



Telcos services stumble as flood peaks

Darren Pauli, ZDNet.com.au on January 13th, 2011 (6 days ago)

The peak of the Brisbane floods early this morning may have failed to break the 1974 record levels, but it did break telecommunications services for some major carriers.



(Candles image by Lars Christopher Nøttaasen, CC2.0)

Vodafone lost mobile services to the entire state at about 6pm last night. The blackout lasted about an hour while the waters played havoc with infrastructure connecting Queensland to New South Wales.

"... due to adverse weather and flooding in Queensland, services for Vodafone customers in the state are temporarily unavailable due to a disruption to transmission services between NSW and Queensland," Vodafone said. The telco sought an alternate service route and services were restored.

Fibre backbone provider Nextgen Networks lost connectivity for about two hours between NSW and Queensland after its main link suffered an electrical fault about 100 kilometres north of Newcastle, NSW. Its secondary main link was damaged on Tuesday.

"We currently have an outage on the alternate main cable between Brisbane and Sydney. We are also working with other carriers to organise emergency wavelength swaps, where possible, for additional 'industry-wide' redundancy," the carrier wrote in a network update (PDF).

"The [severed] cable is underwater and expected to be out of service for several days, flood water depending."

It wrote that its Controlled Environment Vaults, or the electronic regeneration sites for its interstate routes, are likely safe from flooding and have enough battery power to last at least two days.

Internode customers in Queensland were subsequently cut off before the carrier failed over to a degraded service on the Optus network until Nextgen came back online.

"Unfortunately, the worst-case scenario has been realised. The remaining inter-capital path has been severed ... In the short term all Internode services in Qld will be unable to reach any domestic or international destinations," the company wrote in an update.

Internode is now monitoring for outages at its points of presence, but praised Nextgen Networks for its readiness and ability to

quickly fix the serious fault. Users on broadband forum Whirlpool also praised the carrier's recovery work.

AAPT was hit with outages on a number of fibre links between NSW and Queensland on Monday. The carrier worked to provide redundant solutions for many routes, but yesterday didn't know when affected areas would return to normal service.

Some of its Queensland co-location sites were also under threat, so AAPT started removing its equipment from those sites. The central office site housing customer infrastructure, however, was under no threat of flooding.

Optus and Telstra have also been struggling with fixed and mobile networks towers affected by the floods.

URL:<http://www.zdnet.com.au/telcos-services-stumble-as-flood-peaks-339308550.htm>