# NBN 3.0 from the Alliance for Affordable Broadband

1. We believe that national broadband capability is as important to the 21st century as railways and roadways were to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. We believe the Federal government's primary role is setting policy frameworks that incentivises markets to build this infrastructure. We acknowledge markets fail to deliver universal service, and where they do governments should assist or directly invest.

2. We believe, generally markets are better managers of capital and technology risk than government. We believe in infrastructure based competition - not infrastructure monopolies with retail competition - as the path way to deliver affordable broadband with a great customer experience. We believe in preserving existing infrastructure competition where it is assisting in the delivery of affordable fast broadband today - such as the metropolitan HFC networks - and we oppose stranding or crowding out such infrastructure assets.

3. We believe the argument for a national fibre-only NBN solution has failed to convince. For the short to medium term we see, globally, no demonstrated mass requirement for the "up to 1Gbps" speeds to homes and SOHO. Instead, we see the greatest priority is giving broadband to those who don't have any, not faster broadband to those that have.

4. We believe a competitive National Fibre Backhaul Network (NFBN) platform is critical to the development of broadband in Australia.

5. We believe the case for "100Mbps to Gbps" connectivity to schools, hospitals and businesses is convincing. This is for reasons of both current need and future productivity gains. We believe that further balanced research will support this as well

6. We believe that it is important for government and Industry to create a sustainable, affordable and socially responsible 'fibre future' strategy.

7. We believe that the government still holds or has access to the best telecommunications infrastructure asset in Australia being the spectrum capable of carrying a national ubiquitous 4G network able to deliver up to 100Mb/s to 98% of Australians. We believe this spectrum is a **nationally significant asset.**

8. We believe that next generation 4G technologies are the best fit for purpose for the vast majority of consumers and SOHO clients currently without other broadband delivery options. This technology combined with the spectrum listed in item 7 above is capable of delivering a ubiquitous, integrated national broadband baseline network and is the most affordable deployment technology able to be rapidly deployed throughout Australia within a single term of Government.

9. In short, we believe that a mix of technologies and a market based approach will deliver the best outcome. We believe that an alternative national broadband network, let's call it NBNv3, could look something like this:
    - 4G national wholesale network coverage, to 98% of Australians, at up to 100mbps;
    - Fibre or equivalent high speed broadband for backhaul, school, hospitals, and most businesses, at speeds up to 1Gbps;

- A fibre based solution (whether that be FttP or FttN or combination of both) for areas of demonstrated need via commercial return, or where there is a demonstrated and justifiable improvement in productivity and/or social equality to justify tax-payer contribution
- Satellite for remote areas, at speeds up to 12Mbps.

10. We believe a public/private model should be explored for NBNv3, which, where practical or endeavours to include and recognise the existing investments of competitive fibre and wireless operators, and incentivises markets to solve the problem. For example, in wireless, consider offering the 4G spectrum asset with the obligation to build a national wholesale only 4G network, delivering 100Mbps over say 98% of Australia, and to start and finish within a term of government, with government incentives where the build is uneconomic. Existing 3G operators and spectrum holders are free to continue to exploit their asset, and compete, without the burden of national carrier and universal service obligations, and with the benefit of reach on the national wholesale 4G network. Of course, this is not the only public/private model.

11. We believe that a well-informed Independent member of parliament might wisely favour an NBNv3 public/private model on a mix of technologies, with deliverables within a term, over a more costly and more risky 8+ year NBN 2.0 rollout.

12. The cost of all this? In the US, a privately funded group is building a national 4G wireless network that is wholesale only to meet Obama administration objectives of affordable access for all. The network will cover 93% of 300 million people, over an area roughly the same land mass of Australia. Total cost, $US7 billion (which includes operational costs for first 7 years). In Australia, you might expect to cover 98% of our 22 million people who occupy a much smaller portion of the landmass than is the case in the US for $3 billion or less with a large part of this delivered by private investment. We believe further research should be undertaken on such a proposal.

13. The cost of the government stimulus required to complete an NBNv3 national fibre backhaul and high speed access networks can be delivered for a fraction of the cost of the current NBN proposal.

14. We believe that any substantial investment by the taxpayer for any National Broadband Infrastructure (whether it be NBN 2.0 or the examples above) must be subject to serious investigation and independent cost estimations, cost-benefit analysis, genuine industry and public consultation as well as a review of its impact on the Australian competitive telecommunications landscape.

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