



# National Broadband Network

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## Nextgen wins \$250m regional backbone deal

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04 December 2009 01:34 PM

Tags: blackspots, conroy, leighton, nbn, nextgen, optus, regional, backbone

**Leighton subsidiary Nextgen Networks has pipped Optus for the \$250 million deal to roll-out 6000 kilometres of backbone links to regional Australia.**



Conroy's regional fibre plan  
(Credit: DBCDE)

The construction giant's boss Wal King and Communications Minister Stephen Conroy today signed the deal at Leighton's Sydney offices.

"We will be working as hard as possible with communities for the least disruptions, but we will build it as quickly as we possibly can," King said today at the media briefing.

The six destinations of the network are Geraldton, Western Australia; Darwin, Northern Territory; Emerald and Longreach, Queensland; Broken Hill, New South Wales; Victor Harbor, South Australia; and South West Gippsland, Victoria. Conroy said the links would pass 100 regional towns.

Work is expected to commence immediately with the backbone links expected to be completed within 18 months.

Conroy said that the network's construction would create around 1000 jobs and took the opportunity to take a jibe at new opposition leader Tony Abbott.

"Tony Abbott is opposing 1000 direct jobs created by this project. He's opposing cheaper broadband to 395,000 regional Australians in 100 regional locations. And he's stopping price competition, which according to Western Australian government, where there is no competition for existing infrastructure, prices are between 250 and 700 per cent higher because there is no competition to these regional centres."

The Department of Broadband Communications and the Digital Economy has published maps [here](#).

Telstra had [advised against the plan in a submission](#) to the government earlier this year.

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