, the purpose of the travel and any specific outcomes achieved.
3. What was the total amount spent by NBN Co on overseas accommodation and meals?
4. How many staff travelled interstate?
5. What was the total accommodation and meals bill for staff travelling interstate over the past year?
6. How many future overseas trips is NBN Co currently planning?

Answer:

1. Number of staff that have travelled overseas: 54
First class tickets: 0
Business class tickets: 5

Please note: the figures above are for October 2010 to June 2011, as specific reporting on these line items was not available for July-September 2010. Breaking this information down by staff member, including their name and position and their total travel expenses would be very time consuming and an unreasonable diversion of resources.

2. & 3. Please see Question on Notice 569.

4. Similar to the answer to Question 1, for the period October 2010 to 30 June 2011, NBN Co staff were issued with 5,618 tickets, where a ticket is equivalent to a sector flown (e.g. Sydney – Melbourne).

5. Please see Question on Notice 569

6. The exact number and timing of planned overseas trips is not available and will be determined on an “as required” basis following consideration and approval of the CEO.

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Question No: 530

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Training

Senator Birmingham asked:

Please detail all staff training programs for which NBN Co paid in financial year 2010-11, including costs, numbers of participants, the title of each training program and the name of each training provider.

Answer:

Please see answer to Question on Notice 573

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Question No: 531

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Advertising

Senator Birmingham asked:

Please detail all advertising expenditure in financial year 2010-11 by campaign, including the campaign's purpose, total cost (including campaign research and design) and media (i.e. print, radio, TV etc) involved. In each case, if the campaign was part of a broader strategy, what other communications activities were undertaken and at what cost? Please provide a similar breakdown on budgeted future spending.

Answer:

In 2010-11 advertising costs (including branding activities and newspaper advertising for tenders) were \$12,000. Costings for future advertising budgets have not been finalised.

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Question No: 532

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: External fees/consultants

Senator Birmingham asked:

Please provide a breakdown by category (e.g. legal advice) of total costs paid to external consultants. For all payments in excess of \$10,000, please itemise and detail the name of the consultant, work undertaken and the total payments made to the consultant.

Answer:

The following table provides the amount spent in the different categories of services for which consultants have been used.

Consultancies for the year ended 30 June 2011

<u>Activities FY11</u>	<u>\$m</u>
New developments	1.1
Network technology (including associated support, design and implementation services)	10.1
Information Technology (including support services, enterprise architecture, process design)	17.8
HR corporate systems, processes and communications	1.3
Procurement	1.2
Program Management	2.7
Training & Strategy	3.6
Finance	1.7
Other	4.5
<u>Total</u>	<u>44.0</u>

For information in regard to legal services, please see QoN 571.

Contracts in place between NBN Co and consultants contain confidentiality requirements, where the disclosure of information such as sums paid to individual consultants and other details is restricted.

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Question No: 533

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: InWriting

Topic: Conferences

Senator Birmingham asked:

Please detail any overseas international conferences partly or fully funded by NBN Co in financial year 2010-11. For each conference fully funded please identify:

- (a) the venue;
- (b) the reason for each conference;
- (c) the number of registered participants;
- (d) whether consultancy fees were paid for organisation of the conference;
- (e) to whom were any consultancy fees paid; and
- (f) the cost of each consultancy?

Answer:

NBN Co did not partly or fully fund any international conferences during 2010-11, nor has it funded any in the past.

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Question No: 534

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: FOI

Senator Birmingham asked:

For both calendar year 2011 to date and financial year 2010-11, how many Freedom of Information applications have been received? Please provide breakdowns of the numbers of applications granted in full, granted in part, refused, withdrawn and still being processed. For those withdrawn, please provide a further breakdown indicating whether the application was withdrawn before or after the applicant was notified of estimated costs.

Answer:

1. FOI Applications – Financial Year Ending 30 June 2011

As outlined in NBN Co's most recent annual report, the company received 15 FOI applications for the financial year ending 30 June 2011 (NBN Co became subject to the FOI Act 11 June 2011).

Two applications were withdrawn. Of the two withdrawn applications, no costs estimates were provided. The applications were withdrawn after NBN Co provided the applicants with links to documents and information already in the public domain.

- 1 application was transferred to another agency.
- 12 applications were still being processed as at 30 June 2011.
- No FOI decisions were made in the last financial year.

2. FOI Applications – 1 July 2011 to 21 November 2011

In the current financial year to 21 November 2011, there were 25 "active" applications of which 13 were new applications from 1 July 2011 onwards.

Of those 13 new applications that were the subject of decisions by NBN Co:

- o 2 – Released in full
- o 5 – Released in part
- o 3 – Refused
 - 1 application was refused on the basis of exemptions under the FOI Act.
 - 2 applications were refused on the basis of practical refusal reasons. In one instance, the information was already in the public domain. In the other, the document was already subject to a previous refusal by NBN Co.
- o 3 – No documents held by NBN Co.
- o 9 applications were withdrawn:
 - 8 applications were withdrawn before any notification of estimated costs. In the majority of the withdrawal cases, NBN Co directed the applicants to

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information already in the public domain – Hansard, NBN Co or DBCDE’s website, etc.

- 1 application was withdrawn after notification of costs. In that instance, the applicant sought sensitive commercial information in relation to the Optus Deal. The withdrawals came after the refusal of a related request by the same applicant, seeking the Telstra Definitive Agreements.

