Best Effort.

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

TODAY'S BRIEFING

Monday 23 November 2026

- A power failure at the ACT Emergency Services Agency headquarters on 19 November 2026 cut supply to the Triple Zero call centre for four minutes after a backup battery pack failed; authorities say no calls were lost.
- Complaints to the TIO about Swoop's Moose Mobile rose to 831 in the September quarter.
- NextDC told shareholders on 20 November it will stop pursuing sites near homes after the West Footscray backlash.

13 stories · **20 min** reading · **21** sources · Online at besteffort.au/editions/2026-11-23

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CARRIERS & NETWORKS 1 OF 13

ACT Triple Zero call centre loses power for four minutes as backup battery fails

Power at the ACT Emergency Services Agency headquarters cut out for four minutes on 19 November 2026 after the first backup battery pack failed. Authorities say no Triple Zero calls were lost, while the union representing ambulance workers has called the outage extremely concerning.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The incident shows how a power failure combined with a backup battery fault can interrupt Triple Zero call handling, even when diversion and a secondary site limit the harm.

Power at the ACT's primary emergency call centre was cut for four minutes on the evening of 19 November, and authorities are still investigating the cause. The outage at the Emergency Services Agency headquarters in Fairbairn, near Canberra's airport, ran from 8:11pm to 8:15pm.

The first backup battery pack failed to start, and the second took four minutes to come online. During the outage four in-progress ambulance calls dropped out, and the ESA said no new calls came in for ambulance or fire and rescue. Staff were then relocated to a backup centre in Hume.

ESA Commissioner Wayne Phillips said any attempted calls would have been diverted to ACT Policing, which was not affected. Phillips said "we lost a couple at the time but we were able to retrieve them, so the community was never impacted at all through this outage." He said he hoped staff would return to the headquarters late on Saturday night or on Sunday morning.

The cause is not yet established. Phillips said that "the speculation might have been lightning or a massive power surge," while investigations continue. He said the episode showed the backup systems work well, referring to the Hume centre.

The Transport Workers' Union, which represents ambulance workers, called the outage "extremely concerning". The union's Damian Pollard said members on duty that night found it distressing and described the failure as a psychosocial hazard. Pollard said "four minutes is life and death."

REPORTING FROM

1 **abc.net.au** · Investigations underway into power outage at ACT Triple Zero call centre

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

DATA CENTRES 2 OF 13

Residents overwhelmingly oppose Anthropic-anchored Western Downs data centre

Nearly 600 public submissions on the proposed Western Downs Digital Park, with Anthropic as anchor tenant, were almost all opposed, according to a filing lodged for developer Zerra DC. The planned load is 1.44 gigawatts.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Community opposition is becoming a material risk for large Australian data centre proposals, with a scrapped Sydney project and a delayed Melbourne one already on the record. Water, power demand and local infrastructure are the issues objectors are raising against a 1.44 gigawatt load.

A proposed data centre in regional Queensland with Anthropic as its anchor tenant has drawn overwhelming opposition from residents, according to a filing for the project. Of nearly 600 public submissions on the Western Downs Digital Park, about 250 km west of Brisbane, two backed the project and one was neutral. The other 595 opposed it or asked for a delay until developers cleared certain environmental hurdles, the filing said.

The filing was lodged on behalf of developer Zerra DC, and it acknowledged that a significant number of submissions raised reasonable matters on water, power, noise, roads, housing and the scale of the project. Objectors mostly cited water use, electricity demand and prices, noise, road damage from construction traffic and pressure on housing. About one-third of the submissions came from people who lived within 200 km of the site.

The project had received five objections in a month before it named Anthropic as its tenant on 15 September, a log of public comments showed. The rest arrived between then and 11 November, when the local government stopped accepting submissions. Representatives of Zerra and Anthropic were not

immediately available for comment on the filing.

The site is farmland and further from the suburbs than other proposals, but its planned computing load of 1.44 gigawatts would make it one of the country's biggest. The filing describes the first Australian facility for Anthropic, and the response, though far from binding, points to a showdown between the company and the host community. The filing was published in the same week Anthropic priced its initial public offering on Wall St, on 18 November.

