Best Effort.

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

TODAY'S BRIEFING

Friday 13 November 2026

- Vocus restored the Australia Singapore Cable on 11 November 2026, 68 days after a suspected shunt fault on 4 September.
- Data centres drew scrutiny on several fronts: Quantum DC paused its 1200MW Tungkillo bid after community backlash, and the AEMC opened consultation on registering large loads.
- In Canberra, NBN Co released the first 2,000 premises for full-fibre upgrades, with another 2,000 expected by Christmas.

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FIBRE, SUBSEA & INTERCONNECT 1 OF 13

Vocus restores Australia Singapore Cable after 68 days, following crew medical diversion

Vocus said the Perth to Singapore Australia Singapore Cable was back in service on 11 November 2026, about 68 days after a suspected shunt fault on 4 September. A delayed Indigo West job and a crew medical emergency stretched the schedule.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Vessel availability, permits, a queue behind another cable job and a medical diversion all added time to a single fault on the Australia to Singapore route. SharkCloud advises businesses with users in several countries to keep at least one backup region rather than depend on one route.

Vocus told customers in an outage notice posted at 06:36 UTC on 11 November that marine work on the Australia Singapore Cable (ASC) had finished, the system had been powered back up, and early testing showed it running normally. The related ticket was closed at 07:09 UTC. Measured from 06:12 UTC on 4 September, when the fault was detected, the Perth to Singapore system was down for about 68 days.

The fault sat in Indonesian waters, and the ticket lists the cause as a "suspected shunt fault". Wavelength and Ethernet services between Perth and Singapore dropped out, and internet traffic moved onto other paths. Vocus shifted load onto a layer 2 route via Jakarta and onto newly commissioned 100G capacity linking Japan and Guam.

By 28 October the repair ship had loaded spare cable and equipment at Batam in Indonesia, and the Indonesian operating permits had been obtained. Vocus planned to fix a second cable, Indigo West, before turning to ASC, aiming to finish the ASC marine work on 11 November. Indigo West was completed on 4 November, behind schedule, with Vocus saying it met complications. The ship then headed for the ASC fault location and got there early the following morning.

Because the repair needed the entire ASC system powered down, services still running over undamaged sections were also taken offline. On 6 November, after the vessel had lifted one end of the damaged cable, a crew member needed urgent medical care and the ship diverted to Jakarta. The lifted end was secured and buoyed, with a guard vessel left beside it, and Vocus expected the detour to add 3 to 4 days. Work resumed on 9 November with both damaged ends

recovered, and splicing started. The last joint was finished on 11 November, the section was returned to the seabed and power was restored.

Vocus described that as its last scheduled update on the repair, adding that any remaining problems on individual services would be dealt with directly with the customers concerned. With Indigo West fixed on 4 November and ASC on 11 November, both cables on the route are available again. Routing may not snap back immediately, since Vocus says customer services are still being validated in stages and other carriers need time to shift traffic back.

REPORTING FROM

1 **00Shark** · The Australia Singapore Cable Was Repaired on November 11, About 68 Days After It Failed on September 4 and After a Pause for a Crew Member's Medical Emergency — Routes Toward Singapore Are Worth Retesting Now

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

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 2 OF 13

First 2,000 Canberra premises can upgrade to full-fibre NBN, another 2,000 by Christmas

NBN Co has released the first 2,000 ACT premises for fibre-to-the-premises upgrades in Holt, Griffith and Narrabundah, with a further 2,000 expected by Christmas. Construction has begun on more than 38,000 premises.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 3 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The ACT rollout is an early test of NBN Co's program to move fibre-to-the-node premises to full fibre, with retailer plan rules and staged releases shaping how quickly customers switch.

More than 2,000 premises in Canberra can now order full-fibre NBN upgrades, and another 2,000 are expected to become eligible by the end of 2026, according to a media release from Assistant Minister Andrew Leigh. The first suburbs released are Holt, Griffith and Narrabundah. Construction has begun on more than 38,000 ACT premises served by fibre to the node.

Region Canberra reported that work has run since February across 85 suburbs. The release is the first wave of an investment that would move around 97,000 homes and businesses in the ACT from ageing copper connections to full fibre by 2030. The government expects about 94 per cent of ACT premises to be able to access gigabit speeds by December 2030, roughly double the current proportion.

Greg Thornton, NBN Co's executive general manager for infrastructure planning and delivery, said the program was on track and slightly ahead. He said about 30 directional drills were working through suburbs at any one time. NBN Co releases small areas at a time, he said, to shorten the gap between disturbance and customers being able to order, and the 2030 date is when the program ends rather than when releases begin. Canberra's installs involve backyard aerial cabling plus new infrastructure at the front of properties, he said.

