

**Address by Anna Perrin
NBN Co Chief Customer Officer**

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Thank you and good morning everyone.

It's great to be back on Wurundjeri land and I want to start by paying my respects to elders, past and present.

As ever, it's wonderful to see so many friendly, familiar faces here today.

This is always a great event - and a huge thank you to Grahame and the whole CommsDay team for bringing us together again.

As the last few weeks have shown us, there's nothing simple or easy or straightforward about what we do as an industry - which I think is a big part of why so many of us love telco.

Though it can sometimes feel like our challenges get bigger and bigger every year.

And in recent weeks, we have of course seen that play out.

What we do is difficult, has many challenges and it's absolutely vital.

We offer critical services to the consumers and businesses we serve across the nation and the significance of that role has never been more important, or relied upon.

So today, I wanted to share insights from what I consider to be a landmark moment that launched on September 14, which feels like an age ago in telco years, but was only a few weeks ago, where industry came together in a remarkable way, to launch what we called Accelerate Great.

The biggest speed upgrade in nbn's history, and I would argue also the biggest in Australia's broadband history.

[Scene set: Accelerating Great – a moon shot]

Before I do that though, I wanted to quickly go back one step.

I've been working in Australian telco world for well over 15 years.

And I'm really proud to be part of this remarkable industry.

During my time there have been some really big moments.

There are many, but I think a couple really stand out:

The 3G launch.



The 4G launch.

The 5G launch.

And of course, the broadband evolution of our nation.

I remember one of my first days at Alcatel we were talking about IPTV, which was really the precursor to all of the streaming services.

I remember somebody saying that one day we'd be able to watch all of the TV shows that I used to watch when I lived in the UK.

Watch *whatever* we wanted *whenever* we wanted.

The idea of being able to watch content from my home in the UK was super appealing, but seemed like a bold idea at the time.

At the time you couldn't imagine that would be possible - now of course it's part of the way we live.

Also important has been the innovation in copper and now fibre technologies in the fixed space.

And of course satellite, where change has been, literally out of this world!

I've been so fortunate to have seen so many incredible changes.

But as I already noted, the one moment stands out as the most significant, certainly in my career, was – the launch of **Accelerate Great** just over a month ago.

I would argue Accelerate Great is the biggest single biggest change this industry has ever tried to do in one moment – it felt like a genuine moon shot.

Why?

Because, in a single point in time both nbn and the well over 100 different retailer service providers have delivered an extraordinary change; a change that will benefit Australian homes and businesses for years to come.

The changes that retail service providers, or RSPs, have had to complete to bring Accelerate Great to life have been incredible in their scope and scale.

From network capacity, configuration and backhaul...

To updated marketing.

From IT, billing and order management system changes...

To the introduction of new operational processes and training.

From the rollout of new next-gen routers and customer base communications...

To what often amounted to a fundamental review of organisational strategies.



And all of this was different to what was originally envisaged.

Our initial plan had speed upgrades, but the feedback from industry made the ultimate offering far richer.

That feedback meant we also brought a 2 Gigabit speed to the ‘home’ market, the fastest ever residential plan, along with better assurance and improved business plans.

Plus there was the support needed to integrate two new Fibre NTDs, nbn’s first significant change to these devices in 14 years.

And then there were the profound changes within nbn itself to make Accelerate Great possible.

And that’s where I want to focus my remarks today.

I want to give you a sense of what was required behind the scenes to bring Accelerate Great to life.

It was a massive, multi-faceted program of work – and the fact that it all went down essentially without a hitch is a testament to care built into the process and the professionalism of this industry.

Our retail provider partners – including many of you here today – have already helped ensure over 2 million Australians can benefit from the faster speeds by integrating the changes into your retail systems so quickly.

We recognise what the delivery of these changes has meant to your businesses over the last 12 months, and we’re continuing to work closely with your teams to support the ongoing effort.

In the weeks and months ahead, NBN will continue our efforts to raise awareness and educate homes and businesses about the benefits of the accelerated speeds and the importance of in-home set up.

And our retail provider partners will continue to take the message and opportunity out to their customers.

