Media release

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NBN confirms successful fibre-to-the-node speed test

First in-premises trial delivers raw download speeds of 105 Mbps*

The first in-premises test by NBN Co of fibre-to-the-node (FTTN) technology has delivered raw download speeds of 105 megabits per second (Mbps) and upload speeds of 45 Mbps.*

The technology trial was conducted recently by NBN Co engineers in Umina, near Woy Woy, on the NSW Central Coast.

Engineers installed a VDSL modem in a shopfront and then connected the existing copper telephone line to a node cabinet in the street.

The node cabinet, which has been erected alongside a Telstra pillar around 100 metres from the shopfront, converts electrical signals transmitted over copper wires into pulses of light that can travel over optical fibres.

NBN Co Chief Executive Officer, Bill Morrow, said:

"This is an important milestone in the rollout of the National Broadband Network (NBN).

"It demonstrates that existing technologies such as the copper network are capable of playing a vital role in delivering high speed broadband to Australians."

NBN Co Chief Operating Officer, Greg Adcock said:

"As outlined at our analysts' update today, this speed test is a result of the work by our engineers and construction crews to install a small number of node cabinets in Umina on the NSW Central Coast and Epping in Melbourne's northern suburbs to pilot the construction and delivery of FTTN.

"Once active, the next step will see NBN Co invite retail service providers to take part in a limited FTTN end user trial in these locations. The aim will be to test the delivery and end user experience of high speed broadband via FTTN to a small number of premises at each location."

The results of the technology trial bolster the findings of the Strategic Review conducted by the company and published in December 2013.

The Strategic Review determined that the NBN could be delivered sooner and more cost-effectively by incorporating existing capable telecommunications networks with an upgrade path – such as copper and hybrid fibre coaxial cable (HFC) – into the rollout.

According to the Strategic Review, a mixed technology NBN:

- is estimated to be capable of delivering wholesale download speeds of up to 100Mbps to retail service providers providing services to at least two-thirds of Australians in the fixed-line footprint by 2019, compared to an estimated 57 per cent under the re-evaluation of the previous plan;*
- could save taxpayers more than $31 billion compared to the Fibre to the Premises-only rollout model; and
- could lead to less disruption and less invasiveness to the homes and driveways of millions of Australians

The company is planning a widescale commercial rollout of technologies including FTTN next year following the renegotiation of NBN Co's Definitive Agreements with Telstra.

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Notes to editors

- NBN Co is committed to fulfilling the Federal Government's policy goal of ensuring that Australians have access to fast broadband as soon and as cost-effectively as possible, as set out in the Federal Government's Statement of Expectations to the company http://bit.ly/1p6t345

- A Strategic Review carried out by NBN Co and completed in December 2013 recommended that the National Broadband Network could be rolled out faster and as cost-effectively as possible by utilising a wider range of best-fit technologies and taking into consideration existing infrastructure. http://www.nbnco.com.au/about-us/media/news/strategic-review.html

- For more information, visit www.nbnco.com.au

*NBN Co provides services to its wholesale customers, telephone and internet service providers, and does not provide services directly to end users. This trial involved testing speeds over physical network layers rather than end user speeds. End user experience including the speeds actually achieved over the NBN depends on some factors outside our control like equipment quality, software, broadband plans and how the end user's service provider designs its network.