Eligible households receive a letter from NBN Co, then choose a retail service provider, which arranges the final connection inside the home. Thornton said around 64 per cent of fibre-to-the-node customers across Australia cannot get 100 megabits, and the upgrade opens multi-gigabit speeds to them. He also compared restoration times after the Queensland floods, saying some copper areas took up to 57 hours to replace, against 1.5 hours with fibre.

Region Canberra reported that many providers currently require a 100 megabit plan to switch, and Thornton said that would change around March 2027, letting cost-conscious customers migrate at their existing speed. Infinite Networks managing director Anthony Bortolotto said tree roots or garden beds on the cable path could add a couple of weeks to an install. He said that with more than half of Canberra working from home at least part of the week, the upgrade was "long overdue".

Customer Jim Thornton, who moved from a 5G service, said the speed and reliability were now there. Leigh said the typical Canberra household uses over 500 gigabytes a month with 25 connected devices, forecast to reach 44 by 2030.

REPORTING FROM

1. **Andrew Leigh MP** · Transcript - Doorstop Press Conference
2. **Region Canberra** · Thousands of Canberrans can get onto full-fibre NBN connections by Christmas
3. **Andrew Leigh MP** · Media Release - Faster NBN arrives for thousands of Canberrans

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

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 3 OF 13

Optus wins most awards in Opensignal's November mobile network report

Optus took eight of 14 awards outright and shared a ninth with Vodafone in Opensignal's latest Mobile Network Experience report, while Telstra won coverage and Vodafone won upload speeds.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The results split leadership across the three operators, with Optus ahead on 5G speed and experience, Telstra on coverage and Vodafone on uploads and 5G availability, which gives each a different marketing claim based on Opensignal's user-app testing.

Optus collected the most awards in Opensignal's latest Mobile Network Experience report, WhistleOut reported, winning eight outright and sharing one with Vodafone. The bi-annual report assesses Telstra, Optus and Vodafone across four categories: 4G Experience, 5G Experience, Coverage and Consistency, with 14 awards available in total.

Optus won the fastest 5G download speed award for the eleventh time in a row, at an average of 207.3Mbps. Telstra followed on 173.7Mbps and Vodafone on 168.2Mbps. On 4G downloads, the figures were 59.9Mbps for Optus, 51.1Mbps for Telstra and 38.9Mbps for Vodafone.

Vodafone won both upload speed awards, for 4G and 5G. Its 5G upload average was 18.1Mbps, against 16.5Mbps for Telstra and 16Mbps for Optus, and its 4G upload average was 9.3Mbps. Optus won all of the awards in the 4G and 5G Video and Games Experience categories, which Opensignal scores out of 100 using measures such as loading times, video quality and latency.

Telstra won the coverage awards, including overall coverage and 5G Coverage Experience, for the seventh time running. It scored 9.6 for overall coverage and 8.2 for 5G Coverage Experience on a scale of zero to 10.

Optus and Vodafone were joint winners of Time on Network, each on 99.3 per cent, while Vodafone won 5G Availability outright with 86.8 per cent. Optus won Consistent Quality with 84.9 per cent and Reliability Experience with 947 out of 1,000.

Opensignal draws its data from on-device tests run by a selection of its app users on each network. The data for this report was collected between 1 July and 28 September.

REPORTING FROM

1 **WhistleOut** · Optus' network takes home most awards in new Opensignal report

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

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 4 OF 13

Optus and Nokia lift 900MHz 5G speeds in ACT test using full 25MHz downlink

Optus and Nokia say a live-network trial in the ACT delivered download speeds up to 91 per cent faster outdoors and 51 per cent faster indoors by letting a commercial phone use Optus' full 25MHz downlink channel in the 900MHz band.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 2 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The trial points to a way for Australian operators to raise capacity and indoor and regional performance from low-band spectrum they already hold, rather than relying on new allocations. The results come from a single live-network test in the ACT, and the sources do not give a commercial rollout timeline.

Optus and Nokia have demonstrated an asymmetric 5G configuration in Optus' 900MHz spectrum that delivered download speeds up to 91 per cent faster outdoors and 51 per cent faster indoors than the existing network set-up. The companies describe it as a world-first, and Mobile World Live reported they called the live-network trial a "technical world-first".

The configuration pairs a 25MHz downlink with a 20MHz uplink in the 900MHz band. It allowed a commercial smartphone to use Optus' full 25MHz downlink channel for the first time. Optus said the gains came because the handset in the test could use the whole 25MHz. The testing took place in the ACT on the newly launched OPPO Find X10 Pro Max, which runs one of MediaTek's latest chipsets.