Before I do any of that though, and on behalf of everyone at nbn, I want to say a huge **thank you**.

Thank you to our retail partners, to our suppliers and to the various teams that were involved in this important activity.

[Accelerating Great]

And while many of you were directly involved but, for those who weren’t, let me give you a brief summary of what Accelerate Great is, and why it matters.

On Sunday, September 14 – nbn boosted wholesale speeds and capability on high-speed plans across FTTP and HFC networks. There are nearly 10M homes and businesses eligible for these speed boosts.



At the highest level, this was about helping unlock Australia's potential for growth, productivity, and digital inclusion.

It was about empowering homes and businesses to stay ahead of growing data demands and embracing the technologies of tomorrow.

On one of our most popular plans, for example, we boosted wholesale download speeds by 5 times, taking the 100Mbps to 500Mbps download.

Drilling down a little further, **we also introduced** new residential multi-gig plans.

We expanded the 250mbps business plan into the HFC footprint for the first time.

We launched two new next-gen NTDs to help prepare for Australia's multi-gig future.

And we released throughput test capability to help better assure a high-speed customer experience for FTTP.

Many of our retailer partners have already rolled out these changes to customers.

And Australians have responded by upgrading their plans, by enthusiastically embracing residential multi-gigabit speeds and by ordering new fibre services in record numbers. More on the results so far later.

While the launch headlines focused on speed and capability, I wanted to really mark and celebrate the moment by sharing what it actually took to make this happen.

[A Peek Behind the Curtain: The Longest Day]

Because as many of you know, rolling out a program like Accelerate Great isn't as simple as flipping a switch.

It's the culmination of months - of careful planning, testing, and collaboration across every corner of our organisation.

The final deployment took place in a tightly controlled window: from 9:00pm on Saturday 13 September to 10:00am the following morning.

In just 13 hours, we brought to life a suite of enhancements that will shape the future of connectivity in Australia.

To give you a sense of the scale of the planning, our teams prepared 49 different contingency scenarios – from plain sailing to near-on network failure scenarios – so we were ready for any eventuality.

That's the level of diligence and foresight that underpinned this launch.

Then on the night of launch the network uplift began with status updates to our retail service providers from 9:30 pm and then continued through the night.



By 3:30am Sunday morning, our aggregation network changes were complete.

And at 10:13am Sunday morning, we gave the green light for the ordering of the new multi-gig plans and expanded business offerings.

It's important to remember that it was a night powered not just by systems and protocols, but by people.

Teams across nbn and our partners worked through the night with precision, commitment and care. There were some emotional people during the night, not from tiredness, but pride in what we were collectively implementing.

All of this was supported by a live Hypercare Response Room that ran throughout the night, with experts on call to support RSP's and internal teams in real time.

No one was left waiting.

No issue was left unresolved.

Everyone was aligned and informed.

On the IT side, our strategy was simple: mitigate risks early.

We had also trialled, planned and tested several parts of Accelerate Great deployment in partnership with industry in the lead up to September 14.

The first trial was a speed increase trial which allowed RSPs to introduce a speed uplift on some of their own services.

This helped RSPs understand how we would implement the changes, as well as impacts on their own networks.

The trial was open for 12 months, with 13 RSPs participating and speed increases put in place across 81 services, with zero incidents.

We set out to prove that higher speed tiers could be delivered reliably across RSPs, across nominated tech types, and across service profiles – and we did!

The second trial, also successful, was of our new speed tiers - 2 Gbps and 250 down and 100 up on HFC - and new Fibre NTDs.

This involved 20 RSPs with testing across 130 locations - a record for nbn.

What undoubtably made the trial successful was the collaboration with RSPs and there were really three broad aspects to that:

Firstly, real time feedback on results and performance. This helped us to understand issues and triage together to find solutions.



This went beyond just how the test services operated to real customer insights to support nbn's in-premises optimisation program.

Secondly, close and open collaboration.

This included RSPs sharing speed test results captured directly from within customers' homes to help us understand the end customer performance ahead of time.

And thirdly, the identification of a range of improvements to our processes to improve customer experience, the testing of fixes, and the refinement and updating required to our business process documentation.

