Best Effort.

The weekday briefing on Australian telecommunications, data centres and AI infrastructure.

TODAY'S BRIEFING

Tuesday 3 November 2026

- Aussie Broadband agreed to buy AGL Energy's telecom business for an upfront A$115 million in its own shares, and its stock reached A$5.43 in early trade on Monday 2 November 2026.
- Data-centre siting is tightening: Victoria has issued new rules and South Australia is drafting legislation.
- Communications minister Anika Wells accepted the operators' voluntary disaster roaming arrangements for the 2026-27 season, so no mandatory framework applies.

13 stories · **20 min** reading · **24** sources · Online at besteffort.au/editions/2026-11-03

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Aussie Broadband jumps as much as 19.9% on deal to buy AGL's telecom business

Aussie Broadband shares hit A$5.43 in early trade on Monday 2 November 2026 after it agreed to buy AGL Energy's telecom business, with an upfront payment of A$115 million in ABB shares.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Jefferies' view is that the deal, together with last year's More acquisition, lifts Aussie Broadband to third place among NBN service providers, which points to further consolidation among retail providers on the network.

Aussie Broadband shares rose as much as 19.9 per cent to A$5.43 in early trade on Monday 2 November 2026, after the company agreed to buy the telecom business of power producer AGL Energy. It was the stock's biggest gain since late August 2025 and took it to its highest level since 18 November. Aussie Broadband was among the top gainers on the broader ASX benchmark, which was up 1.6 per cent.

The consideration includes an upfront payment of A$115 million in Aussie Broadband shares.

Jefferies called the deal "highly attractive", pointing to appealing customer acquisition costs and a strong growth pipeline through AGL's bundled offering. The broker said that, combined with last year's More deal, the acquisition cements Aussie Broadband as a leading wholesale broadband provider and the third-largest NBN service provider in Australia.

Despite the jump, Aussie Broadband shares were up 1.6 per cent for the year to date, against a 3.4 per cent rise for the benchmark.

REPORTING FROM

1 **stockopedia.com** · AGL ENERGY | Aussie Broadband surges on 'highly attractive' AGL telecom deal

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

DATA CENTRES 2 OF 13

Microsoft's Australian data centre arm books $326m profit after prior-year loss

Microsoft Datacentre (Australia) Pty Limited made a $326 million profit in the year to 30 June 2026, compared with a $5.6 million loss a year earlier, as AI demand lifted returns on its local spending.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The accounts show a hyperscaler's local data centre business in profit while still in a heavy investment phase, which bears on how the build-out is judged alongside open questions on power, water and tax.

The Microsoft entity that runs its Australian data centres made a profit of $326 million in the year to 30 June 2026, after losing $5.6 million the year before. Microsoft Datacentre (Australia) Pty Limited oversees the company's expanding local facilities.

The profit arrives while Microsoft pays for new buildings, servers and related infrastructure. The company has pledged $25 billion over three years to lift its Australian data centre and AI capacity, a commitment the report calls the biggest by any global technology company in the country. An earlier $5 billion investment had already added sites and raised national capacity.

The report attributed the earlier loss to infrastructure and power costs rising faster than revenue during a fast expansion. It said those pressures appear to have eased as AI workloads improve utilisation and pricing power, and that the result reflects rising demand for cloud and AI computing.

Globally, Microsoft has been putting tens of billions of dollars into property, equipment and chips each quarter to support growth in its Azure cloud. The report said the Australian result suggests some of that spending is starting to show clearer financial returns in a key regional market.

The report noted that the profit does not resolve the wider debate in Australia about the energy, planning and tax effects of large data centre builds. Questions about future power demand, water use and the tax actually paid by foreign-owned operators remain open.

REPORTING FROM

1 **bbrw.com** · Microsoft's Australian data centres swing to $326m profit on AI investment boom

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 3 OF 13

Zip opens ZMobile prepaid plans to all Australians, from $9 a month

Zip Co has opened its TPG Telecom-hosted prepaid service ZMobile to anyone via its website, with launch pricing from $9 a month for six months.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 3 sources · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The launch adds another prepaid brand running on TPG Telecom's network, pitched at price-sensitive customers through a financial services company's own channel.