The work combines network development from Optus and Nokia with a new MediaTek chipset and OPPO's commercial handset support. Low-band spectrum matters in Australia because it travels further across large distances and reaches deeper inside buildings, but it is a finite resource. Optus said around 15 per cent of connections in urban areas and 35 per cent in rural areas rely primarily on its low-band spectrum.

Optus chief technology officer Sri Amirthalingam said the work was about making limited spectrum go further for customers. He said Australia presents "a unique engineering challenge" and that Optus has "highly concentrated urban environments alongside enormous distances between communities". Amirthalingam said getting more performance from the 900MHz spectrum Optus already holds gives it another way to improve service where distance, buildings and geography make connectivity harder.

Nokia's Asia Pacific vice president of mobile infrastructure, Henrique Vale, said the next phase of 5G would be shaped "not only by new spectrum, but by finding smarter ways to unlock the full potential of the spectrum operators already have". He said the result could help deliver stronger connectivity deep inside buildings and across regional Australia.

REPORTING FROM

1 **iTWire** · Optus and Nokia Achieve World-First 25MHz 5G Downlink Breakthrough in 900MHz Spectrum

2 **Mobile World Live** · Optus, Nokia go high on low-band 5G

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

DATA CENTRES 5 OF 13

AirTrunk lines up up to 610MW of Hunter wind and solar for Kurri Kurri

AirTrunk has signed an exclusivity deal with European Energy Australia over 260 MW of solar, up to 350 MW of wind and a battery of 800+ MWh in the Hunter. No power purchase agreement exists yet, and RenewEconomy reported that none of the projects has been lodged for approval.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 4 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The deal shows a large data centre operator responding to federal expectations and NSW guidelines that new facilities pay for their own additional clean supply. Until a PPA is signed and the projects are approved and financed, however, the generation remains a proposal, with solar and battery targeted for 2030 and wind for 2032 against a campus still in planning.

AirTrunk has agreed to deal exclusively with European Energy Australia on three proposed New South Wales projects: 260 MW of solar, wind of up to 350 MW, and a battery storing more than 800 MWh. The companies announced the arrangement on 12 November 2026, and the projects all sit within the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone. AirTrunk says the output is meant to serve its NSW electricity needs, including the proposed Kurri Kurri data centre campus. W.Media added the two generation projects together to reach 610 MW.

The solar farm and battery are aimed at starting operation in 2030, and the wind farm in 2032. European Energy intends to connect them to Ausgrid's upgraded 132 kV network, which depends on final connection arrangements, approvals and technical studies. The parties are talking about a possible long-term power purchase agreement, but nothing has been signed, and the length and terms of the exclusivity period have not been made public.

RenewEconomy reported that the generation and battery proposals have not yet been submitted for approval and that no financiers have committed funds. That outlet described the battery as 600 MW and 800 MWh, while AirTrunk's release states only the 800+ MWh capacity. No cost for the projects has been disclosed.

The Kurri Kurri campus is proposed for the former Hydro Aluminium smelter site at Loxford. W.Media reported that the planning application for the campus lists total power consumption of 550.5 MW, and that public exhibition ran until 11 November. The Newcastle Herald, as relayed by Voltgrid, reported that Cessnock City Council voted unanimously to object, although the NSW government rather than the council decides the application. The Herald also reported that AirTrunk may use the nearby Snowy Hydro gas peaking plant in the meantime, a point the company's release does not address.

AirTrunk founder and CEO Robin Khuda said, "Digital growth must bring new energy with it." AVP Energy Sabooh Whitelaw acknowledged the Hunter projects will not meet all demand, adding that "more renewable generation and firming will be needed to support Kurri Kurri and AirTrunk’s wider NSW needs."

Under the federal government's expectations, new data centres should secure additional clean generation or storage to offset their demand, while NSW guidelines expect operators to fund the extra supply and infrastructure their projects need. AirTrunk has a goal of matching all its electricity use with renewables by 2030, and about 73 per cent was matched in FY26. The deal follows the 31 MW Mulwala Solar Farm, also owned by European Energy, which officially opened in the week of the announcement; RenewEconomy reported AirTrunk already holds a PPA for part of its output.

