# Best Effort.

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

TODAY'S BRIEFING

## Friday 27 November 2026

- Data centres dominate the edition.
- The ABS reported private capital spending up 12.2 per cent in the September quarter 2026, the sharpest quarterly rise since 2011, with data centre equipment the main driver.
- The federal government cleared the $32 billion Anthropic-backed Western Downs Digital Park of further national environmental assessment, though council and state approvals remain.
- Unions and contractors are pressing for apprentice quotas on builders, and the ACT is still investigating a Triple Zero power failure.

**13** stories · **22 min** reading · **22** sources · Online at besteffort.au/editions/2026-11-27

IN THIS EDITION

1 DATA CENTRES
**Data centre buildout lifts Australian business investment by 12.2 per cent in a quarter**
Private capital spending jumped 12.2 per cent in the September quarter 2026, the ABS...

2 POLICY & REGULATION
**ACMA seeks views on satellite options for outdoor mobile coverage on external territories**
The ACMA has opened consultation on two high-level regulatory options to help Optus...

3 DATA CENTRES
**Anthropic-backed $32b Western Downs data centre cleared of federal environmental assessment**
The federal government has decided the proposed Western Downs Digital Park near...

4 POLICY & REGULATION
**ACMA issues guidance on new duties to block illegal gambling from 1 January 2027**
The ACMA has released initial guidance for ISPs, DNS providers, app distribution...

5 DATA CENTRES
**Unions and contractors want data centre builders forced to take on apprentices**
The ETU and NECA are urging the government to write apprentice quotas and a training...

6 CARRIERS & NETWORKS

### NSW commits $3.8m to three nbn fixed wireless towers in the Riverina

The NSW Government is funding three fixed wireless towers with nbn at Yerong Creek...

7 DATA CENTRES

### CDC chief Greg Boorer says data centre opposition is built on misinformation

Speaking to an ACT Property Council event on Monday 23 November 2026, CDC founder and...

8 CARRIERS & NETWORKS

### Telstra opens its Flinders Island network to rival customers during bushfire

About 150 people on other networks have connected to Telstra through Temporary...

9 AI INFRASTRUCTURE

### Charlton says reliance on foreign AI could outweigh Australia's oil dependence

Assistant Minister Andrew Charlton told ABC News Australia the country needs its own...

10 CARRIERS & NETWORKS

### GlobalData forecasts Australian fixed wireless connections to grow 3.6 per cent a year to 2031

GlobalData expects fixed wireless access to rise from 10.4 per cent of Australian...

11 CARRIERS & NETWORKS

### Telstra launches Dynamic 5G, a slice-based wireless service with a throughput guarantee

Telstra is selling business customers a wireless service on its 5G standalone network...

12 AI INFRASTRUCTURE

### Firmus chases US$4 billion debt package to keep Indonesian AI project on schedule

Firmus is trying to raise US$4 billion before Christmas to fund Nvidia chips for a...

13 POLICY & REGULATION

### ACT still investigating Triple Zero outage after backup power systems failed to hold

A four-minute power loss at the ACT Emergency Services Agency's Fairbairn...

DATA CENTRES 1 OF 13

# Data centre buildout lifts Australian business investment by 12.2 per cent in a quarter

Private capital spending jumped 12.2 per cent in the September quarter 2026, the ABS reported, the sharpest quarterly increase since the mining boom of 2011, with data centre equipment the main driver.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 2 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Data centre fit-out is now a main driver of national business investment, concentrated in Victoria and New South Wales and tied to electricity and transmission works. Planned spending for 2026-27 was revised up and one economist expects ICT spending to nearly double in the 2027 financial year, though much of the equipment is imported.

Private new capital expenditure in Australia climbed 12.2 per cent in the September quarter 2026 after seasonal adjustment, the Australian Bureau of Statistics reported on Thursday 26 November 2026. CNA reported that the inflation-adjusted level reached A$59.5 billion, against market forecasts of a 4.4 per cent increase. The ABS said spending is 18.6 per cent above the level of a year earlier.