Zip Co (ASX: ZIP) said on Monday 2 November 2026 that ZMobile, its mobile offering, can now be bought by any Australian on the Zip website. People do not need to be existing Zip customers to join.

The service is prepaid and uses TPG Telecom's 4G and 5G network. All plans carry unlimited national talk and text, rollover of up to 500GB of data and no lock-in contract, plus global roaming and international calling.

New customers can pick from three plans that are discounted for their first six months. The 20GB plan is $9 a month before moving to $24, and it is limited to the 4G network. The 45GB plan starts at $15 and then rises to $38, while the 100GB plan starts at $29 and then rises to $66. Those two larger plans run on 4G and 5G and cover standard calls and SMS to 25 countries.

Subscribers can bring their current number across, activate an eSIM and run their account from the Zip website.

Peter Gray, Zip's co-founder and Head of Strategic Growth, linked the launch to Australians trying to hold down everyday spending amid high living costs. Gray said, "Mobile connectivity is critical to how people manage life, work and money, and remains an essential cost that many households are looking to control". He called the nationwide rollout a next step in Zip's strategy of giving people more choices.

TPG Telecom owns and operates the Vodafone mobile network and also runs brands including TPG, iiNet, Internode, Lebara and felix. Zip also offers the Zip Pay, Zip Plus and Zip Money credit accounts and the Zip Personal Loan in Australia.

REPORTING FROM

1 **iTWire** · Zip to launch ZMobile to all Australians
2 **Fintech News Australia** · Zip ZMobile Opens to All Australians with Introductory A$9 Plan
3 **MarketScreener Australia** · Zip Launches Mobile Connectivity Product in Australia

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

DATA CENTRES 4 OF 13

Energy North drops 2028 start for 1 GW Project Ares after NT EPA pauses assessment

Startup Energy North has withdrawn its June 2028 first-power target for the 1 GW off-grid Project Ares data centre after the Northern Territory EPA suspended its assessment clock on 7 October 2026 to seek federal advice.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 4 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

A territory regulator waiting on federal policy shows approval conditions for gigawatt-scale data centres are still unsettled, and investingLive said slower approvals push out developer revenue and could weigh on valuations that assume fast AI-driven growth. It also undercuts the NT's pitch that remote land makes it a faster route than the cities.

Energy North no longer has a June 2028 first-power target for Project Ares, a planned 1 GW gas and solar data centre on a Northern Territory cattle station, after the territory's Environment Protection Authority put its assessment timetable on hold. Reuters broke the story in an exclusive on Sunday 1 November 2026. On 7 October the EPA suspended the seven-week period it works to when deciding what a project must satisfy, said it would seek advice from Canberra, which is still shaping its expectations for data centres and AI infrastructure, and set no new timeframe.

Daniel Hunter, Energy North's vice president of project development, confirmed the date was only indicative when the project was referred for assessment and that the company has stopped working to it. The company said it will confirm timing once the regulator sets terms for an environmental impact statement, and it would not name its financiers. Construction Review reported that the delay is not a rejection, and that the project must go through a full environmental impact statement, the highest tier of assessment under the NT's Environment Protection Act 2019.

The EPA found 10 potential impacts, among them pressure on water systems and harm to Aboriginal sacred sites, and said it lacked confidence that the proposed mitigation would work. Groundwater is a central issue: the referral allows for extraction of up to four gigalitres a year from the Montejinni Limestone Aquifer in the Wiso Basin, and the regulator wants more information on the effects. The Northern Land Council has also pointed to the practical difficulty of consulting Traditional Owners in remote areas.

Project Ares is designed as an off-grid campus with 1 GW of IT load, 3,000 MWp of solar and 16 GWh of battery storage, backed by up to 1,038 MW of gas generation for firming. The referral describes two 500 MW phases at Murranji Station in the Barkly Region, about 683 km south of Darwin, with a peak construction workforce of about 4,300. Energy North said Phase 1 power could arrive 12 to 18 months after a final investment decision, subject to funding and approvals, and that its founder has paid for development so far.

