

Regional Telecommunication Review

I have lived in the Middle Dural area, on Sydney's NW outskirts, for 8 years. When we moved here, we expected the NBN to be available to us within about 2 years. However, the installation date has progressively shifted back. To date we are still at least 6 months away from getting the NBN. There was a lot of work installing the service in the first half of this year and the NBN rollout map showed that our service would finally be connected by the end of June 2021. 3 days before the end of June, the NBN changed the completion date to the December 2021 and shortly after that was amended to the end of January 2022. Their map colour indicates however that the build is completed. This is a complete joke. The NBN must have known well prior to the end of June that it was not possible to connect us.

My premises are about 11km from the Dural Telephone Exchange and I am lucky to get a 1Mb per second download and 0.2Mb per second upload speed via ADSL. This is insufficient to run any of the streaming services that are taken for granted by most people today.

To add insult to injury, for most of June this year, my ADSL service was inoperable. While we are locked down in Covid, I am trying to run a business from home, my son has had to complete his HSC without decent internet and is now doing his tertiary studies, unable to livestream lectures that he needs to attend.

Without an ADSL service we are forced to use our mobile data. However, the mobile signal strength is so poor, that we need to have a directional antenna on our roof connected to a booster pad in one room of our residence. As we are unable to walk around the house with our mobiles, we Bluetooth our mobiles to our cordless remote landline system instead. This allows us to walk around our house with the cordless remote. We are Telstra customers. Optus and Vodafone, provide a still worse service. While we can receive mobile calls via this convoluted method, we are barely able to hotspot our laptops when the internet is down.

Our residence is surrounded by bush. With the increasing reliance on emergency service alerts being broadcast via SMS, I fear that we will not receive important messages. Often, we don't realise a message has been received until we visit our mobiles on the booster pad.

In this day and age, it is unbelievable to think that we live in Australia's most populated city and have such poor internet and mobile reception. There has to be a better solution.