

## Media Release

### National Broadband Network goes live on mainland Australia

Residents in Armidale NSW become first to be connected to the NBN

#### **STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 12:00PM, 18 MAY 2011**

The city of Armidale in rural New South Wales today celebrated becoming the first centre in mainland Australia to receive the National Broadband Network.

The Prime Minister presided over the switch-on of superfast fibre optic broadband services to selected Armidale residents at an official ceremony this morning.

The NBN will in the coming months enable an increasing number of residents, businesses, and medical and educational facilities in the Armidale First Release Site to receive broadband at speeds of up to 100 Megabits per second\*.

Residents are progressively being connected to the network as part of customer trials by four telecommunications providers who have already completed the certification process: iiNet, Internode, iPrimus and Telstra.

The handful of Armidale customers who have been trialling the service over the past month now join those already connected to the network in Tasmania, where the three communities of Midway Point, Smithton and Scottsdale were brought online in August last year.

This test phase is a critical step in building the network, working with telecommunications providers and integrating our operating systems as we aim to provide the best possible service throughout the future rollout.

The launch featured demonstrations of education, health and business applications that will be enabled by the NBN as well as testimonials from some of the first Armidale customers connected to the network.

Mike Quigley, NBN Co Chief Executive, said: "Today marks a significant milestone in our national rollout. Residents in Armidale will be the first mainland Australians to experience the tremendous benefits of this vital communications infrastructure that will serve Australian homes, businesses, schools and hospitals for decades to come.

"It represents the collective efforts of many people, including our construction partner Silcar Communications, Armidale Dumaresq Council and the University of New England as well as business and community groups, local residents and the retail telecommunications companies."

Work on the NBN began in Armidale in August last year. The city is one of five First Release Sites on the Australian mainland. The other sites - Kiama/Minnamurra Downs, NSW; Townsville, Qld; Willunga, SA and Brunswick, Vic - will be connected when they begin customer testing in the coming months.

\* 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

- Armidale was selected as a First Release Site as it provided an ideal location for evaluating a build in a rural inland town and represents some of the diversity of situations NBN Co will encounter across Australia in the volume rollout.
- NBN Co announced the selection of Armidale and the four other First Release Sites in March last year.
- The First Release Site of Armidale covers approximately 4,882 Premises (including the University of New England) or 2,900 excluding the University.
- The number of telecommunications providers offering services over the NBN as part of the trials is expected to increase to include AAPT, AARNnet, Comscentre, Exetel, Nextgen Networks, Optus, Platform Networks, SkyMesh and Vodafone, as these providers complete the certification process.
- The NBN Co certification program is a process by which NBN Co works with telecommunications providers to prepare them for accessing the network effectively and efficiently.

Audio visual materials are available through Medianet at <http://medianet.multimediarelease.com.au/bundles/0fca4296-d21b-4ee5-9970-b4c9b39f03f1> and from NBN Co's dropbox account at [www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com).

For access to the dropbox material email [scott.rhodie@nbnco.com.au](mailto:scott.rhodie@nbnco.com.au) or call Kate Russell / Liz Kearney at n2n on 02 9213 2307 / 9213 2323 or email [nbn@n2n.com.au](mailto:nbn@n2n.com.au)

Materials include:

- Image stills of event (**available from 1.30pm on 18 May**)
- NBN Co construction and end user stills
- NBN mainland switch on – four minute video
- NBN mainland switch-on animation
- B-roll: interviews with four Armidale NBN home users and NBN home installation
- B-roll: interview with Mike Quigley, CEO, NBN Co
- B-roll: interview with Jim Barber, Vice Chancellor, University of New England
- B-roll: University of New England, health application
- B-roll: NBN construction, NBN Co office and NBN connected school