The collaboration in this trial also extended to the suppliers of our new Fibre NTDs in Nokia and Sercomm and even our existing HFC NTD supplier Vantiva.

All variants of our new NTDs were tested with RSPs for connecting, adding and replacing.

RSPs could also test interoperability with their own devices.

So, the final cut over on September 14 wasn't our first rodeo!

We'd already completed 28 successful deployments in the lead-up.

The deployment on September 14 was our 29th – and our most ambitious yet.

We also ran scheduled decision checkpoints throughout the night.

Each step was governed by health checks, executive oversight, and a clear “only if ready” protocol.

If something wasn't green, we paused, we fixed it, and only then did we move forward.

The result?

A smooth transition.

No – or virtually no – anxious moments!

And I think you are hearing, Accelerate Great represents an extraordinary, nbn-wide and industry-wide effort.

The scale is amazing:

More than 3,000 network changes over more than 100 nights.

29 major IT deployments over 12 months.

More than 2,500 field workforce technicians trained in the installation of four new NTDs.

More than 50,000 NTDs pre-stocked into technician vehicles to mitigate the risk of shortfall.

16 RSP trial agreements executed, and 62 pre-launch issues identified and resolved.

147 firmware builds on the new NTDs.



More than 900 members of our Operations team trained in revised products and processes to be ready for launch.

Again, an extraordinary level of activity and fantastic result.

[A fantastic industry response]

I want to turn now to perhaps the biggest question of all when it comes to Accelerating Great: how has the market responded in the month since launch?

In a word: brilliantly.

Let me share some of the latest datapoints:

69% of our service orders are now coming through on Higher Speed Tiers, with more than 6000 multi-gig orders received in the 4 weeks post launch.

Demand for Business Fibre has been incredibly strong and we now have more than 80k services on Business Fibre. In Sept alone we saw 29k customers adopt a Business Fibre plan.

37% of our subscriber base is now on 100Mbps and above;

Our Fibre Connect program saw record service orders for the month of September – 51,800 orders - with strong momentum across all channels;

And early Tuesday morning this week we crossed the 1M service orders for Fibre Connect, a huge milestone. And so important given fibre is faster, more resilient to weather, more reliable and power efficient.

All up, it's a phenomenal response – and one that confirms the market is not just ready for faster fibre, but is racing toward it.

[Some key learnings]

This is a largely industry audience, so I wanted to share a few of the key learnings from the roll out.

Firstly, doing it in one controlled window meant less disruption and fewer moving parts later. Also, the pre-launch trials and testing was essential.

This was all about reducing risk.

Secondly, we had real time support in place in case anything wobbled.

As I mentioned earlier, our Hypercare Response Room ran through the night so no one was left waiting. Those teams didn't miss a trick.

And thirdly, we had a very clear idea of what success needed to look like.

Above all of that I would say one thing was more critical than anything else: collaboration.



It was amazing the way the industry all lent in on everything from launch timing to customer education, assurance, to the inclusion of new hyper fast and business tiers.

The consultation, the mutual respect and the shared determination to deliver something special was truly amazing - and again I want to offer a huge thank you for it.

In the end, it wasn't just the technology that made it work - it was the trust, teamwork and shared ambition across the industry.

[Celebrating the moment but thinking about what's next]

This is a moment to savour and celebrate.

A huge and historic moment for nbn.

For our retail partners.

For our customers.

And importantly, for our country.

And that's important because in the last century, nations built prosperity with factories, freeways and power stations.

Today, it's more often fibre, spectrum and cloud.

Bandwidth is the new backbone of economic strength and connectivity has become the defining infrastructure of our age.

It shapes how we work, learn, trade, care and grow. It determines which businesses thrive, which regions prosper, and which nations succeed.

Today, more than 20 million Australians rely on the nbn network every day.

It now carries around 80 per cent of the nation's data traffic, making it one of the most widely used and essential platforms in our economy.

Australians are spending an average of 6.5 hours online daily - up from just 90 minutes a little over a decade ago - whether working, studying, running businesses, or staying connected with family and friends.

This shows just how central digital connectivity has become to modern life.