The hold follows NextDC's decision to postpone a Melbourne expansion over energy supply concerns and Goodman's withdrawal of a Sydney project after resident opposition. Reuters called the Ares delay the largest timing setback yet for an Australian data centre. The NT government is reportedly in talks with 12 data centre-related projects, and Beetaloo Energy has a separate proposed 2 GW data centre near Darwin that would also generate its own power. Capacity Media flagged two things to watch: when the EPA sets terms for the impact statement, and whether Canberra's data centre policy arrives first.

REPORTING FROM

1. **Tech Insider** · NT Data Centre Scraps 2028 Start After Stall [2026]
2. **Construction Review** · Australia's 1GW Project Ares Data Centre Faces Regulatory Delays in the Northern Territory
3. **investingLive** · Australia's AI investment ambitions hit by another data centre setback
4. **Capacity Media** · Why power regulators now decide where AI data centres go

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

POLICY & REGULATION 5 OF 13

Wells accepts mobile operators' disaster roaming deal, no legislated framework

Communications minister Anika Wells has judged the mobile operators' voluntary disaster roaming arrangements adequate for the 2026-27 high-risk weather season. That means a mandatory framework is not triggered, and the operators alone decide when roaming switches on.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

A community safety function now rests on voluntary commercial arrangements between operators, with no government role in activation decisions and no mandatory framework having been triggered.

Communications minister Anika Wells has found the mobile industry's temporary disaster roaming (TDR) arrangements satisfactory, so the law does not now require a mandatory framework. The assessment was required under a Coalition amendment to the Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation legislation, which the government accepted earlier in October and which set a deadline of the end of the month. Had she found the arrangements lacking, a requirement to build a mandatory framework would have followed.

Wells's statement is dated 29 October and covers the arrangements the operators put in place on 1 October. She concluded they were enough for the 2026-27 high-risk weather season, saying she was "satisfied industry's initial provision of TDR in Australia is sufficient". Wells added that the capability is operational and ready to be activated when appropriate.

Documents tabled in the House of Representatives on Thursday confirm that only the mobile network operators decide whether to activate, extend or end disaster roaming, with no approval role for governments. A letter dated 23 October from Australian Telecommunications Alliance chief executive Luke Coleman to Department of Infrastructure first assistant secretary Lisa La Rance describes how the scheme works. Coleman said the industry had set protocols for activation, deactivation, extensions, technical and safety limits, competing demands and information sharing. He wrote that the model "does not confer on government any decision-making, oversight, or approval role". Coleman tied that to the department's own acknowledgement that operators and emergency services have a better view of the situation on the ground and the networks than it does.

Under the reporting plan, operators will tell relevant state and territory contacts about activations and deactivations using existing mass service disruption processes. Copies will go to the department's outage notification mailbox and to the National Situation Room at the National Emergency Management Agency. Telstra will send its own notice when roaming is activated in areas only it serves and no network impacts are involved. The industry argued existing processes give enough visibility and rejected a separate government reporting framework, though operators will supply a summary at the end of the season.

Wells said the initial model weighs extra connectivity for affected communities against the need to keep surviving networks safe and reliable. Coleman said operators agreed safeguards to protect those networks, and that Triple Zero access stays the top priority. Customers who lose their usual network can connect through another participating one, within technical and operational limits. Wells noted that emergency calling can already reach other available networks without disaster roaming.

Coleman said the industry backs looking at longer-term national coordination, including a possible single coordinating body, but that this would build on current arrangements rather than be needed for them to work. The industry plans to review its experience once the 2026-27 high-risk weather season ends.

REPORTING FROM

1 **TelSoc** · TelSoc Newsletter - CommsDay Story of the Week

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

DATA CENTRES 6 OF 13

Spotswood residents fight $1.47b data centre as Victoria sets new siting rules

Victoria's new data centre rules would likely block Greensquare's proposed 240MW Spotswood facility, but they do not apply to applications already lodged. Information Age reported that Greensquare may have withdrawn the proposal.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 3 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Victoria is Australia's second-largest data centre market, and electricity demand there almost doubled over the 12 months to mid-2026, so the rules set clearer siting, energy and water expectations for developers. Projects already in the fast-track pipeline, such as Spotswood, sit outside them, which keeps community pressure on the approval process.