Other Australian projects have met resistance. Goodman Group scrapped a data centre of roughly A$1.2 billion planned for Sydney in September after a public backlash. NextDC delayed a Melbourne project amid resident concerns about energy use, which triggered a shares selldown.

REPORTING FROM

1 **techpartner.news** · Anthropic's Australian data centre overwhelmingly opposed by residents

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

POLICY & REGULATION 3 OF 13

ACCC opens superfast broadband access inquiry, submissions due 11 December

The ACCC released a discussion paper on 12 November 2026 to start setting final terms for the superfast broadband access service, with written submissions due by 5pm on 11 December 2026.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The determination will set price and non-price terms for wholesale access to superfast fixed-line networks outside the NBN, shaping what retailers pay and can offer on them.

The ACCC has begun a public inquiry into the terms for the superfast broadband access service (SBAS), publishing a discussion paper on 12 November 2026. Submissions must be lodged in writing by 5pm on 11 December 2026.

The SBAS is a regulated wholesale product delivered over superfast fixed-line networks that are not part of the NBN. The inquiry is meant to end in a final access determination, which fixes the terms under which providers may use the service. The ACCC will examine price terms, which cover what providers pay,

and non-price terms, which cover the remaining conditions of access.

The inquiry follows the ACCC's July 2026 decision to keep the SBAS declared for a further four years.

Once it has considered submissions, the ACCC will release a draft report for more consultation and then a final report setting out its decision. Parties that miss the December deadline can still comment when the draft report appears.

Network operators and the retailers that buy access from them have the most at stake. Other interested parties, consumer groups among them, may also make submissions. Households connected to these networks could be affected indirectly, depending on the prices and services their provider is able to offer.

REPORTING FROM

1 **NewsCop** · Superfast Broadband Access Service Inquiry Opens a Vital 4-Week Window

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

DATA CENTRES 4 OF 13

NextDC rules out new datacentres near homes after West Footscray backlash

NextDC told its annual general meeting on Friday 20 November 2026 that it will stop pursuing sites near residential properties, after protest over power poles delayed its M3 expansion in Melbourne and shareholders delivered a second strike on executive pay.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The episode shows community opposition to grid infrastructure can delay datacentre capacity and hit a listed operator's value, and NextDC's decision to avoid sites near homes narrows the locations it will consider for future builds.

NextDC will no longer chase new development opportunities close to homes, following community opposition to the expansion of its M3 site in West Footscray, in inner Melbourne. The Guardian reported that the backlash was followed by a 40 per cent drop in the company's share price.

The annual general meeting on Friday was the first since the M3 expansion was put back, after power provider Jemena paused construction of new 22-metre power poles amid community protest. Shareholders registered a second strike

against executive pay, though a motion to spill the board was heavily defeated. The share price has climbed back above $9, but Goodman Group acquired a stake of nearly 10 per cent in NextDC in the meantime.

Chief executive Craig Scroggie described it as his "hardest AGM" in 15 years and said he ultimately carried responsibility for "delivery, power, planning, approvals, construction and community support". He said NextDC had needed to work more closely with its power and construction partners, and with the community, and was now doing so. Scroggie said residents should have been heard sooner during the Jemena works, and that ensuring this was NextDC's role. He said the company's practices had shifted, adding that "Community expectations have moved in the age of artificial intelligence and we must move with them."

NextDC said it will establish a community consultative committee that includes a standing forum for residents and local stakeholders. It also plans a dedicated project website and contact channels with defined response times for complaints and inquiries.

Flynn, speaking for NextDC, said the mood towards datacentres had changed sharply over roughly six years. He pointed out that the M3 site had been used for industry for a century, including petrochemical works before the datacentre was built. Flynn said the Jemena employee in charge of community engagement departed after the reaction to the taller poles delayed the expansion. He said Jemena had "just charging ahead regardless of community".