REPORTING FROM

1. **Voltgrid News** · AirTrunk Eyes Up to 610 MW of Hunter Solar and Wind for Kurri Kurri
2. **RenewEconomy** · Data centre giant lines up solar, wind and battery deal to power its plans for former smelter site
3. **AirTrunk** · AirTrunk and European Energy Australia Advance >1 Gigawatt Hunter Renewables and Storage Partnership
4. **W.Media** · AirTrunk targets 610MW of new renewable generation in NSW

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

DATA CENTRES 6 OF 13

Gingerah refers 1GW Kimberley data centre for federal review

Gingerah Energy has referred its 1,000-megawatt Project Meridien data centre and renewables hub near Broome for federal environmental assessment, and says gas will be a minor part of the energy mix. Environmental groups want to know where that gas will come from.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 2 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Meridien is a proposal for a data centre that builds its own generation and storage rather than drawing on an external grid, and no approvals, tenant or funding have been reported. The gas sourcing question and community sentiment towards data centres are likely to shape how it is received.

Gingerah Energy has put Project Meridien, a proposed 1,000-megawatt data centre and renewable energy hub in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, before the Commonwealth's environmental agency. Enerdata reported on 27 October that a government release dated 21 October lists the referral under the federal EPBC Act. A referral opens the federal environmental process but does not amount to an approval.

The project would sit on Karajarri country, on the Frazier Downs pastoral lease held by the Karajarri Traditional Lands Association (KTLA), roughly 100 kilometres south of Broome. Gingerah is owned jointly by KTLA, the Dutch company Fugro and Longreach Capital Investment, an Australian firm. Longreach also owns Theia Energy, which has previously applied to drill and fracture exploration wells in the Kimberley.

Enerdata reports the plan as five stages of 48MW, 120MW, 240MW, 620MW and 1,000MW, operating off-grid through an internal microgrid. Generation would come from about 5.2GW of solar and 1.5GW of wind, a combined 6.7GW, with 5GWh of battery storage. The reported targets are a final investment decision on the first phase in 2029, progressive commissioning over 2030 to 2032 and full build-out by 2038.

Chief executive Jop van Hattum said the project would start on solar, batteries and gas, with wind added later. He said renewables would initially meet more than 85 per cent of demand, and Gingerah is aiming for that share to reach 94 per cent. He said the gas would most likely come from Karratha and be bought from "the domestic gas market".

Environmentalists have suggested the supply could be fracked gas from the Kimberley. Fracking is not banned in the Canning basin, but no project there has the approvals needed to go ahead. Environs Kimberley director Martin Pritchard said the domestic market answer "leads to questions", and asked whether the gas might come from Buru Energy or Theia Energy. KTLA director Justin King Senior said the gas would "absolutely not" come from fracking.

Grattan Institute energy expert Alison Reeve estimated the first 240-megawatt phase would need about eight terajoules of gas a day, and about 32 terajoules at full capacity. She said that was perhaps 1 per cent of WA's total gas demand, but that the project was too small to prompt new exploration or fracking in the Kimberley because the state already has enough gas.

REPORTING FROM

1 **ABC News** · Developer says gigantic WA data centre will not use fracked gas

2 **The Australian Developer** · Gingerah refers 1GW Kimberley data centre for federal review

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

DATA CENTRES 7 OF 13

Quantum DC pauses 1200MW Tungkillo data centre bid after community backlash

Quantum DC will not lodge a development application this year for its proposed 1200-megawatt AI data centre at Tungkillo in the Adelaide Hills, saying it misread community feeling. The SA government is moving to legislate a regulatory framework, and the Greens, One Nation and the Liberals have pushed for scrutiny of the sector.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 4 sources · 3 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Community opposition is now delaying or ending data centre proposals in several states, and the SA government intends to legislate a regulatory framework for the sector. The industry body says the lack of federal rules leaves operators and investors without policy certainty.

Quantum DC has paused plans for a 1200-megawatt AI data centre at Tungkillo in the Adelaide Hills and will not seek development approval this year, after sustained opposition from the local community. The site is on Collins Road, about 41 kilometres directly east of the Adelaide CBD, and the proposal includes energy infrastructure. The Melbourne-based developer's Tungkillo Compute and Energy Hub would include on-site gas-fired power generation, according to 5MU. Bloomberg reported the project is the company's only one, according to its website.

Chief executive Alby Tomassi said in a statement: "We misread the strength of feeling about this proposal and acknowledge the first weeks of our early engagement created more questions than answers," and the company would now run a longer-term engagement program. Quantum DC said it has been contacted by more than 350 people, and the community submitted a consolidated list of 432 questions. The issues raised covered water, energy, noise, lighting and the night sky, traffic, bushfire, farming land, location and the local environment.

Two consultation sessions scheduled last month were postponed amid safety concerns, and locals held their own protest meetings that drew a few hundred people. The sessions rescheduled for November, including drop-in sessions at the Mannum Leisure Centre, are now cancelled. Tomassi said an open forum with 500 people and 432 questions would not be effective. Quantum DC said it will convene a panel of independent experts to review specialist studies and publish the findings. The pause does not mean the proposal has been abandoned, and Tomassi has not ruled out progressing Tungkillo in future.