Residents of Spotswood in Melbourne's inner west are campaigning against a $1.47 billion, 240MW data centre proposed by Greensquare, just as the Victorian government introduces rules that would probably rule the site out. The changes do not apply retrospectively, so applications already lodged can proceed under existing arrangements, Information Age reported. Information Age also reported that Greensquare may have withdrawn the Spotswood proposal, with public consultation expected to restart if it is resubmitted.

Victoria's Sustainable Data Centre Action Plan, released in September 2026, sets a 150 metre buffer between residential buildings and new data centres and bans them on residentially zoned land. It also prohibits data centres in rural zones unless they sit next to critical infrastructure, and the government has committed to banning new developments in the Green Wedge Zone. Proponents must offset operational electricity use with new renewable generation and storage, cover all connection costs and join demand flexibility services to the extent commercially and technically possible. Facilities cooling with water are expected to use recycled or non-potable water or pay to replace the drinking water they use, and a statewide night-time noise limit of 55 A-weighted decibels applies. The Minister for Planning's statement of expectations covers permit applications lodged on or after 23 September 2026.

Greensquare, a Sydney-based company acquired by a Swiss private equity firm last year, applied through the state's fast-track planning process. That process removes the council from the decision and eliminates the ability to challenge the outcome at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. The site is as close as 100m to homes and a childcare centre, about 7km south-west of the

Melbourne CBD. Greensquare estimated the completed facility would create 130 ongoing direct jobs and outlined plans to cut water use and use renewable HVO diesel and battery backup. The company said it had engaged proactively with the community, distributing letters to more than 600 households and businesses in mid-July and holding information sessions.

Long-time residents Peter and Laura Russel say approvals should be paused until the new rules take effect. Laura Russel told Information Age she would be "furious if Greensquare is approved before these new protections come in". Peter Russel said, "There shouldn't be any more approvals until these are in place," and described the issue as one that has become an election matter. The Russels said the information session was "framed very positively" and that answers were "deliberately vague".

Spotswood is one of several contested projects. A $1.1 billion data centre in Campbellfield is also moving through the fast-track process, and Greensquare abandoned a $1.1 billion Western Australian proposal earlier this year after community backlash. The Australian reported that NextDC's $2bn M4 project at Fishermans Bend was approved in 75 days with "no response received" from CitiPower or South East Water. NextDC said M4 is designed with closed-loop air-cooled technology using no water. Port Melbourne Action Group has also protested that project.

Commonwealth legislation is anticipated in early 2027, and the Victorian plan is intended to work alongside it. Detailed siting and design guidance is expected in 2027.

REPORTING FROM

1 **klgates.com** · Victoria: Sustainable Data Centre Action Plan Published | HUB
2 **Information Age** · Spotswood residents take on $1.47b data centre | Information Age
3 **Stockhead** · Victoria fast-tracks NextDC data centre without checking on power or water

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

DATA CENTRES 7 OF 13

Data centres lift industrial land values and squeeze warehouse feasibility, JLL says

JLL research reported by AllCommercial shows data-centre developers paying up to 182.1 per cent above industrial land values in South Sydney, as a $155 billion pipeline competes with logistics projects for sites and power.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Competition for power-connected land is changing industrial feasibility in Sydney and Melbourne and may push data-centre development into regional markets, which bears on grid planning, approvals and logistics supply.

Data-centre developers are bidding for industrial land against warehouse and logistics projects, and in places they are paying far more, according to JLL research reported by AllCommercial. JLL puts the national data-centre investment pipeline at $155 billion, and projects that capacity will expand more than 13-fold to above 16GW by 2035.

In some outer-suburban locations the premiums over prevailing industrial land values run from 20.4 per cent to 63.3 per cent, JLL found, while South Sydney reached 182.1 per cent. The competition is flowing into large-lot pricing: between 2025 and 2026 JLL recorded growth of 9.6 per cent for two-to-five-hectare sites in Sydney's Outer Central West and 16.5 per cent in Melbourne's west.