A Jemena spokesperson declined to comment but pointed to a September statement announcing that its general manager for electricity networks had decided to step down.

REPORTING FROM

1 **the Guardian** · NextDC vows to keep future datacentres away from homes after community backlash in Melbourne | Datacentres

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

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 5 OF 13

Moose Mobile complaints to TIO jump from 39 to 831 after network migration

The Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman's September quarter report shows complaints about Swoop Holdings' Moose Mobile surging to 831, with 410 of the 815 national complaints about uncontactable providers aimed at the brand.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The figures show a network migration that Swoop described as causing lower-than-expected churn coincided with a sharp rise in complaints to the ombudsman, many of them about customers being unable to reach their provider.

Complaints about Moose Mobile to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman rose from 39 to 831 in the September quarter, making it the fourth most complained-about telco in Australia, Unaudited reported on 21 November 2026. The brand has about 133,000 services. The ombudsman's report attributes the surge to issues with the network migration from Optus to Vodafone. Telco Pay Pty Ltd trades as Moose Mobile, which is owned by Swoop Holdings.

Unaudited calculated the increase at 2,030.8 per cent on the quarter and 3,513 per cent on the year, the largest percentage rise of any Australian telco. Moose ranked ahead of TPG Group, Superloop, Aussie Broadband and iiNet. Lycamobile took a full financial year to reach 832 complaints.

Of the 815 complaints made nationally about a provider being uncontactable, 410 concerned Moose Mobile.

Swoop's public account of the migration has been more measured. On 27 October it reported that migration-related churn was lower than it had anticipated, with the combined mobile and NBN base falling by under 7,000 services. Swoop later told Unaudited, on 4 November, that it tracks average first response and resolution times.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Unaudited** · Moose Mobile TIO complaints: 831 in a quarter, 410 unreachable

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

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 6 OF 13

GTA VI launch lifts NBN traffic to 36.54 Tbps, a new record

NBN Co recorded 36.54 Tbps on the night Grand Theft Auto VI went on sale, about 20 per cent above baseline, after an earlier preload peak of 33.19 Tbps on 12 November. Aussie Broadband, TPG, Telstra and Optus also reported heavy demand.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 6 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The result shows how a single large digital release, spread across a preload window, can push the NBN and retail networks to new highs while peaks stay within what operators said they had prepared for. The measurements come from different networks and baselines, so they show demand rather than a like-for-like capacity comparison.

The launch of Grand Theft Auto VI pushed the NBN to a throughput of 36.54 Tbps, which NBN Co said is the most data the network has moved in a single second, WhistleOut reported on 20 November 2026. NBN Co said the figure is about 20 per cent above baseline and equivalent to downloading the 212GB game 21 times in a second.

The launch peak followed an earlier record. NBN Co confirmed traffic hit 33.19 Tbps on 12 November, about 10 per cent above its normal baseline, as players preloaded the game, which became available on 10 November. TechRadar reported that the earlier peak topped the previous record of 32.91 Tbps set in 2025. NBN Co said a Fortnite patch released the same day also contributed, so the 12 November peak cannot be attributed to GTA VI alone. Since preloading began, NBN Co has logged more than 70 petabytes of additional traffic, which it estimated at roughly 330,000 game downloads.

Retail providers reported their own highs. An Aussie Broadband spokesperson told WhistleOut the launch took its network to 6.9 Tbps, and said traffic to PlayStation servers rose 151 per cent during the preload period, with Xbox servers up 39 per cent. A TPG spokesperson said traffic on the night was about 15 per cent above average, with the spike starting around 2.30pm and surging in the evening. Telstra set no record, but a spokesperson said the spike was the third largest it has seen. Optus did not share data on the night, but said its customers had downloaded more than 10.1 petabytes of the game since preloads began, approximately 47,500 copies.

NBN Co's state breakdown for the first four days of preloading showed Tasmania with the largest peak increase above baseline at 16.3 per cent, followed by South Australia at 14.2 per cent, Victoria at 13.9 per cent and New South Wales at 13.8 per cent. Queensland recorded 13.6 per cent and Western Australia the smallest rise at 6.6 per cent.

