

I have tried many times to get resolutions to ongoing NBN problems here in Eureka NSW, and grew tired of all the hoops I had to jump through without anything changing. I have done it all - lodged issues with my provider TPG only to be put through weeks of nightly calls from overseas call centre staff who would make me reboot the modem and run speed test after test, which kept showing ridiculously slow speeds < 1mb/sec despite all the hours of rebooting (as if that alone was ever going to fix anything). I have complained to the Telecommunications Ombudsman and local politicians detailing that the Australian Senate (years ago) had identified a list of the NBN Fixed wireless towers with the worst performance in Australia and despite Eureka being on the list, nothing was happening.

My complaint to the Ombudsman included that it should be illegal for providers to charge for a service that they know they cannot provide eg. where they are aware the tower (Eureka) doesn't have the capacity to service the customers connected to it. I saw in the media recently the ACCC are now taking this point up. But for us in Eureka this has been the reality for years.

The problem is the providers pass the issues off saying it is related to NBN and they have to wait for infrastructure improvements. But we are still being charged for the full service plus the costs of streaming services we can't use. Now with COVID lockdowns my wife is trying to work from home and can't get reliable service and my daughter is homeschooling for the HSC and last night couldn't get onto the ZOOM meeting from her school telling the kids about what was happening with their HSC exams. I've had it.

The providers send you crazy by fobbing you off to overseas call centre staff and waste hours of your available after work / family time when they don't do anything and know they can't do anything, and NBN hides away and you can't get through to them to even lodge a complaint. And we are charged for it all.

We have had rubbish internet for weeks now (rubbish in the daytime and nothing at all some nights) and yet when you go to NBN they say no outage in my area (rubbish - I've checked with neighbours and nothing is working). And everytime they come to do "scheduled maintenance" nothing works afterwards and you can't get any response from anyone except to try and reboot the modem.

It wouldn't be so bad if it was only occasionally but the problems go on and on and it's not like we can just use a phone to hotspot wifi because the signal at Eureka won't let us do that either.

When it works properly it can be good, but there are just so many times when it doesn't work properly.

1. There must be accountability taken by NBN. They need to be responsible and refund charges if the service is not up to a benchmark standard.
2. NBN providers need to provide service guarantees (none of this 'night time peak speeds may differ to the plan speed'), and they need to be penalised financially if not providing minimum levels of service - they in turn should be able to recover those costs from NBN if it is NBN's problem.

3. When conducting maintenance - the service needs to be restored properly when they finish each day or at the end of the maintenance period. We get messages that there will be a planned outage for a few hours on a day and then the service doesn't work afterwards
4. It may be time to add additional towers or move away completely from the fixed mobile model in our area and upgrade us to fibre. The Byron hinterland has quite a high number of users for a regional area because of the large number of closely located villages. It is not good enough to always be running out of bandwidth as more people come on at the same time each night.
5. Another issue I gave up on was Telstra tied up the phone numbers at the local country exchanges meaning unless I gave up my home phone number that I'd been using for 20 years, I couldn't use my preferred provider (Internode). I think this should be illegal too.

Regards
Peter Geary