Accelerate Great is not just an engineering achievement.

It is an investment in Australia's competitiveness.

Productivity growth is central to our prosperity.

It underpins higher incomes, stronger public budgets and the services Australians rely on - from aged care and childcare to health, education and defence.



Economists often call productivity the engine of our living standards, and with good reason.

When productivity rises, opportunities expand.

When it slows, our capacity to grow and invest narrows.

That is why the drivers of productivity - including digital infrastructure and network speed - matter so much to the nation's future.

So high-speed broadband is not a utility – it's a platform for transformation.

An enabler of AI, of cloud computing, of advanced manufacturing, virtual health and digital education.

It's what allows a small business in Perth to sell to the world, or a student in regional Queensland to participate in a digital classroom.

Faster broadband alone will not deliver productivity growth. But without it, growth stalls. It clears the runway for innovation.

With Accelerate Great, we are building that runway and the next chapter of Australia's digital economy.

By the end of 2025, more than 10 million premises - including 2.6 million across regional Australia - will have access to faster speeds.

And as we continue work to migrate more and more premises off legacy copper to more capable and high-capacity technologies – predominately fibre – this will grow to around 11 million premises nationally.

Consumer research shows Australians are ready.

Seven in ten fixed-line customers (69%) say they are looking forward to faster speeds.

Three in five (62%) expect they will need them within the next 12 months, and a similar number (59%) believe faster broadband will improve their home experience -from streaming and home offices to digital education and health, and the growing number of connected devices.

So, the message is clear: demand for faster, more reliable broadband is rising across households and businesses alike.

Accelerate Great is about creating headroom for what comes next.

A decade ago, the typical household had two or three connected devices.

Today, it has 25. By the end of the decade, predictions are it will be 44.

From smart TVs to security systems, fitness trackers to fridges, baby monitors to Bluetooth speakers - connectivity is creeping into every corner of the home.



In fact one of the biggest changes to home broadband needs has been electric cars connecting to Wi-Fi to download the latest software updates overnight.

And it's not just the home, businesses are under even more pressure - running cloud platforms, real-time collaboration tools, digital payments and data-heavy applications that all demand speed and reliability.

Accenture research commissioned by nbn estimates that the nbn network has already delivered \$122 billion in economic value and supported more than 160,000 jobs since 2012. With this next wave of upgrades, the opportunity is even greater.

We have built the network.

Now is the time to use it to power something bigger - an engine for productivity, a catalyst for innovation, a platform for inclusive growth.

And above all, a foundation that empowers Australians everywhere.

Together, we've built the foundation. Now let's use it to power something extraordinary - a brilliant, connected future for every Australian.

[Conclusion - committed to collaboration]

I want to finish by reflecting on the journey we have been on with Accelerate Great.

I remember stepping onto this stage when I first joined nbn in early 2023, where I talked about the need for nbn to better partner and collaborate with industry.

I said that it mattered to me and it mattered to nbn, and that we were committed to change.

We knew that if we could better partner, better collaborate and better listen, we could ultimately improve the service we provide to Consumers and Businesses across Australia. And that is what Accelerate Great has done.

We spent six months really listening, talking and working together with industry to reach an outcome that would be a win for nbn, a win for retailers and – most importantly – a win for customers we serve.

And we've empowered Australia to leap into a new era of connectivity.

We're getting better – much better - at listening to each other's needs and working together.

This is what “brilliant” really looks like: an industry giving its best and delivering great outcomes for Australia.

I feel lucky to lead such a fantastic crew at nbn, to be part of an organisation that's not afraid to break new ground and to be part of an industry that is not afraid to try to land a moon shot.

The good news is we're just getting started.



We know there are plenty more opportunities and challenges ahead of us, and I have no doubt that we will tackle them head-on!

Thanks again to Commsday - for the privilege of being able to speak here today; for bringing us all together, to continue our collaboration; and for your ongoing interest and engagement in our sector.

And thank you to all of you, our industry partners.

I look forward to continuing to work with you all as we build a connected Australia, where no one is held back, no one is left behind and Australians can make the most of a brilliant, connected future.

Thank you.

<ends>