Preloading spread demand over several days rather than concentrating it on release day, and NBN Co said it had prepared and expected the network to cope. Broadband experts warned of a risk of localised congestion and slower speeds in the days after launch. Canstar figures cited by ChannelNews put a full 212GB download at almost 19 hours on NBN 25 and 28 minutes on NBN 1000, though actual speeds depend on network conditions, servers and household equipment.

Overseas, DE-CIX recorded a peak of 33.03 Tbps across its exchanges on 18 November, and CircleID noted that operator figures measure different networks and are not directly comparable. Virgin Media O2 had its busiest day for internet traffic on 10 November, and Comcast called the preloads the largest single event in its network's history, according to reports.

REPORTING FROM

1. **Hoodline** · GTA VI Preload Breaks Broadband Traffic Records Nationwide
2. **channelnews.com.au** · Is Your Broadband Slow Today, As GTA 6 Download Demand Slows NBN – channelnews
3. **circleid.com** · GTA VI Launch Pushes Internet Traffic to Record Highs Across Global Networks
4. **Wisevoter** · NBN Traffic Hits Record as GTA 6 Launches
5. **WhistleOut** · Grand Theft Auto VI sets NBN download record
6. **mezha.net** · GTA 6 preloads help push Australian network to record traffic peak

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

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 7 OF 13

Telstra and Maritime Safety Queensland finish marine radio rebuild at eight northern sites

Maritime Safety Queensland and Telstra have finished upgrading marine VHF radio infrastructure at eight remote Far North Queensland sites, with new towers, satellite backhaul, solar power and batteries.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The rebuild gives the Reef and Torres Strait traffic services sturdier radio and tracking infrastructure in locations reachable only by air or sea, and shows Telstra's enterprise work for government in remote regions.

Telstra and Maritime Safety Queensland, part of the Department of Transport and Main Roads, have completed work on eight marine VHF radio sites in Far North Queensland, Marine Business News reported on 20 November 2026. The sites serve shipping around Weipa, Karumba and Thursday Island, and also carry the Reef Vessel Traffic Service at Darnley Island, Moa Island, High Peak, Cooktown (Indian Head) and Mt Westall.

The works added new towers and VHF radio systems, along with satellite backhaul, solar power and battery storage. Automatic Identification System equipment now operates at High Peak and Mt Westall, giving better vessel tracking and monitoring. Several locations could be reached only by helicopter or vessel, and gear for High Peak and Mt Westall was flown in.

Funding came from the Queensland Government and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, and the two delivery partners have worked together for more than 30 years. The network will back Reef VTS, which Maritime Safety Queensland runs jointly with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority. The project took ARCIA's Outstanding Critical Communications Project award and is a finalist for Public Sector Project of the Year at the PMI Australia Project Management Awards.

Maritime Safety Queensland General Manager Kell Dillon called the work a major investment in the safety and resilience of northern maritime communications. Dillon said the upgrades "will help vessels stay connected with our traffic services, improving safety for shipping, commercial operators and recreational boaters."

Telstra Enterprise Group Executive Oliver Camplin-Warner said the company had spent two years rebuilding the network with Maritime Safety Queensland. He said crews flew towers and power systems to mountaintops and islands with no roads, within a weather window of five or six months a year. Camplin-Warner said, "The Great Barrier Reef is a World Heritage area and one of the busiest shipping corridors in the country," and that those monitoring it must be able to reach a ship's bridge in any weather.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Marine Business News - Australia's Marine Business Industry News Source** · Maritime Safety Queensland and Telstra rebuild the radio network helping protect the Great Barrier Reef

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

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 8 OF 13

Telstra begins RCS rollout, with iPhone support due after Apple's December update

Telstra began enabling RCS messaging on Android handsets on 16 November, and iPhones are due to follow once Apple releases its December iOS update. Optus and Vodafone have not committed to switching it on.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Until now none of the big three supported RCS on iPhone, and Optus and Vodafone have only said they are considering or exploring it, so messages between Telstra and rival-network customers will keep falling back to SMS and MMS.