Mid Murray Council Mayor Simone Bailey said the council has big concerns about the location, including proximity to a dark sky reserve, distance from a Country Fire Service station, limited access on unsealed roads, and effects on noise and the water table. Tungkillo resident Magdalene Lippett, who opposes the project, welcomed the pause. Northern Areas councillor Hank Langes said he would ask his council whether it would support hosting the project in its area, which covers Jamestown and Spalding.

SA Premier Peter Malinauskas said the episode showed the state needs a strict regulatory framework so data centres are not built, or even proposed, in places they should not be. AI Minister Chris Picton said the announcement showed why the government wants legislation through parliament. The Liberals, One Nation and the Greens welcomed the pause, while the SA government criticised the developer's consultation process, according to ABC News. The Greens called for a moratorium, and Greens leader Robert Simms moved a motion in the Legislative Council seeking a statewide moratorium and opposition to Tungkillo, following an online petition that passed 13,000 signatures. The Greens, One Nation and the Liberals united in the upper house on Wednesday to set up a parliamentary inquiry into data centres, which Labor did not support.

Data Centres Australia, which does not represent Quantum DC, said consultation timing is a trade-off. Chief executive Belinda Dennett said operators and investors want policy certainty, adding "The quicker we have certainty, the more viable I think Australia's going to be." Bloomberg described Tungkillo as at least the third Australian development to be waylaid in recent weeks, noting a Melbourne project delayed for NEXTDC and a Sydney project abandoned by Stockland. Further rallies and meetings are planned, including a public meeting at Tailem Bend on Monday 16 November about Firmus Technologies' proposed 1,000-megawatt data centre near the town.

REPORTING FROM

1. **ABC News** · Developer 'pauses' AI data centre proposal after it 'misread' community feeling
2. **ABC News** · Data centre industry butts up against community challenges
3. **5MU** · Tungkillo Data Centre Developer Pauses Plans after Community Backlash
4. **Energy Connects** · Another Data Center Halts in Australia as Public Backlash Rises

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

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 8 OF 13

TPG Telecom plans customer-triggered AI agents, reports 40 per cent lower churn

TPG Telecom is developing AI agents that customers could start themselves to diagnose and fix service problems, with general manager Gaston De Arriba reporting around 40 per cent lower churn in cohorts where agentic AI is already used. No launch date was given.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 3 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

For Australian carriers, the plan shows AIOps tools moving from internal network operations towards customer-facing self-service, with TPG pointing to churn and call-deflection benefits, though the figures are management-reported and lack baselines. TPG's own flagged risks of security and agent operating cost are likely to be matters other operators weigh in similar rollouts.

TPG Telecom is developing AI agents that customers could trigger themselves to diagnose and fix problems with their services, potentially without calling the telco, according to iTnews. General manager of technology operations Gaston De Arriba outlined the plan at Cisco Live in Melbourne. He said cohorts where TPG uses agentic AI have seen churn fall by around 40 per cent.

The agents build on Splunk tools that TPG deployed in March to make its service operations more AI-driven, an approach often called AIOps. TPG's stated aims included real-time visibility across its networks and IT environment and faster detection and resolution of issues. CIO Monitor reported that the March disclosure named Splunk but not individual products or versions.

As of Thursday 12 November 2026, the agents work in the background and support contact-centre staff rather than dealing with customers directly. They collect network performance data, KPIs, incidents, changes and complaints, correlate them and identify each customer's problem in real time. The system recommends what staff should tell the customer and proposes fixes for TPG to implement in the network. De Arriba said one of the main pain points was that customers call and the call centre "doesn't have enough information to tell them where is the impact and what we are doing to resolve it".

De Arriba described the churn result as an early metric. CIO Monitor noted that he gave no starting churn rate or cohort size, and that the figure does not isolate AI from other service interventions. He also said proactive action had deflected many calls to the call centre, an effect TPG had not expected, though no call volumes or savings were disclosed.

The next step is letting customers start the agents from their own services. De Arriba said TPG's appetite was "to give the power to the customer to trigger the agents from their own services, and then the agent to take care of the service performance for these customers". Customers could see service performance on screen, receive advice on what to change on their side, or raise a trouble ticket without phoning. CIO Monitor reported that no launch date, eligibility rules, coverage or commercial terms were disclosed.