Robert Ewing, the ABS head of business statistics, said the quarter's increase was "the largest rise in capital expenditure since the September quarter 2011, during the mining investment boom." He linked the strength to firms buying large volumes of server racks and processing gear, a pattern that has built since the September quarter 2025.

Information media and telecommunications posted the biggest industry gain, up 86.7 per cent to a record. Equipment and machinery spending overall rose 23.1 per cent to a record high, and the information media and telecommunications part of that category was up 183.5 per cent. CNA noted that much of the equipment was imported, which offsets some of the benefit to economic growth.

Outlays on buildings and structures edged up 1.7 per cent. Information media and telecommunications building work rose 8.9 per cent and electricity, gas, water and waste services rose 7.7 per cent, with both sectors at record levels. Ewing said renewable energy and data centre projects continue to drive the building category, backed by power suppliers delivering related storage and transmission infrastructure. Victoria, up 31.0 per cent, and New South Wales, up 9.6 per cent, continue to account for most data centre investment, while the

Northern Territory was the only state or territory to decline.

Companies also raised their intentions for the coming year. An ABS survey showed planned spending of A$223.7 billion in the year to June 2027, which is 11.8 per cent more than the previous estimate. Abhijit Surya, senior APAC economist at Capital Economics, said information and communications technology spending could nearly double in the 2027 financial year, while capital spending elsewhere was struggling to tread water.

CNA said the figures pointed to some resilience in the economy after five interest rate rises this year. Surya said that because the Reserve Bank is clearly worried about capacity pressures, the data suggest it "won't be in a rush to cut rates anytime soon". According to CNA, markets do not fully price a first cut until August, and a June cut is seen as an 83 per cent chance.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Australian Bureau of Statistics** · Data centre investment continues to drive new capital expenditure

2 **CNA** · Data centre rush drives biggest rise in Australian business investment since mining boom

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

---

POLICY & REGULATION 2 OF 13

# ACMA seeks views on satellite options for outdoor mobile coverage on external territories

The ACMA has opened consultation on two high-level regulatory options to help Optus, Telstra and TPG Telecom meet the Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation in Australia's external territories and territorial sea. Submissions close on 12 February 2027.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The consultation will shape how mobile spectrum can be used for satellite-to-handset services in remote areas, which the three operators are likely to depend on to meet the UOMO outside the terrestrial network.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority is asking industry for views on two regulatory options to support mobile operators in meeting the Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation (UOMO) in the external territories and

territorial sea. Submissions close at 5 pm AEDT on Friday 12 February 2027.

The UOMO will require Australia's three mobile network operators, Optus, Telstra and TPG Telecom, to provide baseline outdoor voice and text coverage across the country. That includes the external territories of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, as well as Australia's territorial sea.

The ACMA said the operators are likely to rely, at least in part, on satellite-to-handset direct-to-device technology to meet the obligation in those areas. Its consultation paper sets out two high-level options, which it said could provide a pathway for future use of International Mobile Telecommunications spectrum for direct-to-device satellite services in the territories and territorial sea.

The regulator is also seeking feedback on its analysis of the alternatives to those two options.

REPORTING FROM

1 **ACMA** · Supporting the Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation in the external territories and territorial sea

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

---

DATA CENTRES 3 OF 13

# Anthropic-backed $32b Western Downs data centre cleared of federal environmental assessment

The federal government has decided the proposed Western Downs Digital Park near Dalby, Queensland, needs no further national environmental assessment. The $32 billion project, backed by Anthropic, still needs council and state sign-off.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The decision clears the federal step for what ABC News described as the largest data centre proposed in Australia, leaving council and state approvals, and a dispute over emissions and approval speed, as the remaining hurdles.

A $32 billion data centre proposed for Queensland's Western Downs, backed by Anthropic, has cleared the federal environmental stage, ABC News reported on 26 November 2026. The National Environmental Protection Agency found

the Western Downs Digital Park, west of Brisbane, was "unlikely to have a significant impact on matters of national environmental significance". The project was referred to the agency only about two months earlier, and a government spokesperson attributed the speed of the decision to the project's design and site selection.