Electricity, not land alone, is the binding constraint. JLL estimates that a 1MW data centre draws as much power as around 360 warehouses of 20,000sqm each, which is why closeness to substations and transmission lines can materially shift what a site is worth. CBRE has likewise flagged power access as a major hurdle for the sector as AI workloads and hyperscale demand grow.

Warehouse developers are feeling the effect. JLL's modelling indicates that the economic rents needed for new modern warehousing already sit around 30 per cent to 103 per cent above prevailing market rents in some locations, depending on market and development assumptions. AllCommercial said that over time this could reduce future industrial supply in some precincts.

The relationship also runs the other way, as data-centre construction adds to demand for conventional industrial space. JLL recorded 177,800sqm of gross industrial take-up from the construction sector over the past year, equal to 4.2 per cent of the total, the highest share since 2013 and nearly double the 10-

year average. Some of that comes from suppliers of cooling, electrical gear and cabling that need to store or assemble products near project sites.

Sydney and Melbourne remain the main hubs, but JLL expects 2026 to bring more large campuses outside traditional availability zones, with developers considering regional New South Wales and Victoria, parts of Queensland and Perth. CBRE expects live capacity to move from roughly 1.3-1.4GW in 2025 to around 1.8GW within three years, yet still forecasts a supply gap of 0.7-1.7GW by 2028.

On policy, the Property Council told the federal Office of AI in October 2026 that data centres should be planned alongside industrial land, energy, infrastructure, housing and employment rather than as an isolated technology use. AllCommercial said the effect on land values is likely to vary by location, since many sites cannot provide what operators need.

REPORTING FROM

1 **AllCommercial.com.au** · Data Centres Reshape Australia's Industrial Property Market

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

POLICY & REGULATION 8 OF 13

SA to tighten data centre planning rules as Tungkillo 1.2 GW proposal meets local resistance

Premier Peter Malinauskas says legislation is being drafted to rein in data centre development after residents rallied against Quantum DC's proposed 1,200-megawatt campus at Tungkillo in the Adelaide Hills. No formal application has been lodged.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 3 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

South Australia's planned legislation could change how data centre proposals are assessed while several large projects are in the pipeline, adding approval risk for developers seeking land and grid access outside metropolitan areas.

South Australian Premier Peter Malinauskas has said the state's planning rules for data centres need tighter oversight, with legislation being drafted as community opposition grows to a proposed 1,200-megawatt AI campus at Tungkillo in the Adelaide Hills. 7NEWS reported that he wants the law in place

as quickly as possible because development proposals are already moving through planning processes.

Quantum DC proposes the hyperscale facility with associated energy infrastructure on Collins Road, which ABC News placed about 41 kilometres east of the Adelaide CBD. The company's project page, as described by FutureTechDose, puts the site about 55 kilometres east of Adelaide, with Stage 1 targeted for 2028 and full development by 2031. The infrastructure would cover 120 hectares of a 220-hectare site. No formal application has been lodged with state planning authorities.

Chief executive Alby Tomassi said about 80 per cent of the electricity would come from solar and wind contracts, with two on-site substations connecting to existing ElectraNet lines. An on-site gas-fired power station would provide firming capacity, and rainwater would meet the water needs rather than the River Murray or existing groundwater, Tomassi said. FutureTechDose noted the company estimates about 20 megalitres of water a year at full operation, and that construction water requirements are still being assessed. It also cautioned that the plan is not a zero-emissions design and that the self-supply claim will need independent modelling and regulatory scrutiny.

Quantum DC postponed two consultation sessions that had been scheduled for the week of the protests and rescheduled them for 20 and 21 November. ABC News reported the postponement followed safety concerns, while 7NEWS said the sessions were cancelled after a bomb threat. Residents held their own meeting at Tungkillo on Thursday and a rally at Mannum on Saturday 31 October 2026. Organiser Magdalene Lippett said residents had raised concerns about land use, water supplies, noise and light pollution, and that the community would pursue every legal avenue. Lippett said, "We're not going away," and argued there must be a point where the state questions the trade-offs for primary production and local lifestyles.

