

Media Release

National Broadband Network to open up regional employment opportunities

NBN Co today announced it is seeking expressions of interest from registered training providers equipped to skill the workers who will build the National Broadband Network.

Training is planned to commence in the second half of 2012 to ensure sufficient workers are in place for the full scale rollout of the network, scheduled to begin in 2014.

The company has already undertaken a comprehensive region-by-region analysis of the supply and demand for construction expertise as well as of industry-recognised training courses to ensure workers are appropriately skilled.

The next step seeks to ensure registered training organisations across the country are equipped to provide the specific qualifications required to roll out high speed broadband to every Australian premise.

According to NBN Co's Head of Corporate Services, Kevin Brown, the skills required for the NBN will range from network engineers to manual labourers, therefore qualifications will vary, but he expressed confidence that a substantial proportion of the total workforce would be sourced locally.

"A key difference between the NBN's job requirements and those created by the mining boom is that the work of NBN Co is dispersed right across the country. It will provide real opportunities for local employment, not least among the 8000 to 9000 semi-skilled workers – some 50 per cent of the total anticipated NBN workforce – who we expect can be trained in a timeframe of fewer than three months.

"For instance, around half the workforce will be labourers, earthmoving plant operators and road traffic controllers who will require safety training, construction industry certification, as well as some additional training on the specific tasks to be performed.

"A further third are likely to be telecommunications lines workers deploying the network in the streets, who may require between four and 24-months training depending on their existing skills, and cabling at the premises who may need between two weeks and 18 months training, depending on their current skills."

Mr Brown also noted that the recent agreement between NBN Co and Telstra has already brought additional clarity to workforce planning activity. For instance, the agreement to lease Telstra's existing infrastructure will reduce overhead rollout and therefore the requirement for highly-skilled electrical linesworkers.

NBN Co recently signed its first construction contract with Silcar, covering NSW/ACT and Queensland. This contract represents around 40 per cent of the construction activity anticipated over the next two years.

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Editors note

Expressions of Interest (EOI) are sought from RTOs who can deliver training courses for eight nominated occupations. These occupations are expected to account for the majority of the workforce required to construct the NBN.

Civil construction

- Labourer (ANZSCO 899999)
- Earth Moving Plant Operator (ANZSCO 721211)
- Road Traffic Controller (ANZSCO 899923)

Fibre network construction

- Telecommunications Linesworker (ANZSCO 342413)
- Cabler (Data and telecommunications) (ANZSCO 342411)
- Cable Jointer (ANZSCO 342412)
- Electrical Linesworker (ANZSCO 342211)

Wireless network construction

- Radiocommunications Technician (ANZSCO 313211)

RTOs that are accredited to provide ICT10 Integrated Telecommunications, RII09 Resources and Infrastructure Industry, UET09 Electricity Supply Industry Transmission, Distribution & Rail Sector or UEE07 Electrotechnology training packages are invited to respond to this EOI.

Submissions must be made by Friday 29 July 2011 using the RTO EOI pro-forma which can be downloaded at www.nbnco.com.au/rtoeoi