Telstra has begun turning on RCS, the successor to SMS and MMS, and Android phones on its network started receiving it on 16 November. A Telstra spokesperson told Information Age that iPhone customers will get it after Apple's December iOS update, and the carrier aims to complete the rollout by the end of 2026.

Apple built RCS support into iOS 18 in 2024, but the feature depends on the mobile network also supporting it. Until now, none of the three big Australian carriers had enabled it for iPhone.

RCS carries texts over Wi-Fi or mobile data instead of the legacy SMS channel. Telstra's RCS page lists higher-quality photos and video, typing indicators, read receipts, improved mixed iPhone and Android group chats, and messaging over Wi-Fi. Telstra says RCS supports end-to-end encryption, although some older handsets may lack certain security features, and on iPhone the encrypted version remains a beta that Apple is enabling network by network. iPhone users will still see green bubbles for RCS messages, and Telstra says some message effects and animations may not work.

The service is switched on by default for Telstra consumer, small business and enterprise mobile services, with no added charge. Messages count towards a customer's data allowance when away from Wi-Fi, and roaming charges may apply overseas. A Telstra spokesperson told WhistleOut that Belong, Everyday Mobile and ALDI Mobile customers are covered, and Information Age added Boost.

Both the sender's and recipient's phones and networks must support RCS, and Telstra says messages revert to SMS or MMS when either side does not. A Telstra customer messaging someone on Optus or Vodafone will therefore notice no change for now. Neither rival has confirmed it will enable RCS. Optus told Information Age that RCS is "one of a number of future product and technology initiatives being considered". Vodafone said it is "actively exploring how best to bring this capability to our customers".

Android users need Google Messages, and Telstra says some older Samsung owners using the Samsung Messages app may have to switch. iTWire noted that Google Messages already carries RCS between Android phones over Google's own servers, so the iPhone was the gap. iPhone users should install the December update and then confirm RCS Messaging is on in Settings, under Apps and Messages.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Digital Advisors** · Telstra RCS: what changes for iPhone and Android texts

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

POLICY & REGULATION 9 OF 13

AusAlert cell broadcast warnings now live alongside the older SMS system

AusAlert, Australia's national cell-broadcast warning system, has been available since 1 October 2026 and will run beside the SMS-based Emergency Alert until at least July 2027. One broadcast from towers reaches every compatible device in range, instead of a text to each number.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Warnings move from number-by-number SMS to tower broadcasts that can reach devices on congested networks, with tighter targeting and no dependence on customer databases, though landlines remain on the old system for now.

Australia's new national warning system, AusAlert, has been available since 1 October 2026 and pushes emergency warnings out from mobile towers rather than as text messages. The older Emergency Alert system stays in service beside it until at least July 2027, and some states and territories may use both during this warning season while the transition is completed next year. Eventually AusAlert is to replace the SMS system.

Before launch, the system was tried in community tests at nine locations in June and a national test on 27 July 2026. AusAlert's preliminary results show 94% of Australia's mobile cells broadcast the test alert, which was above the target.

Emergency Alert behaves like a large mailing list: emergency services pick an area, and the system then sends a message to each phone associated with it. ACMA says phones are found through the address held in the Integrated Public Number Database, which telcos are legally required to supply, and through a mobile's last known location. Messages and calls from that system originate from 0444 444 444.

AusAlert is built on cell broadcast, which is used in more than 30 countries, among them the US, UK, Japan, New Zealand and Canada. Nearby towers send out one mass transmission, and all compatible devices within range receive it together. Because it travels on a dedicated channel instead of SMS, alerts can get through even when networks are congested. Warning zones can shrink to 160 metres across and can span state borders. The service depends on active 4G and 5G networks and does not require a working SIM, although Apple notes iPhone government alerts are supported with a SIM or eSIM from a supported provider.