De Arriba said TPG is moving slowly and keeping agents within defined boundaries. He named customer experience and security as priorities, the latter particularly as customers begin interacting with agents directly. Cost is a third risk: he called the "tokenomics" of deeper agent deployment a point of risk because agents can quickly raise operating costs.

REPORTING FROM

1 **CIO Monitor** · TPG Telecom's Agentic AI Churn Results and Roadmap
2 **iTnews** · TPG Telecom plans to let users "trigger agents from their own services"
3 **Australian Herald** · TPG Telecom plans customer-triggered AI service tools

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

DATA CENTRES 9 OF 13

Data centre build-out to need thousands of extra tradespeople a year, Oxford Economics says

An Oxford Economics briefing forecasts Australian data centre construction will need an average of 5,200 electricians a year from 2026 to 2030, adding to shortages across infrastructure. A companion report says up to three-quarters of the investment will go on imported goods.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Competition for electricians, plumbers and HVAC technicians from data centres could raise labour costs and delay other infrastructure, including energy projects, while much of the capital spend flows offshore to imported equipment.

Oxford Economics estimates that building Australia's data centres will call for an annual average of 5,200 full-time equivalent electricians between 2026 and 2030, along with 4,200 plumbers and pipe fitters and 2,600 mechanical and

HVAC technicians. The briefing, Data centres boost demand for trades, was written by economist Oscar Guth and warns that competition for specialised labour could lift wages and contractor costs and raise the risk of delays across data centre, energy, defence, hospital and other projects.

Oxford Economics forecasts direct employment in the industry will peak at about 38,400 workers in 2030, with around 36,000 in construction and project delivery and 2,400 in operating completed facilities. Data centres are expected to account for about 22 per cent of electrician demand across major projects nationally over the period, about 40 per cent for plumbers and pipe fitters and 38 per cent for mechanical and HVAC technicians. Non-IT work is forecast to rise eightfold, from $4bn in 2024 to $32.4bn in 2030, equal at its peak to about 13 per cent of all non-residential building and engineering construction.

The demand lands on a workforce already short of people. Citing Infrastructure Australia estimates, Oxford Economics said the infrastructure sector had about 204,000 workers in 2025 and a shortfall of about 141,000. Since September 2025, job advertisements have risen 16 per cent for electrical and telecommunications tradespeople, 10 per cent for engineers and 5 per cent for ICT technicians. Spending on major infrastructure projects, including data centres, is forecast to rise from about $106 billion in 2026 to $144bn in 2030, with major energy construction going from about $28bn to $45bn.

The report expects construction employment to spread beyond Sydney and Melbourne, which hold 87 per cent of the sector's construction workforce in 2026 but are forecast to fall to 54 per cent by 2030. Regional construction employment is forecast to grow from around 300 workers to more than 10,000, lifting the regional share from about 3 per cent to 29 per cent. Oxford Economics said AI-focused facilities have higher energy needs, different specifications and lower latency requirements, which could favour regional sites with abundant land and fewer approval constraints. Ongoing operational employment is more modest, because much of the work of running computing infrastructure is done off-site by hyperscale customers, though Australian neocloud providers could add local roles.

A separate briefing by economist Harry McAuley compares the boom with mining investment of the 2000s and early 2010s. Oxford Economics estimates investment in data centre facilities and equipment could exceed $240bn over the five years to 2030, and that up to three-quarters of it will go to imported goods, against an estimated peak of 45 per cent in the mining boom. IT equipment is expected to make up around half of investment and is almost entirely imported, and Australia has no advanced processor manufacturing capacity. Data centre-related imports are forecast to peak at just under $45bn in 2030.

The briefing says the export contribution of data centres is less certain than that of mining. McAuley cites NextDC estimates that application, education and compute exports could generate $11bn over the five years to 2030, which Oxford Economics describes as relatively small against imported components.

GPUs and accelerators are estimated to last four to six years, against up to 30 years for major mining assets, so operators could generate repeated waves of equipment imports.

REPORTING FROM

1 **W.Media** · Data centre boom to require thousands of Australian tradespeople

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

POLICY & REGULATION 10 OF 13

AEMC floats mandatory registration and ramp limits for large data centres

The Australian Energy Market Commission has opened consultation on registering data centres and other large inverter-based loads, with telemetry and demand-change limits, and has finalised a 30MW threshold for new grid access standards.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 2 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The proposals would shift data centres from ordinary connecting loads towards visible, directable participants in the NEM, which could affect connection costs and operating models for operators planning large Australian builds.

The Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) is weighing compulsory registration and new operating rules for big data centres and similar large power users, so the grid operator can see more of what they draw. A consultation paper went out on 12 November, responding to a rule change request lodged by the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO). Submissions close on 17 December 2026, and the AEMC plans a draft determination on 1 April 2027, depending on what stakeholders raise.