Tomassi said engagement before lodgement was deliberate, and that a summary of what the company heard will accompany its application. Planning Minister Nick Champion said any application would go through a "rigorous planning system", including power and water requirements. Champion said the government would decide whether the State Commission Assessment Panel or the minister assesses it.

Opposition and crossbench figures addressed the Mannum rally, though government members did not attend. The Liberals, Greens and One Nation back the local campaign but differ on approach. Greens leader Robert Simms called for a moratorium on new data centres and for them to be included in the royal commission. Malinauskas has ruled out examining data centres under his proposed Royal Commission into artificial intelligence. The Premier said data centres should not be built where they can affect communities, and said, "We don't want unregulated growth of data centres in South Australia," he said.

Other projects are in the pipeline: Firmus Technologies is pursuing AI factory developments near Tailem Bend and Stirling North, and IREN has proposed an 800-megawatt campus at Bundey in the Mid North. Data centres already operate in Adelaide's CBD, Kidman Park, Hawthorn, Mawson Lakes and Pooraka.

REPORTING FROM

1 **ABC News** · Locals protest against proposed AI data centre in Adelaide Hills
2 **FutureTechDose -** · Tungkillo's 1.2 GW AI Campus Is Still a Proposal
3 **7NEWS** · AI data centre boom sparks backlash as SA moves to tighten planning laws

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

POLICY & REGULATION 9 OF 13

TPG says 98 per cent of scam calls to Vodafone users came via Symbio

TPG Telecom says almost all of 25 million scam calls it analysed were traced to Symbio, owned by rival Aussie Broadband, as telcos prepare for the Scams Prevention Framework. Aussie Broadband says it disconnects persistent bad actors and has promised extra measures.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The dispute points to closer scrutiny of wholesale voice once the framework applies, with penalties of up to A$50 million and expectations of stronger customer checks and traffic monitoring.

TPG Telecom has traced 98 per cent of 25 million scam calls it analysed to Symbio, a little-known internet voice company owned by its rival Aussie Broadband. The calls reached customers of Vodafone, which TPG owns, between July 2025 and July 2026. ABC News quoted TPG executive Vanessa Hicks on 22 October. Hicks said TPG wanted "more urgent action to stop this activity closer to the source and stop these calls reaching Australians".

Information Age reported that the calls often mimicked the scripts and processes of genuine contact centres while posing as police, banks, government agencies and technology firms. Symbio sells Australian phone numbers in bulk to businesses that make calls over the internet. It has about 500 customers who on-sell the numbers, and each of those may hand them to thousands of further users.

Aussie Broadband said it had appropriate measures in place, though its executives conceded that eliminating the activity had proved difficult. Chief executive Brian Maher told ABC that, "Where we find a persistent bad actor, then we will disconnect them". TPG denied that commercial rivalry motivated its public criticism. Maher argued that Symbio, as the largest wholesaler in the market, would naturally carry a higher proportion of scam calls. Aussie Broadband has also committed to a scam review of Symbio customers, more investment in scam monitoring technology and a scam portal for recording tracing work.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority checked a police-impersonation campaign that Vodafone had flagged. It said the apparent sources were several overseas telcos and it found no non-compliance by any Australian telco. The authority added that the traffic had been identified and blocked.

The Scams Prevention Framework is expected to take effect on 31 March. Regulators expect telcos to strengthen know your customer requirements and to monitor the traffic crossing their networks. Banks, digital platforms and telcos that fail to comply face penalties of up to A$50 million for the most serious breaches. If carriers and wholesalers push those checks further along the supply chain, offshore providers could be required to show their identity, the parties they call and how they use their numbers.

REPORTING FROM

1 **BPO News** · Australia telcos brace for anti-scam law as scam calls remain rampant

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 10 OF 13

Eurobodalla council approves two Telstra small cells for Mystery Bay

Eurobodalla Shire Council has unanimously approved development applications for two small cell towers at Mystery Bay on the NSW south coast. Telstra says the Black Spots Program-funded 4G build will reach about 60 dwellings.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The approval shows how Black Spots Program builds in small communities can turn on site acquisition and approval timeframes, with Telstra arguing that further searching risked the available funding window.