Only authorised senders can issue alerts: state and territory emergency services for local and regional emergencies, and the Australian Government for national ones. Each alert carries one of two levels. A Critical Alert makes the phone vibrate and play a loud siren-like sound for about 10 seconds, even on silent or Do Not Disturb, and users cannot opt out. A Priority Alert stays quiet on silent or Do Not Disturb and can be turned off.

On Apple hardware, AusAlert is expected to work on iPhone 11 and later models running iOS 26.4 or newer, and on the Apple Watch SE2, SE3 and Series 6 onwards with watchOS 26.4 or newer. Android phones need Android 12 or a later version. iPads will not get AusAlerts. Landlines continue to be reached by the old system, while the government works with Emergency Management Victoria on extending its Automated Voice Messaging to carry AusAlert warnings to landlines, with no start date given.

Since towers broadcast to everyone in range, no app, sign-up or opt-in is needed, and visitors without an Australian SIM can receive alerts. AusAlert does not collect or store phone numbers or locations. The ACT Emergency Services Agency says devices just outside a target area may receive an alert, since radio coverage does not follow exact warning boundaries. AusAlert says an alert might be missed if the device is off, in aeroplane mode, incompatible or out of date, or if a nearby tower is damaged. Telstra says a genuine warning will not ask recipients to click, pay or hand over personal information.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Digital Advisors** · How AusAlert emergency alerts work, explained

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

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 10 OF 13

NBN Co opens full fibre upgrade to more than 470 premises in Trangie

More than 470 homes and businesses in the central-west NSW town of Trangie can now move from copper-based nbn services to Fibre to the Premises, with NBN Co staff holding drop-in sessions in town.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The Trangie upgrade is a regional example of NBN Co's fibre upgrade program replacing copper-based connections, a program that has made full fibre the largest technology footprint on the network.

More than 470 homes and businesses in Trangie are now eligible to upgrade to nbn's Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) service, Dubbo Photo News reported on Monday 23 November 2026. The paper had reported in May that construction was underway in the town to enable the upgrade.

NBN Co staff are in Trangie for drop-in sessions at Café 2823 to discuss the upgrade and what better connectivity could mean for households, businesses and the local economy. The first sessions have already been held, and the team returns between 9.30am and 2pm from Tuesday 24 November to Thursday 26 November.

The company says the move from the legacy copper-based service brings a more reliable and resilient connection, with better video calls, streaming and download speeds, and the ability to connect more devices at once. It also points to benefits for remote work, online education and telehealth, which it says can reduce the need for long drives.

Narromine Shire Council Mayor Lachlan Roberts urged locals to attend a session. Roberts said faster, more reliable broadband would support local businesses, agriculture, students and families, and would create "greater opportunities for people to live, work and thrive in Trangie". He added that recent investment in both fibre and fixed wireless infrastructure would help leave residents and businesses well positioned.

Tom O’Dea, nbn Head of Regional Engagement NSW, said households were consuming more data than ever. He said reliable connectivity was becoming an essential part of life as more people work remotely, run businesses and connect smart devices.

Across the country, more than 1.5 million homes and businesses have upgraded from copper to full fibre under nbn's fibre upgrade program. Full fibre is now the largest technology footprint on the network, at around 39 per cent of all connections.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Dubbo Photo News** · Trangie's digital future gets a boost as nbn upgrade completed

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

SATELLITE & SPACE 11 OF 13

Zetifi wins NSW funding to build ZetiSky satellite safety antenna for vehicles

Wagga Wagga's Zetifi is one of six first-round recipients sharing $7 million from the NSW Emerging Technology Commercialisation Fund. The money will go to ZetiSky, a vehicle antenna meant to send SOS alerts over direct-to-device satellite when there is no mobile signal.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 3 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The grant supports work on making direct-to-device satellite usable for safety-critical communications outside mobile coverage, a gap Zetifi says current services leave open. It also links a regional Australian hardware maker with telematics platforms and a Telstra sales channel that fleet customers already use.

