Some notes and points after losing NBN (Tuesday 13/2/2024)

Note: There are quite a few assumptions in the below, they are based on my experience (during this and previous outages)

1. NBN is often exclusive wholesaler, so telco's attempting to use any other wholesale supplier for their backhaul will be either impossible, or very expensive.

2. The Fire station is quite close to the NBN box, and has a large generator on site. I assume Optus/Vodafone probably helped fund the generator, and have access to it. Why does NBN not, does it need to be an essential service to access it (which it should have whether it wants to be or not), or is it too cheap to pay for its share, (or bit of both)

3. While NBN was down, the phone towers at the Firestation were also down, (presumably because they had no backhaul)

4. I live within 100M of the firestation and normally can't get <5 bars from the Optus tower, but during the outage, it simply wasn't running. And the Optus tower I could connect too was not responsive. (Probably overloaded to the max)

5. My main phone is on a low priority Telstra MVNO (Aldi), I was able to connect to a tower, (and at 5AM actually get internet), but for the rest of the time, SMS's seemed to get through but it often took 20 Minutes, not much luck with anything else. I assume the tower I was connected too had some basic backup (wireless) link to the rest of the network, and was also way overloaded.

6. One positive, I drove to Hallam and Mobile was fine there.

7. Prior to NBN being back, power had been restored to Belgrave South, the Shops were open, but Cash only as the eftpos terminals were down. Cash hopefully isn't going anywhere, events like this make you realise part of the reason why you might need it.

8. When the NBN came back, it took a little while, but everything started working again.

9. During last outage (and possibly this time too), there was an NBN box in Cockatoo that had a generator attached/chained to it with the locals keeping it fuelled up. If it isn't already, this should be a thing, they should have some accessibility (probably to the local emergency services), so we have some recourse if the mains power is down for any extended time, and be able to do things to help ourselves.

10. If there is a bush fire what happens to the NBN boxes?
    Could we tip a truck of topsoil/sand?? on the boxes, prior to evacuating/ fire fighting. So when we get back hopefully NBN can be restored with a bit of digging. (I assume the box will overheat and shutdown when covered) Will topsoil/sand stop them being destroyed? Other options?
    Some sort of testing could be carried out and a procedure to minimise the outage after a major fire could be defined.

Some thoughts
- Data is the new base layer.
- Everything is put on top of data, so it needs to be the thing that **HAS** to work.
- I have 3 connection options with the hope that I would be fine in the event of an outage. (2 * Mobile carriers, 1 * NBN Provider) However when NBN went down, all 3 became either unusable, or near as.
- NBN is the required wholesaler for pretty much everything and needs to be better, more resilient.
- NBN not being connected to a generator less than 30M away, and causing an entire town to have very limited communications because of a power outage seems irresponsible.

- Perhaps into NBN put one or more older (65+) ex (or current) farmers, and team them with some very young people. Old farmers seem to know how to make and get things fixed/working.
- Perhaps dodgy, but a working dodgy NBN is a a lot better than a not working NBN, waiting a week for a tech to arrive to fix it properly.
- Hopefully together they can map out strategies for making NBN more resilient inexpensively (with local community/people assistance).

- Perhaps some basic changeover/upgrade training for regional communities. perhaps in small groups. Young lads do the changeover, older person provides stability, ensures all boxes are ticked.
- Being in a position to help ourselves and have some basic make it work capability, should be available.