



# Stay safe and connected in times of natural disaster and emergencies

**Sunday 23 October, 2022** - Australians are experiencing more extreme and frequent weather events including bushfires, cyclones, drought and flooding.

As flooding events unfold in eastern and southern Australian states, **nbn**<sup>®</sup> is urging communities to prepare for a potential a loss of **nbn** services during an emergency event and test their residential evacuation and business continuity plans.

“Our network is built and designed to be as resilient as possible,” **nbn** Chief Development Officer Regional and Remote Gavin Williams said.

“Where physical damage is caused by extreme events, we have assets that can be mobilized quickly to help restore **nbn** services as quickly as possible.

“However, the majority of outages on the **nbn** network during emergencies are caused by power outages so it’s important people have a plan to stay connected and updated by other means should power outages happen and disrupt connectivity.”

**nbn** is asking households and businesses to take four simple steps to prepare:

1. **Stay mobile:** Keep a charged mobile phone and portable mobile battery pack ready to use in a power outage, or if your **nbn** connection is disrupted in an emergency event. Turn off mobile data when not needed and unnecessary apps to save battery.
2. **Stay updated:** Local radio is a good source of information during an emergency, so include a battery powered radio in your emergency communications kit. Also follow emergency services, including your state Fire and Rescue and Police Services, as well as utility companies and **nbn** (@NBN\_Australia) on social media for updates.
3. **Back up:** To make sure you can access important information and essential documents from anywhere, including insurance policies and financial documents, consider creating a digital back up on a USB or in the cloud.
4. **Test** residential evacuation and business continuity plans, including considering investing in alternative communication and power options to keep your business or community group operating – these need to be tried and tested regularly as part of your Business Continuity Plans.

Large emergency events the past few years mean **nbn** is as prepared as possible for what the 2022-23 summer season may bring.

Among initiatives to bolster and prepare the network in times of emergency include:

- In late 2021 we boosted its temporary network infrastructure with the addition of 58 new pieces of temporary infrastructure, including Multi Technology Trailers (MTT), Network on Wheels, Wireless Mast Trailers and Hybrid Power Cubes, which will be stationed in different locations across the country for potential deployment when needed during an emergency.
- The \$6 million-worth of new infrastructure, which was partially funded by the Australian Government’s Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters (STAND) package, joins

**nbn's** fleet of Sky Muster® Trucks and portable satellite kits which also help provide communities with connectivity in the aftermath of emergencies.

- Investments in network resiliency - The **nbn** network is resilient and designed to withstand disruption to one part of the network, without affecting the entire network.
- Moving infrastructure – The devastating flooding of Lismore and areas of South East Queensland in 2022 has meant critical infrastructure has been raised (where possible) to prevent flooding damaging the same infrastructure again
- Building back better – Lessons from the Victorian Dandenong Ranges storms of 2021 mean we are better prepared to restore services quicker where infrastructure is damaged through improved and more efficient designs and equipment preparedness and stockpiles.
- Trialling new network connectivity – In Traralgon, Victoria, a trial is presently taking place with a Point-of-Interconnect On Wheels semi-trailer truck at the local exchange. The trailer is designed to keep the **nbn** network, and services running in the event of major power loss or infrastructure damage due to flooding or bushfires.

“Our teams work closely with emergency services and power companies to prepare for a potential disaster and ensure we can repair and restore the network as soon as it is safe to do so,” Mr Williams said.

“Where there has been an outage, we will prioritise reconnecting essential services, such as hospitals, fire, police and emergency services.”

There are also a range of assets that can be deployed to emergency evacuation centres and other community hubs to provide temporary access to voice and broadband services.

These include mobile satellite trucks, and satellite ‘fly-away’ kits that are easily moved and setup to where the need is greatest. Temporary emergency management solutions are only available for deployment in emergency situations and can be requested by emergency services via the state/territory emergency management processes.

“We know how important access to broadband services are for homes and businesses across Australia,” Mr Williams said.

“Now is the time to begin planning and be prepared for what could happen.”

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#### NOTES TO EDITORS

- On social media, the [@NBN Australia](#) provides the most up-to-date information and advice concerning network outages and restoration as they occur.
- We have a range of localised spokespeople available for updates. For requests, and to ensure it is captured by anyone on-call out of hours, email [media@nbnco.com.au](mailto:media@nbnco.com.au)
- **nbn** is not responsible for the operation of mobile networks. If you have questions concerning mobile network connectivity and outages (including restoration) you will need to speak with the telco operators themselves (Telstra, Optus, Vodafone).
- The majority of outages on the nbn network during emergencies are caused by power outages.
- Equipment connected via the nbn network will not work during a power outage. If the network is not working due to a loss of power this does not automatically mean the network itself is damaged
- **nbn** has a number of generators on standby to support connectivity to critical infrastructure and services in areas where power outages occur. These are deployed in emergency situations where it is safe to do so, and in co-ordination with emergency services and authorities where need is greatest.
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