As at 21 November 3 applications were active and subject of charges reviews by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner:

- 1 application was originally refused as a substantial diversion of resources then re-scoped and NBN Co made an advance deposit request of \$722.25.
- 2 other applications had estimated processing costs of \$99.38 and \$185.63.
- In all 3 instances, NBN had offered a 25% discount, based upon its decision that the release of the document would be in the “general public interest”.

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Question No: 535

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Staff

Senator Birmingham asked:

How many staff have left NBN Co since its establishment? How many resigned and how many were terminated? What were the positions and salaries of those staff who have left?

Answer:

Sixty-seven employees have resigned since NBN Co was established. An additional 25 terminations were company-initiated. NBN Co does not disclose people's private data, with the exception of our Key Management Personnel shown in the Annual Report.

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Question No: 536

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Contracts let by NBN Co

Senator Birmingham asked:

What is the value of each contract let by NBN Co to date?

Answer:

NBN Co publishes on its website details including the value of all its major contracts related to the rollout of the network and the establishment of its corporate systems and processes. The value of the major contracts announced to date is over \$7 billion. There are, however, many smaller contracts and statements of work under head contracts that are not as significant but still have standard non-disclosure clauses. NBN Co has determined that seeking parties' agreement to provide the value of each of these smaller contracts would require a significant diversion of resources which the company is not prepared to undertake.

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Question No: 537

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Contracts let by NBN Co

Senator Birmingham asked:

How many premises will be connected under each contract let by NBN Co to date? How long will it take for each contract to be delivered? Do existing contracts provide rights to service other as yet uncontracted areas or preferential rights to future tenders?

Answer:

Please refer to the individual company media releases (available at www.nbnco.com.au) for each construction contract let. These releases provide details of the contracts that are not commercial in confidence.

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Question No: 538

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: NBN Co Satellite Service

Senator Birmingham asked:

How many premises have connected to the NBN Co satellite service since its establishment? What retailer or retailers have they connected through (how many per retailer)? Is more than one wholesale product offering available under the satellite service? If yes, what are the different offerings and how many connections have been made for each offering?

Answer:

As at 30 November 2011, there were 1,154 connected first release satellite services since its commencement on 1 July 2011.

There are seven connected Retail Service Providers (RSP) with services provided roughly evenly distributed across the group. These RSPs are listed on the NBN Co web site.

Only one wholesale offering was available during the period 1 July to 17 Nov 2011. It included a 6/1Mbps access service and 1GB to 20GB monthly data usage plans.

A new product construct was released on 18 November 2011 which enables the RSPs to flexibly construct their own services and usage plans. These services are published on the listed RSP web sites.

In the new product construct, NBN Co does not have visibility of the individual end user service plans.

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Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: First Release Sites

Senator Birmingham asked:

In the trial periods of service offered in the first release sites what product was provided to premises undertaking the trial? What evaluation of these trials was undertaken? Were any independent evaluations undertaken? If so, by who? Will evaluations be made public?

Answer:

NBN offered wholesales services based on its 12/1, 25/5, 25/10 50/20 and 100/40 services. These are megabits per second (Mbps) downstream/Mbps upstream services. The majority of the services taken were the 100/40 service during the trial. Since the trial has finished service providers have been offering their initial plans, for an example see Internode's first release plans: http://www.internode.on.net/residential/fibre_to_the_home/nbn_plans/nbn_first_release/

As at early December 2011, NBN retail pricing has also been released by the following RSP's:

- Internode
- iiNet
- Exetel
- Optus
- Internet Solutions
- Primus
- North Queensland Telecom

Evaluation of the trials was undertaken by NBN Co on a continual basis during the trial period covering different aspects of operations, maintenance, service provider experience and end-user experience. We have made available results of the service provider and end-user experience at various forums, for example at the NBN Forum in Melbourne on 13 November 2011, which is available on our website at:

<http://nbnco.com.au/news-and-events/media-collections/presentations.html>

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Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Fibre Services

Senator Birmingham asked:

- a. In how many regions or areas are services delivered by fibre now being sold?
- b. How many premises are there in each of these regions and how many have had fibre services connected?
- c. How many retailers are providing commercial services?
- d. What retailers are providing fibre based services in which regions or areas?
- e. How many sales of fibre based services in each region have been made in total and through each of the retailers currently providing services?
- f. What wholesale products (i.e. – upload & download speeds) have been bought in each of these regions?

Answer:

a)-d) This information is publicly available on NBN Co's website

e. Questions regarding sales figures of individual companies are best directed to the company involved.

f. Wholesale products have been bought at every speed tier.

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NBN Co Limited

Question No: 541

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: NBN Co Website

Senator Fisher asked:

NBN Co previously listed a current list of senior executive employees/ business function heads and their positions and functions on their website. Why is this listing not available online anymore?

Answer:

A list of NBN Co senior executives is available on the NBN Co website including their functions and positions. Please see: www.nbnco.com.au/about-us/our-people/executives

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
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Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio
NBN Co Limited

Question No: 542

Program No. NBN Co Limited

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Organisation Chart

Senator Fisher asked:

Please provide a copy of the most recent organisation chart for NBN Co.

Answer:

Please refer to answer to Question on Notice 541.