Eurobodalla Shire Council has voted unanimously to approve development applications for two small cell towers at Mystery Bay, clearing the way for 4G coverage in the NSW coastal hamlet. The council had earlier deferred the applications while councillors asked for more information. The service is funded through the Federal Government's Black Spots Program.

Telstra's Regional General Manager for the ACT and NSW, Chris Taylor, told the council meeting that work on the project began five years ago after the Black Saturday bushfires. Taylor said Telstra had been working since 2021 to find a practical and deliverable fix for "long standing mobile coverage deficiencies in Mystery Bay". In that time, he said, the company looked at a taller macro facility, private land, council land, crown land, co-location opportunities and 13 potential small cell locations.

Taylor argued that a different approach would set the project back. He said restarting investigations for a taller macro facility, or pursuing untested locations, would need a new site acquisition, technical assessment, design and approval process. Taylor said there was "no certainty that another suitable and deliverable site could be secured or approved within the available program and funding timeframes".

Taylor said fewer than 70 homes will receive coverage once the two towers are installed. He said the Commonwealth requirement is coverage to at least 25 dwellings, and that Telstra's modelling indicates new outdoor coverage to approximately 60 dwellings. According to Taylor, the solution will also improve 4G voice and data services, local road coverage and network capacity during peak visitor periods, as well as access to emergency communications including 000.

REPORTING FROM

1 **2EC** · New mobile phone reception to be limited less than 70 homes

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 11 OF 13

Spark restores South Island Eftpos after second Paymark fix

Spark said on Monday 2 November 2026 that a connectivity fault which disrupted Spark-connected Eftpos for South Island businesses is resolved, after Paymark put a second repair in place that afternoon.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The incident shows how a connectivity fault on one carrier's network can halt card payments for shops and public facilities across a region, and that an initial repair may not clear it.

Spark has confirmed that card payment failures hitting a number of South Island businesses are over, RNZ reported on Monday 2 November 2026. Supermarkets, pharmacies and Invercargill City Council facilities were among those caught up in the disruption on Monday. While the Spark-connected service was down, some merchants could only take cash or bank transfers.

Paymark, the electronic payments provider, said it had pinned down the cause and applied a fix on Monday afternoon. A repair made some hours earlier had not solved the fault, because Paymark kept getting reports of connection trouble from Spark-connected Eftpos users and said it was looking into a "widespread connectivity issue". Spark later said the fault was resolved.

Earlier in the day Spark had apologised for the disruption and said it was working closely with Paymark to find the cause. At that point it described the impact as limited to some terminals in Invercargill and Dunedin. FreshChoice confirmed that about 12 of its South Island stores were affected, with some contactless transactions failing.

Eftpos New Zealand said customers who connect through its own network were not affected.

REPORTING FROM

1 **RNZ** · Eftpos issue affecting South Island businesses fixed

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

AI INFRASTRUCTURE 12 OF 13

South Korea earmarks US$15.83 billion for AI data centres and chips in 2027 budget

President Lee Jae Myung presented a record KRW 820.9 trillion budget for 2027, with KRW 21.3 trillion going to physical AI, AI data centres and semiconductors and KRW 4.7 trillion to a sovereign AI model.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

State funding at this scale for AI data centres, chips and a sovereign model shows an APAC neighbour backing domestic AI capacity, including an 8.4 GW facility planned with private partners by 2029.

South Korea will lift spending by 12.8 per cent to KRW 820.9 trillion (US$610.14 billion) in 2027, the biggest budget in the country's history, President Lee Jae Myung told the National Assembly on Monday. Funding for digital infrastructure is due to nearly double from the 2026 level.

CNBC reported that KRW 21.3 trillion (US$15.83 billion) is allocated to physical AI, AI data centres and semiconductors. Another KRW 4.7 trillion (US$3.5 billion) is reserved for building a sovereign AI model. On the skills side, the government plans to train 2,000 people to lead chip design and the broader semiconductor sector. Some universities will also offer degrees run with companies, giving students a route into employers such as Samsung Electronics and SK Hynix.

