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MEDIA RELEASE

Digital Champions help empower remote First Nations communities

- 15 remote First Nations communities in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland are the first of 23 to benefit from the expansion of nbn's Community-Wide Wi-Fi program.
- The Federal Government initiative aims to provide (via a retail provider or providers) free nbn® broadband across public spaces in the communities, helping to enable access to essential online services, such as telehealth, MyGov, online education and mentoring services.
- A pivotal element is the creation of Digital Champions – community members who can help the community with some technical troubleshooting of the Wi-Fi service and help other community members get online and improve their digital skills.

nbn is proud to support the successful activation of public space Community Wi-Fi in remote First Nations communities in support of nbn's commitment to connecting communities and increasing digital inclusion for First Nations people.

The expansion marks a step forward in helping to bring affordable internet access to remote First Nations communities across Australia, with another four communities due to be activated by the end of the year.

Communities activated as at end-November 2024:

- **Northern Territory:** Gan Gan and Wandawuy
- **Western Australia:** Loanbun, Kurangjo, Mindi Rardi, Bungtardi, DarlNgunaya, Burawa and Junjuwa
- **South Australia:** Pipalyatjara, Kaltjiti, Amata, Pukatja and Mimli
- **Queensland:** Pormpuraaw

These services are free to use for community members. They use meshed Wi-Fi systems to make internet available across public spaces and in some community buildings, helping to enable greater



access to support services, education, health services, entertainment, and keeping in touch with family and friends.

Gavin Williams, Chief Development Officer – Regional and Remote at nbn, said:

“We are proud to have successfully activated the first 15 of 23 remote communities that we expect will benefit from the expansion of our Community-Wide Wi-Fi program.

“Driving digital inclusion requires us to address four key areas of awareness and education, connectivity, digital ability, and affordability.

“The program helps address all four of these areas by allowing more people equitable access to the opportunities that come with connectivity as well as the support required to make the most of it.

“This program is only possible through continued collaboration with communities, and a key part of the process is co-design with community leaders. We hope that this allows more First Nations people to experience firsthand the social and economic benefits that come with greater access to crucial online services.

“We look forward to continuing this journey and connecting more communities before the end of the year.”

Che Cockatoo-Collins, Executive Manager Indigenous Affairs at nbn, said:

“Beyond connectivity and essential services, we’re hearing positive feedback from these communities as Digital Champion roles are being established to help others in their community, as well as general technical troubleshooting of the services.

“These local community members are acting as digital ambassadors to empower their entire communities to get online and enhance the digital skills of themselves and the people around them.

“The dedication and enthusiasm of these Champions is already making a major difference to fostering a more connected and inclusive future.”

ENDS



Notes to Editors

- nbn currently has community Wi-Fi solutions in more than 100 remote First Nations communities across Australia.
- The expansion of nbn’s Community-Wide Wi-Fi services follows a successful pilot program running since 2022 in Aurukun (QLD), Koonibba (SA), Indulkana (SA), and Warakurna (WA).
- The program is an important part of nbn’s role in addressing priority reforms including Closing the Gap Target 17 – achieving equal levels of digital inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by 2026.

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