AEMO's request argues the National Electricity Rules leave it and network service providers without steady visibility of large inverter-based loads, and without a proper framework for handling fast swings in their demand. The category covers data centres and hydrogen electrolysers, and data centres can ramp up faster than conventional loads thanks to modular design. AEMO forecasts that data centre consumption will climb from around 5TWh to approximately 34TWh within a decade, taking its share of National Electricity Market operational demand from around 3 per cent to 13 per cent.

On registration, the commission is leaning towards adapting the current NEM framework instead of creating a permanent new participant class for large loads. Registration could oblige data centres to give AEMO information, including through the Projected Assessment of System Adequacy process, and make clearer how operational directions apply. The AEMC wants views on whether a 30MW threshold suits registration and whether existing facilities should be caught as well as new connections. It does not think scheduled participation should be compulsory yet, citing varied operating models and possible costs for facilities that deliver critical computing services. The Voluntarily Scheduled Resources framework has not started, so one interim idea is a temporary participant category letting AEMO issue directions straight to facility operators, rather than via their electricity retailer.

The second reform area covers technical requirements. Under a minimum standard, large loads would feed real-time SCADA telemetry to AEMO, covering active power and, at transmission-connected sites, reactive power. A fuller standard would add two-way communications and remote control of active-power limits and ramp rates. The commission also proposes a floor on how quickly loads may alter demand, at ±40MW per minute on the mainland NEM and ±10MW per minute in Tasmania, with quicker rates negotiable if operators show power system security is protected. The AEMC calls those numbers initial proposals, and says workload management, power capping, rack-level controls and energy storage could help data centres shape their demand.

The same day, the AEMC issued a final rule defining a large inverter-based load as one with a combined nameplate rating of 30MW or more, on both transmission and distribution networks. Such loads must stay connected through specified voltage and frequency disturbances, and a new instability-monitoring standard applies. The AEMC said interactions between large power-electronic loads and the grid can sometimes feed cascading disconnections and major load loss. It noted that data centre UPS systems can shift to backup power during a disturbance, though the resulting disconnection from the grid can add to instability. The rule took effect on 12 November, with a six-month grace period for certain connection applications already at an advanced stage.

The work forms part of a broader program across the AEMC, AEMO and the Australian Energy Regulator, spanning data centre contracting obligations, network augmentation costs, connection processes and operational visibility.

REPORTING FROM

1 **W.Media** · Australia considers mandatory registration and new operating controls for data centres

2 **W.Media** · Australia sets 30MW threshold for new data centre grid standards

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

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 11 OF 13

Telstra blames attempted copper theft for Stockton fibre outage

Telstra says an attempted copper cable theft damaged adjacent fibre in the Stockton area, cutting phone and internet services through Fern Bay and Fullerton Cove from about 10:15am on Thursday 12 November 2026. The company has not given a restoration time.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The outage shows how one damaged fibre path through a single structure can cut services for Telstra customers and for local providers that rely on its fibre, while NBN's earlier backup path via Williamtown reportedly kept its services running. It also highlights emergency pendants and medical alarms that may not work over fallback mobile networks.

Telstra says someone tried to steal copper cable and in the process harmed fibre running alongside it, interrupting some of its services around Stockton, newy.com.au reported. The fault started at about 10:15am on Thursday 12 November. Reports put the affected area between northern Stockton and a point roughly one kilometre south of McDonald's Williamtown, taking in Fern Bay and Fullerton Cove.

Early information passed to newy.com.au points to fibre damage inside Stockton Bridge, where there may be "no slack left" to re-splice the cable. If that is the case, a replacement cable might need to be pulled through the bridge structure. Hundreds of older Fern Bay residents are understood to have lost fixed line internet in estates served by Telstra fibre. Reports reaching the outlet say residents cannot call relatives and that some 4G emergency pendants worn by older people have stopped connecting.

Telstra's statement did not include a restoration time. A spokesperson said specialist crews had been engaged and were working to repair the damage "as quickly and safely as possible". The spokesperson said such repairs could be complex and that Telstra would provide updates as the work progressed.

A telecommunications specialist who did not want to be named told newy.com.au that local internet providers' customers on Telstra fibre, some of them businesses, had lost connectivity too. According to that person, the damaged cable passes through the middle of the bridge structure, so replacing it would mean confined space work. The specialist said lane and bridge closures might be required with Transport for NSW approval, and put the repair time at 3 days or more. The outlet was also told Telstra would return on Friday

morning and enter the structure with breathing apparatus to assess the damage.