In a statement on X, Lee said growth alone was not enough and had to reach individual citizens. Lee said the government would "create opportunities for youth to take on challenges, provide small business owners with the strength to rise again, and build new engines of growth for our regions". He has also said the larger budget would add virtually nothing to net government debt, since newly issued bonds would be used to repay existing debt.

The announcement follows strong export data. The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Resources said on Sunday 1 November that monthly exports reached an all-time high and that exports so far this year had passed US$900 billion. Semiconductor shipments were the highest for any October on record, and the president said annual exports of US$1 trillion were within reach.

In June, Lee launched three megaprojects intended to improve the country's standing in advanced technologies. One is a national AI data centre program that includes an 8.4 GW facility, to be built with private-sector partners by 2029.

REPORTING FROM

1 **W.Media** · South Korea sets aside US$ 15.8 billion for AI data centers and chips in record 2027 budget

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.

FIBRE, SUBSEA & INTERCONNECT 13 OF 13

DE-CIX and IGC form joint venture to build Bangkok internet exchange for 2027

DE-CIX and Thailand's International Gateway Co have set up DE-CIX Thailand to build and run an internet exchange in Bangkok, due in mid-2027 and linked to DE-CIX exchanges in five other Southeast Asian cities.

Best Effort desk · Tue 3 Nov 2026 · 3 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The venture adds another Southeast Asian interconnection point tied into DE-CIX's regional and global platform, which is relevant to Australian and APAC operators and hosting providers whose traffic reaches mainland Southeast Asia. HostingJournalist cautioned that the value to any operator will depend on which networks join and on connection and transport costs.

DE-CIX and International Gateway Co (IGC) have formed a joint venture to build an internet exchange in Bangkok, with service expected from mid-2027. Developing Telecoms reported that the companies announced the venture on Wednesday. The venture, named DE-CIX Thailand, will build and operate DE-CIX Bangkok in data centres across the city's metro market.

The Bangkok exchange will be directly interconnected with other DE-CIX exchanges in ASEAN, so networks there can peer with networks in Singapore, Johor Bahru, Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Jakarta over one regional platform. It will also be incorporated into DE-CIX's global backbone, which DE-CIX says links more than 4,600 networks across the Americas, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Bangkok will become the seventh metropolitan market on DE-CIX's Southeast Asian platform. DE-CIX already runs exchanges in Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia, and said close to 150 networks are connected or connecting across that fabric.

IGC, a subsidiary of ALT Telecom, will provide connectivity into the exchange and resell access to customers across mainland Southeast Asia. DE-CIX plans to draw on IGC's terrestrial network inside Thailand and across its borders to reach operators in Thailand and neighbouring countries. The Thai company has more than 12,000 kilometres of fibre across the country, and its interfaces at 12 active border crossings link 42 operators in Thailand and neighbouring states. It also connects to more than 10 Thai data centres and holds licences covering five cable landing stations.

DE-CIX said Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar together account for about half of all end users in the ASEAN region. It described Bangkok as a gateway to mainland Southeast Asia, with submarine connectivity into the Pacific and Indian Oceans and a growing data centre sector. DE-CIX chief executive Ivo Ivanov said, "Thailand is the next logical step in our Southeast Asian growth strategy". Ivanov also said customers would gain "lower latency, greater resilience, and direct access to cloud, AI, content, and network providers across the DE-CIX platform". IGC chief executive Supat Eamwiwat said the exchange would let customers swap traffic "not only locally but regionally".

HostingJournalist noted that the announcement left pricing, participating facilities and initial customer commitments undisclosed. It said buyers would need to weigh transport costs into the exchange and the availability of useful peers against any savings on upstream transit.

REPORTING FROM

1 **HostingJournalist.com** · DE-CIX Plans Bangkok Internet Exchange With Regional Peering
2 **DataCenterNews Asia Pacific** · DE-CIX & IGC launch Bangkok internet exchange
3 **Developing Telecoms** · DE-CIX and IGC to build Southeast Asian IX in Bangkok

Written by AI from the reporting above. Quotes, numbers and names were checked against those sources before publication.