

Media Release



NBN Co seals construction contract to complete broadband rollout in Tasmania

Up to 800 new jobs to be created at peak of rollout

State Government backs training for school leavers and job seekers

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NBN Co has locked in the construction contract that will see Tasmania become the first state in Australia where the National Broadband Network will be rolled out in its entirety.

Visionstream Australia, part of the Leighton Holdings Limited group of companies, has been awarded the contract to replace old-fashioned copper telephone lines with the high speed fibre optic broadband network in cities, towns and suburbs covering around 200,000 homes and businesses.

The four-year detailed design, construction and maintenance contract is valued at approximately \$300 million, with an option for renewal over each of the following two years.

NBN Co's Chief Operations Officer, Ralph Steffens, said:

"It's appropriate that the state that was the first to be connected to the NBN will be the first where the rollout will be complete. It will give Tasmania a head start to be able to take advantage of this transformative infrastructure for the nation's future."

New jobs for Tasmania

The contract is expected to see the creation of up to 800 new jobs at the peak of the rollout as well as a permanent workforce to undertake the ongoing maintenance of the fibre network, including future upgrades.

The opening up of new employment opportunities for Tasmanians is backed by the state government, with funding to support training for young Tasmanians and other job seekers, including workers who are transitioning from other industries, to gain a foothold in the telecommunications and construction industries by working on the NBN rollout.

The accredited training will be offered by training providers in Launceston, Burnie and Hobart to prepare jobseekers for many of the semi-skilled positions that are required for the project.

It is estimated that around half the jobs will require semi-skilled workers including earthmoving plant operators, labourers and road traffic controllers. Linesworkers and installers will account for a further 30 per cent.

It is expected up to 70-100 Tasmanians will be involved in traineeships.

According to NBN Co's Mr. Steffens:

"Better broadband will not only create new opportunities for Tasmanians, it will also mean new jobs for the construction company, its suppliers and subcontractors, local businesses and entrants to the workforce.

"The skills that will be gained from the accredited training programmes will not only support the construction of the NBN but can flow to other industries."

The state of the rollout

Plans have already been announced to roll the NBN out to 91,300 Tasmanian homes and businesses. Of these, the NBN is currently being rolled out to an area covering 11,300 premises in the state. The network is already up and running in an area covering 4000 premises in Smithton, Scottsdale and Midway Point of which close to 700 are using NBN services.

The indicative timetable for the delivery of the NBN to additional towns and suburbs is expected to be announced shortly when NBN Co issues its Three-Year Rollout Plan.

Locations outside the reach of fibre will be served by satellite or 4G fixed-wireless. Both NBN Co's Long Tern Satellite and fixed-wireless services are due for completion in 2015.

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Notes to Editors

- NBN Co plans to rollout fibre optic broadband designed to offer its Retail Service Provider customers wholesale speeds of up to 1 Gigabit per second* to 93 per cent of Australian premises by 2021. The remaining 7 per cent of premises are expected to receive high-speed broadband via fixed-wireless and satellite, with the rollout of both services expected to be complete by 2015.
- The network has so far been rolled out and activated in areas passing 18,200 premises nationwide – three sites in Tasmania and the five mainland First Release sites.
- NBN Co is rolling out the fibre network in a series of modules each of which passes around 3000 premises. In line with network design and planning rules, NBN Co will generally continue construction of new modules adjacent to existing construction locations until the entire fibre footprint in an area has been completed.
- For more information visit www.nbnco.com.au

*NBN Co is designing the NBN to be capable of delivering these speeds to NBN Co's wholesale customers (RSPs). Speeds achieved by retail customers will depend on a number of factors including the quality of their equipment and in-premises connection, the broadband plans offered by their RSPs and how their RSP designs its network to cater for multiple end users.