Local providers with their own networks outside the NBN are understood to have put in temporary point to point wireless backhaul links to Mt Sugarloaf to bypass the damage. NBN infrastructure in the area is understood to be unaffected because NBN had earlier established a backup fibre path via Williamtown.

Households whose NBN service still works may be able to make calls using Wi-Fi calling if their mobile has no signal. A handset showing "SOS Only" may still reach 000 through another mobile network, although some medical alarms and personal safety devices may not support that fallback. Telstra advises people with offline pendants to dial 000 from a mobile phone.

REPORTING FROM

1 **newy.com.au Newcastle News** · Telstra links Stockton outage to attempted copper cable theft - newy.com.au Newcastle News

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

FIBRE, SUBSEA & INTERCONNECT 12 OF 13

DXN wins $4.8M cable landing station order from repeat global internet customer

DXN has signed a $4.8 million contract for a modular cable landing station to be installed at a Pacific site under US jurisdiction. The buyer is an unnamed global internet company that has now placed four orders with it.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 3 sources · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Repeat orders from one global internet company for a standardised, prefabricated CLS suggest demand for quickly deployed landing infrastructure in the Pacific, while tying more of DXN's work to a single customer.

Australian modular data centre builder DXN has signed a binding contract worth about $4.8 million with an unnamed global internet company for a prefabricated cable landing station (CLS). The unit is bound for a Pacific region site under US jurisdiction, and DXN expects to deliver it in the first quarter of FY28. DXN told the ASX that this is the fourth order it has received from the

same customer.

DXN will handle design, engineering, manufacture and commissioning of a turnkey station built on its prefabricated module platform, with power, cooling, fire suppression, security and monitoring built in. Production starts straight away at its facilities in Malaysia and Western Australia. The company said the customer's engineering requirements have been standardised across successive orders, which has cut time and cost in design, manufacturing, supply chain and delivery.

Managing director Shalini Lagrutta said that after four contracts DXN now has "a deep relationship and understanding of the customer requirements". She said the company aims to deliver on schedule while the customer keeps expanding its infrastructure globally.

techpartner.news reported that DXN won a $1.2 million CLS contract from the Solomon Islands Submarine Cable Company in late July, after a $1 million CLS contract from the American Samoa Telecommunications Authority (ASTCA) earlier that month. The ASTCA station will host the La Vasa cable, a US$45 million system linking American Samoa with Fiji and French Polynesia, and will connect to Google's planned Bulikula system. ARN noted the new order follows a Melbourne Airport contract worth just over $4 million.

DXN says it has supplied more than 100 modular data centres to date. Earlier landing station modules went to Sub.co on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands for the Oman–Australia Cable and to Palau for the Echo cable, and DXN also supplied the East Micronesia Cable System.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Slicast** · DXN has signed a Pacific CLS contract with an... · Slicast
2 **techpartner.news** · DXN wins fourth cable landing station contract with global internet customer - techpartner.news
3 **ARN** · DXN picks up CLS contract worth nearly $5M

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

AI INFRASTRUCTURE 13 OF 13

US plans licence rule on advanced AI chips for seven countries including Malaysia and Singapore

The US Commerce Department is preparing rules that would require licences to export Nvidia Blackwell-class and more advanced chips to seven countries, four of them in Southeast Asia, to stop Chinese firms accessing the hardware remotely, The Information reported.

Best Effort desk · Fri 13 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The proposed rule targets data centres in Southeast Asian markets, so licensing requirements could affect how operators in the region host advanced AI chips, which matters to Australian and APAC data-centre and AI infrastructure investors.

The United States is preparing to restrict Chinese AI companies from remotely using advanced AI chips housed in data centres in seven countries, according to a report by The Information relayed by W.Media on 12 November 2026. Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia are among the destinations, along with Brazil, Norway and South Africa. The report cited people familiar with the process.

Under the proposed Commerce Department rules, exports of Nvidia Blackwell-class and more advanced chips to those countries would need a licence. The aim is to stop Chinese AI firms reaching advanced chips remotely through data centres in third countries, and to curb chip smuggling into China. The rule would expand existing semiconductor controls run by the department's Bureau of Industry and Security.

The rule could be announced as soon as this month, according to the report. The department is still consulting other government agencies on the long-awaited rule before finalising it.

The US government has recently been criticised for moving too slowly on restricting China's access to advanced AI technology. The criticism has grown louder after Nvidia's recent alleged spying scandal. Nvidia has long opposed restrictions on chip sales to China.

REPORTING FROM

1 **W.Media** · US to restrict Chinese remote access to AI chips from Southeast Asian data centers: Report

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