The spokesperson said the agency had examined the proposal and concluded that the development near Dalby needed no further federal assessment. The spokesperson also said the project was expected to generate thousands of jobs and lift the state economy, and that nobody lodged a public comment while the referral was open.

The hyperscale facility is planned for the Wambo feedlot, about 250 kilometres west of Brisbane. ABC News described it as the largest data centre proposed in Australia, with total energy capacity roughly a quarter of Queensland's daily electricity use. Anthropic signed a deal on the hub in September and hoped to start using it in 2027.

Developer Zerra DC welcomed the decision. A company spokesperson said the region was picked to limit effects on locals and the environment, while drawing on its energy and industrial base, including nearby high-voltage infrastructure at Braemar. Zerra DC said it was preparing a long-term benefits framework covering local infrastructure, digital learning, jobs, business opportunities and community-led projects.

The development is still subject to council and state approval. According to the council, the Queensland government is set to take over data centre approvals, except for the Western Downs Digital Park.

A Climate Council report released in the week before the article's publication named the project as the data centre industry's top potential polluter, citing its large electricity demand. The report found that without renewable energy supply, the project would produce annual emissions equal to those of 3 million cars by 2035. A community group has formed in Dalby to protest the pace of the project's development. Angela Prenzler of the Western Downs Says Pause group said she believed the project was being fast-tracked at every level. She said approval of a shed on private land appeared to take longer than approval of a data centre in the council area. Prenzler said that even federally, "Nothing is stopping it."

REPORTING FROM

1 **ABC News** · Anthropic's first data centre in Australia given environmental approval

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

POLICY & REGULATION 4 OF 13

# ACMA issues guidance on new duties to block illegal gambling from 1 January 2027

The ACMA has released initial guidance for ISPs, DNS providers, app distribution services and search engines ahead of duties starting on 1 January 2027 to keep illegal gambling operators from reaching Australians through their services.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Blocking duties will reach beyond current website-blocking arrangements to a wider set of providers, so Australian ISPs and DNS operators have until 1 January 2027 to settle what steps they will take.

The ACMA released its first guidance on Thursday 26 November 2026 for digital infrastructure providers facing new gambling-related duties. From 1 January 2027, the duties will cover internet service providers, DNS providers, app distribution services and search engines.

Each of these providers must take steps that are reasonably practicable to stop their facilities and services being used by illegal gambling operators that have a link to Australian customers. The regulator said the aim is to cut access by disrupting the digital routes that put such services in front of Australians. The regime adds to the existing website-blocking arrangements, and extends an active duty to more kinds of digital service provider.

The guidance explains which providers and services fall within the framework and how designated illegal gambling services are identified. It also lists steps providers may take, along with factors the ACMA may weigh when it assesses compliance.

The ACMA said it may revise the guidance or add to it once the obligations are in force.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Australian Communications and Media Authority** · ACMA publishes industry guidance on disrupting access to illegal online gambling services

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

DATA CENTRES 5 OF 13

# Unions and contractors want data centre builders forced to take on apprentices

The ETU and NECA are urging the government to write apprentice quotas and a training levy into its National AI Framework, citing a forecast shortage of more than 70,000 electricians by 2030. Data Centres Australia calls quotas a blunt tool.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 2 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The proposal would put workforce obligations on data centre developers at the same time as the sector competes with housing and energy projects for a scarce pool of electricians. How the National AI Framework treats training could shape construction costs and project timelines for the industry.

The Electrical Trades Union (ETU) and the National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA) are pushing for data centre developers to be required to train their own electricians, so the AI building boom does not strip labour from housing and renewable energy projects. The groups are making joint representations to federal parliamentarians during the sitting week beginning 23 November, Infrastructure Magazine reported.

