

# Media Release



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## **\$200 million program to improve Telstra's copper network**

Telstra will spend an extra \$200 million on the national copper telephone network, directly improving the service experience of an estimated 200,000 customers over the next year.

Group Managing Director of **Telstra Country Wide®**, Doug Campbell, said the program demonstrated Telstra's commitment to ensuring the reliability and longevity of its customer access network and on-going improvements in service.

"This targeted program during the 2005/06 financial year comes on top of our normal network maintenance and rehabilitation work schedule. Priority areas to receive this special funding will be identified by targeting the services of the small proportion of our 10 million customer lines that currently record recurring faults," Mr Campbell said.

"Telstra will also establish a new dedicated program that will draw upon network data to better identify services that are under performing on a persistent basis.

"Approximately 65 per cent of funds will go to Telstra Country Wide areas where the input of our local managers will ensure that the money is spent in such a way as to gain the greatest customer benefit. The funding will be allocated nearly equally between capital and operational expenditure.

"In addition to the traditional telephone service, our customers expect more and better technology to be delivered over their copper lines, such as higher bandwidth internet products. By improving the quality of our national copper network, Telstra will be well placed to provide these services to more customers in the future.

The proactive funding decision aims to further improve Telstra's consistently good performance against the existing regulatory safeguards that specify the minimum customer service quality and reliability standards that Telstra must meet.

While Telstra achieved some of the best ever results in meeting repair and installation timeframes during the March 2005 quarter, as released last week in the latest Australia Communication Authority service report, the new program aims to improve Telstra's performance by reducing faults in the first place.

"This CAN upgrade program is a secure investment in an important asset, adding value to the business and serving customers more effectively," Mr Campbell said.

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