Zetifi, a Wagga Wagga company that makes connected fleet technology, has been named among the first six winners of the NSW Government's Emerging Technology Commercialisation Fund, which is dividing $7 million between them. Its share will pay for ZetiSky, an antenna mounted on a vehicle that lets a worker send a distress call and stay reachable over direct-to-device satellite in places with no terrestrial mobile coverage.

Zetifi argues that direct-to-device satellite is beginning commercial service in some markets but cannot yet be trusted for safety-critical work. The company says trees, terrain and the vehicle itself can block the signal, and that current services mainly carry messages and low-bandwidth traffic. ZetiSky aims to address that at the vehicle rather than leaning only on a handset connection.

Details released with the award describe a project with several components. Software will choose between terrestrial and satellite networks, drawing on location, mapped and learned coverage, satellite geometry and measured link quality. The antenna will also be integrated with direct-to-device satellite services and tuned as conditions change. For safety messaging, SOS alerts and check-ins will go first, messages will be held and forwarded if no network is available, and the worker will be told when a message has been received.

The product extends Zetifi's Smart Antenna Pro and dual-gain Smart Antenna, which are both designed and built in Wagga Wagga. The plan is for it to report into safety and telematics platforms that employers already operate. Telstra muru-D and Teletrac Navman are listed as project partners, and Zetifi also works with telematics providers including Geotab. Zetifi presents the product as a way to respond to incidents, not to watch over workers.

Zetifi sells into agriculture, transport, logistics, health services and field services, through Telstra, CoolDrive Auto Parts and independent automotive and electronics dealers. Founder and chief executive Dan Winson said, "Satellite in the phone is a big step, but for someone working alone, the connection has to be dependable." He said the money would let the company build on its smart antennas and its Marshal Lone Worker Safety solution to offer last-mile coverage to existing fleet customers.

NSW Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology Anoulack Chanthivong tied the round to helping companies turn research into commercial products. He said, "The next generation of globally successful companies could be sitting in a NSW lab, startup or research institute today." Chanthivong said the programme would "help create jobs, attract investment and reinforce NSW's position as a global leader in science, research and innovation".

REPORTING FROM

1. **TelcoNews Australia** · Zetifi wins NSW funding for satellite safety antenna
2. **techpartner.news** · NSW govt backs Zetifi's satellite safety antenna for remote workers - techpartner.news
3. **iTWire** · NSW Government Backs Zetifi's ZetiSky - A Vehicle Smart Antenna For Direct-to-Device Satellite Safety Connectivity

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

FIBRE, SUBSEA & INTERCONNECT 12 OF 13

Avelacom opens Sydney-Illinois trading route with 170.85ms round-trip delay

Avelacom has opened a fibre route between the ASX's Australian Liquidity Centre in Sydney and CME Group's Aurora data centre, reporting a round-trip delay of 170.85 milliseconds. The company calls it the fastest fibre path between the two sites but gave no latency figures for its backup routes.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 2 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

For Australian trading firms, a roughly 1ms gain on a Sydney-US path sits alongside growing scrutiny of backup performance and shared infrastructure, while new transpacific cables such as APX East add route options.

Avelacom has brought into service a fibre route between the ASX's Australian Liquidity Centre in Sydney and CME Group's Aurora data centre in Illinois, with a reported round-trip delay of 170.85 milliseconds. The route was announced on 19 November 2026 and relies on a new North American point of presence that gives a more direct optical path, Capacity reported. Avelacom said where that point of presence sits is confidential.

Avelacom told Capacity that its latest network optimisation trimmed about 1ms from the round-trip delay, and it claims this makes the route the fastest fibre option between the two facilities.

Lorenz Voss, managing director, US at Avelacom, said firms making markets in ASX SPI 200 futures need to react fast to US equity futures moves during Sydney's night session. "If US equity futures move sharply, the firm may need to update its Australian quotes before someone trades against a stale price," he said. Voss said interest rate trading has a similar need, because shifts in US Treasury futures can push desks trading US-Australia yield spreads to adjust positions while both markets are open.