Under the proposal, developers would act as "anchor host employers" and take on more first and second year apprentices instead of hiring qualified electricians away from other sites. The ratio would be one apprentice for every three trade workers during the construction phase of a data centre. Developers would also help fund additional TAFE and VET places through a levy, as the groups argue taxpayers should not carry the full cost. They want the requirements included in the government's National AI Framework, which is expected to go before parliament in the new year.

The call follows revised projections from the Powering Skills Organisation, which now puts the national shortage of electrical workers at more than 70,000 by 2030, up from about 40,000. The organisation estimates data centre construction alone would need an extra 13,280 electricians by 2030.

ETU national secretary Michael Wright said one in ten ETU members was now working on a data centre build, up from zero in only a few years. He said some operators in Sydney and Melbourne already employ one apprentice for every three licensed electrical workers, and that regulation would stop them competing with operators that do not invest in training. Wright said the boom was a "singular opportunity" to lift the number of electricians over the long term.

NECA chief executive Stewart Joyce said contractors were spending time and money training apprentices only to lose them to higher-paying data centre jobs. Joyce said the shift was "taking labour off critical infrastructure and housing projects and contributing to construction delays". He also said inflated data centre wages were pushing up construction costs in major centres.

Data Centres Australia CEO Belinda Dennett disagreed with the approach, saying the electrician shortage was economy-wide rather than specific to data centres. She argued that higher data centre wages were drawing more workers into the sector. Dennett said "quotas are a very blunt tool".

On Tuesday, the Joint Select Committee on Artificial Intelligence released a report calling for "tangible benefits" for communities hosting data centres, and recommending consideration of local jobs, apprenticeships and training. A draft of the National AI Framework released earlier this year said data centre projects should make a "meaningful contribution" to expanding the workforce rather than relying on the existing pool of tradespeople. Skills and Training Minister Andrew Giles said the government was committed to a system responsive to labour market needs, but did not comment directly on quotas.

REPORTING FROM

1 **abc.net.au** · Union pushes to force data centre developers to train more electricians
2 **Infrastructure Magazine** · Industry calls for data centre apprenticeship requirements

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

---

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 6 OF 13

# NSW commits $3.8m to three nbn fixed wireless towers in the Riverina

The NSW Government is funding three fixed wireless towers with nbn at Yerong Creek, Pleasant Hills and Henty, extending coverage to more than 500 homes and businesses across 1,600 square kilometres.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 2 sources · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The project shows the state government co-funding nbn fixed wireless build in regional NSW, with the Riverina towers one part of a $76 million program covering nearly 12,000 premises.

The NSW Government has put $3.8 million into three new fixed wireless towers in the Riverina, which will give more than 500 homes and businesses access to better broadband. nbn is building them under the state's Regional Digital Connectivity Program, and they are expected to widen fixed wireless coverage by 1,600 square kilometres around Yerong Creek, Pleasant Hills and Henty.

Fixed wireless carries a broadband signal from a tower to an antenna fitted at the customer's premises, over 4G and 5G technology. The government said cafés, sporting clubs and agribusinesses can now get quicker downloads and smoother video calls, and that steadier connections would help households working and learning from home. It said the sites were chosen after community consultation, planning and work with the local council.

The Riverina towers are one piece of a $76 million partnership between the state and nbn, which covers nearly 12,000 homes and small businesses at more than 49 regional NSW locations and uses both fixed wireless and fibre. The same state program has also paid for 175 mobile base stations in regional and remote NSW, co-funded with the Australian Government, with investment totalling more than $48.3 million.

Minister for Regional NSW Tara Moriarty said the three towers "will now give more than 500 local homes and businesses access to better broadband". Tom O'Dea, head of regional engagement NSW at nbn, described the fixed wireless network as a critical part of the company's infrastructure for regional homes and businesses. "Australians deserve access to fast, effective broadband, regardless of whether they live in a major city or a country town," O'Dea said.

