

**Broadbanding
Australia**



Media Release

National Broadband Network Goes Live in Kiama Downs and Minnamurra
New Era of Healthcare Showcased as NBN Switches on in Coastal NSW

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Residents in the neighbouring areas of Kiama Downs and Minnamurra, south of Sydney, are set to be the next to experience superfast* fibre broadband through the National Broadband Network (NBN) as the first mainland coastal sites go live today.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer, the Hon Wayne Swan MP, was in Kiama today to switch on the network. At today's launch the Deputy Prime Minister viewed a demonstration of an Australian-developed health solution that can be delivered over the NBN. Developed by Neuroscience Research Australia (NeuRA), the application is delivered via broadband to the home and has the potential to help decrease the incidence of injury among the elderly caused by falls**.

According to Dr Stuart Smith, Senior Research Officer, NeuRA: "With a growing number of people having to care for family members living with diseases that affect their mobility or their mind, a reliable high speed broadband network such as the NBN for monitoring and improving their state of health is a huge breakthrough."

The fibre network in Kiama Downs/Minnamurra covers approximately 2,350 premises, with residents in 80 per cent of properties having consented to the connection of a line during construction to make them "NBN ready".

With the network now live, Kiama Downs/Minnamurra will enter into a trial phase due to run until September/October, after which people in the fibre coverage area will be able to order services from their chosen retail service provider. Around 10 test users have already been connected as part of the trial in Kiama Downs/Minnamurra, and other service activations are in the queue. Across mainland Australia around 100 test users have already been connected to the network so far.

"This is very exciting day for residents in Kiama Downs and Minnamurra. They have enthusiastically embraced the National Broadband Network and are now among the first to experience its benefits – we thank them for their support during construction," NBN Co Chief Executive, Mike Quigley, said.

"It is also an important day for people right around Australia as we envisage a new era of healthcare emerging – an era facilitated by access to high speed broadband to the home not just in our cities, but in the regional and rural areas that need it most."

The Kiama Downs/Minnamurra area is the second mainland Australian site to join the (NBN) and access superfast* fibre-based broadband.

"The Kiama Downs/Minnamurra rollout represents the collective efforts of many people, including our construction partner Transfield, and Endeavour Energy, which provided access to its infrastructure. Kiama Council has been particularly supportive, along with business and community groups and the retail telecommunications companies," Mr Quigley said.

“We deliberately chose five quite diverse locations for our First Release Sites in order to test our construction capability. We are now in a position to ramp up our rollout with the recent selection of a construction partner for NSW, Queensland and the ACT.”

During the trial, NBN Co will work closely with a number of telecommunications and broadband service providers to understand what support they require to deliver services to people in the area. So far 19 retail service providers have signed up to participate in the trial phase, and 10 have passed through NBN Co’s certification process and are ready to test services. They are: AAPT, Adam Internet, Exetel, iiNet, Internode, Nextgen Networks, Optus, Platform Networks, Primus and Telstra.

Construction on the NBN in Kiama Downs and Minnamurra began in August 2010.

* The speeds actually experienced by end-users will depend on a number of factors including the retail broadband plan they choose, their equipment and their in-premises connection.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

- Kiama Downs and Minnamurra were selected as a First Release Site as they allowed the evaluation of construction in a regional coastal township. These suburbs also represent some of the diversity of housing types and situations NBN Co will encounter across Australia in the volume rollout.
- NBN Co announced the selection of Kiama Downs and the four other First Release Sites in March last year.
- The First Release Site of Kiama Downs and Minnamurra covers approximately 2,350 homes. Of these, 1,870 premises have consented for their free lead-in to the fibre network, which represents an 80 per cent take-up rate.
- The open access NBN will help increase retail telecommunication competition by lowering the barrier to entry for all service providers in the Australian market, whether large or small.

Audio visual materials are available through

<http://medianet.multimediarelease.com.au/bundles/29047705-06d2-40f7-8940-474a61edbe9f>

** Falls are a leading cause of injury-related death and hospitalisation in people aged 65 years and over. At least 40 per cent of people who have been hospitalised as the result of a fall require subsequent care in a nursing home.

As the percentage of people aged 65 and over increases – ultimately predicted to be more than 25 per cent of the population by 2047¹ – fall-related injuries will place an increasing burden on Australia’s health systems and aged care facilities.

¹ The Australian Government, Treasury, *Intergenerational Report*
http://www.treasury.gov.au/documents/1239/PDF/01_Exec_Summary.pdf pp. ix