The primary connection is backed by alternative paths through Guam and Tokyo, along with US options through Los Angeles, Seattle, Hillsboro and San Jose. Voss said customers ask whether primary and backup circuits are physically separate along the entire route. "Two circuits can still share a subsea cable, a landing station, or a stretch of terrestrial fibre," he said. Asked about the backups, Avelacom said usable bandwidth varies with each customer's configuration and cannot be stated as one number, and it gave no round-trip latency for those connections.

Capacity pointed to a September 2026 report from the China Strategic Risks Institute, prepared for the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, which assessed how cable disruptions could affect capacity and latency. In one Taiwan-US scenario, the estimated round-trip delay climbed from 231.5ms to 279.2ms once direct routes were overwhelmed, though the modelling centred on US-Asia links rather than the Sydney-Illinois route. Voss said trading firms want to know how much latency and capacity would remain in an outage, so they can decide which systems and data feeds keep running.

The launch coincides with heavy investment in Pacific capacity, including Google's Tabua cable between Australia and California and its Honomoana system through the South Pacific. TeleGeography put construction costs for new transpacific cables due in service from 2026 to 2029 at more than US$3 billion, against about US$1.7 billion invested in the three years before; the estimate includes announced projects that may not all be finished. One planned system is SUBCO's APX East, a 16-fibre-pair cable linking Sydney and San Diego and aiming for service in the fourth quarter of 2028. In September 2026 Firmus agreed to invest around US$300 million for up to 150Tbps of dedicated capacity on the cable over 25 years.

Voss said trading firms boil it down to two questions: "How fast is the connection from exchange to exchange, and what performance can we expect if the primary path goes down?"

REPORTING FROM

1 **ETDatacenters.com** · Avelacom launches Sydney-US fibre route for financial trading, ETDatacenters

2 **Capacity Media** · Avelacom’s 170.85ms route: Is speed enough for transpacific connectivity?

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

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 13 OF 13

nbn and NSW Government complete $5.9 million fixed wireless upgrade in western NSW

A $5.9 million build along the Narromine to Cobar corridor now serves an additional 900 homes and businesses, with the NSW Government providing $5.3 million and nbn doing the work.

Best Effort desk · Mon 23 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The project shows state funding paired with nbn delivery being used to extend fixed wireless to rural properties that had relied on satellite services.

nbn and the NSW Government have finished a $5.9 million broadband upgrade in western NSW that connects 900 more homes and businesses, the Condobolin Argus reported. The state put in $5.3 million, and nbn was responsible for building it.

Along the Narromine to Cobar corridor, crews built two new towers and fitted fixed wireless equipment to three towers already in place. The network now reaches areas around Cobar, Nyngan, Narromine, Trangie and Warren, especially properties that depended on satellite internet before. Fixed wireless coverage now reaches past the nbn fibre connections in town centres, so more rural properties can get better broadband. The Argus said the project brings better coverage and fewer interruptions and dropouts.

Trangie farmer Mark Dugan said unreliable connections had made even routine tasks hard, with frequent dropouts interrupting work at home. He said the new service gave him more confidence that online tasks could be finished without losing the connection. Grace Walker, owner and chief flying instructor at Narromine flight school Flying with Grace, had been using her phone as a hotspot at her office. She said unreliable connectivity often pushed administrative work into after-hours at home, and that fixed wireless has made her work more efficient.

Minister for Regional and Western NSW Tara Moriarty said reliable internet was essential for running businesses, managing farms, accessing services and studying from home.

The works are one part of a $76 million partnership between the state and nbn under the Regional Digital Connectivity Program. That program targets better internet for almost 12,000 homes and small businesses in more than 49 regional locations. Next in line are Taralga, Binda, Goolgowi, Wilcannia and the areas around Narrabri, with services due by the end of 2027. nbn offers an

online regional checker for property owners to see whether they are eligible.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Condobolin Argus** · $5.9 million internet upgrade connects western NSW communities

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