

NBN OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Publicly owned, quality, reliable, affordable telecommunications

Affordable, quality telecommunications are fundamental to the future of our economy, jobs, education, essential services, and way of life.

The NBN is a piece of vital infrastructure, but the Coalition's 'multi-technology mix' disaster has left many people without affordable or reliable services.

Under our plan, all Australians will have access to high quality Internet and voice services.



THE GREENS WILL:

- Keep NBN infrastructure publicly owned
- Finish the NBN using best choice technology
- Make high quality telecommunication affordable for all Australians
- Ensure regional telecommunications are funded, fair and fit for purpose



KEEP NBN INFRASTRUCTURE PUBLICLY OWNED

Under the original NBN legislation, its sale would have been triggered automatically five years after its completion.

The Greens secured safeguards making it as difficult as possible for future governments to privatise the NBN by ensuring any move to sell it off is subject to a full public inquiry and vote in Parliament.

The government paid \$11 billion to bring Telstra's networks back into public hands¹ to establish the NBN: we should not repeat the Telstra privatisation debacle.

The NBN is a public good. The Greens will retain the NBN infrastructure as a public asset and ensure it remains in public hands as Australia's sole universal-access, wholesale telecommunications service provider.

1 Thompson, Jeremy. "Telstra Signs \$11b Deal with NBN." ABC News, 22 June 2011, www.abc.net.au/news/2011-06-23/telstra-signs-11b-deal-with-nbn/2768546.

FINISH THE NBN USING BEST CHOICE TECHNOLOGY

Australia's Internet is lagging behind the rest of the world. It is slower and less affordable than comparable countries.

We rank 60th in the world for Internet speed, behind Belarus, Panama, and Serbia², and 57th in the world for fixed broadband affordability³. The Coalition's 'multi-technology mix' disaster has left many Australians without affordable or reliable Internet access⁴. It has created vast inequalities, with some areas having duplicate infrastructure and others remain waiting with no Internet access at all.

Rural and regional Australians have been particularly disadvantaged, with oversubscription of satellite services, downgrades from existing ADSL, and no phone access for emergencies⁵.

Short-term concessions like those supported by the Coalition, using outdated Fiber to the Node or disastrous Hybrid Fiber Coaxial will cost far more in the long-term and hamper our capabilities in the short to mid-term⁶.

The Greens are committed to a forward-looking NBN that uses Fiber to the Premises, Fiber to the Curb, and 5G Fixed Wireless to prepare us for the future and bring us in line with the capabilities of other countries.

Australians need a 21st century Internet to support our future economy, jobs, education, health, and way of life. We will finish the NBN using the best long-term technology solutions and make it available to all Australians.

2 "Speedtest Global Index – January 2019." Speedtest Global Index, www.speedtest.net/global-index.

3 "Digital Australia: State of the Nation 2017." EY Sweeney, digitalaustralia.ey.com/.

4 Parliament of Australia, The rollout of the National Broadband Network, 29/9/17, https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/National_Broadband_Network/NBN/First_report

5 BIRRR, Submission to the Joint Standing Committee Inquiry into the Rollout of the NBN in Rural and Regional Areas, 2018, <https://birrraus.files.wordpress.com/2018/06/birrr-submission-nbn-rollout-rrr.pdf>

6 Australian Journal of Telecommunications and the Digital Economy, The Tragedy of Australia's National Broadband Network, March 2017, <https://telsoc.org/ajtde/2017-03-v5-n1/a94>

QUALITY, AFFORDABLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS FOR EVERYONE

NBN's wholesale pricing structure is a key factor in slow speeds and high prices, forcing retailers to choose between quality and affordability of available services⁷. The digital divide between people is growing and people on low incomes are falling even further behind.

Telecommunications must also be regulated as an essential service, including fixed-line, mobile, and broadband services.

The Greens will:

- Require transparent review of NBN pricing structures so retailers provide consumers with the best possible options and ensure affordable base-rate broadband packages are available to low income households;
- Establish a Federal Telecommunications Concession (\$60 each quarter) payable to all holders of a DHS Health Care Card at a cost of \$1.2 billion over the forward estimates. This payment will replace the limited Telephone Allowance and fund an NBN migration program for vulnerable consumers to help close the digital divide and enable all Australians to participate fully in our digital economy, society, and government;
- Update the Telecommunications Consumer Protection Code to drive better customer service and industry practice; and
- Empower the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman to facilitate complaint resolution.

REGIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS THAT ARE FUNDED, FAIR AND FIT FOR PURPOSE

Rural, regional and remote communities are receiving less for their money compared to urban areas and are often unable to access sufficient data to conduct their business, educate their children, and access essential services online⁸. The Greens will ensure that regional communities receive telecommunication services that are comparable in cost, quality and reliability to urban areas.

The Greens will:

- Ensure that families and businesses, no matter where they are, can access enough data to meet their needs at a fair price;
- Ensure the use of best available technologies including fixed wireless and fixed line services (with satellite the technology of last resort, where no other options are possible);
- Extend the Mobile Black Spot Program at a cost of \$100 million per year; and
- Expand the ACCC Broadband Monitoring Program to include Fixed Wireless and Satellite, at a cost of \$1.8 million.

CASE STUDY

Matilda lives on a property in Bruce Rock, WA, with her partner and three children who are in school. Her family previously had an ADSL Internet connection, but were transitioned to Sky Muster as their NBN service.

The family have struggled with satellite outages, inadequate data to run their rural business and their children's education, and lack of mobile coverage.

Under the Greens' plan, the quality of their service will be monitored, they will have enough data at a fair price to meet all their needs, and the Mobile Black Spot Program will continue to cover gaps in rural Australia.

⁷ The Monthly, Network Error, April 2017, <https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2017/april/1490965200/paddy-manning/network-error>

⁸ BIRRR, Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Broadband Network, 7/4/17, <https://birrraus.files.wordpress.com/2017/04/birrr-nbn-joint-standing-committee-submission-submitted-redacted.pdf>