Lockhart Shire Mayor Jane Hunter said the announcement was "a wonderful outcome for our residents and businesses". She thanked residents for taking part in the council's original survey, which she said helped show why better connectivity across the shire matters. Residents and businesses can check eligibility for an nbn upgrade on the nbn website.

REPORTING FROM

1. **NSW Government** · Faster internet for more than 500 homes and businesses across the Riverina
2. **techpartner.news** · NSW govt invests $3.8m in three fixed wireless towers for Riverina - techpartner.news

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

DATA CENTRES 7 OF 13

# CDC chief Greg Boorer says data centre opposition is built on misinformation

Speaking to an ACT Property Council event on Monday 23 November 2026, CDC founder and CEO Greg Boorer said objections to data centres lack a factual basis and urged governments to make the case for the industry as sovereign infrastructure.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 2 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The comments show a large operator arguing that community consent and siting are becoming central to how quickly Australian data centre capacity can be built, and pressing governments to set clear frameworks.

CDC founder and CEO Greg Boorer wants governments to put more effort into explaining why data centres matter, arguing the industry is being left alone to answer growing community concern. He was speaking at an ACT Property Council event on Monday 23 November 2026. Boorer said Australia has a golden opportunity to build sovereign capability around advances in artificial intelligence, while misinformation spreads through social media.

He compared the reaction to the one that gas, solar, wind and battery projects have met, particularly in the regions, and said anxiety about AI had intensified it. Critics call data centres water and energy guzzlers, Boorer said, yet none of CDC's facilities in its 20-year history has used water for cooling. He also said data centres do not push up power bills and that CDC often underwrites new grid generation to offset what it builds.

Boorer described CDC's proposed Wagga Wagga data centre as among the biggest regional projects in Australia. He said the government and the electricity utility advised that the site was the best location in the country. In his account, CDC has had to run community engagement on its own, including promoting a $225 million benefit-sharing fund for the city, against a small but effective opposition. Boorer said supporters stay silent, whereas "you've got 90 people on a petition that are going bananas" over "imported, concocted outrage on social media from the United States about gas turbines that we're not even talking about".

CDC wants governments such as the ACT to set the highest possible standard in their data centre frameworks, Boorer said, since that would formalise what the company has done over two decades.

Boorer presented data centres as sovereign infrastructure and said the war in the Middle East had strengthened that case. "We had 30 days to work out the fuel supply issue, whereas with AI, with digital services, they can be turned off in a second," Boorer said. He said such services should not sit in another country.

Boorer said weaker US data centre investment after the mid-term election results, and in the Gulf states because of the war, gives Australia a window of about a decade to build its own digital infrastructure. He said that depends on placing facilities in "hardcore industrial areas or in regional areas with the necessary grid connectivity and communications connectivity" and not in residential estates.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Region Canberra** · Data centre hysteria threatens Australia's digital self-sufficiency, warns CDC founder

2 **Slicast** · CDC founder warns that data centre hysteria... · Slicast

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

---

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 8 OF 13

# Telstra opens its Flinders Island network to rival customers during bushfire

About 150 people on other networks have connected to Telstra through Temporary Disaster Roaming on Flinders Island, where a bushfire has burnt around 14,500 hectares and Telstra is the only mobile carrier.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 2 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The activation applies the operators' disaster-roaming arrangements in a place with one mobile carrier, where rival customers would otherwise have no service.

Telstra has extended Temporary Disaster Roaming on Flinders Island, so people who normally use other mobile providers can get onto its network while a bushfire burns out of control, Pulse Tasmania reported on 26 November 2026. The company said around 150 people with services on other networks have connected since the capability was switched on.

Telstra is the only mobile operator on the island, so subscribers of rival brands would normally get no mobile coverage at all. Customers of Optus, TPG or Vodafone, and of brands that resell those networks, can connect for the time being if their handsets are compatible. The arrangement covers calls, texts and basic data at no extra cost.

Wisevoter, citing Telecompaper, reported that Telstra switched the service on at 2:07pm AEDT on 25 November 2026 and described it as the first operational use of national arrangements agreed by Telstra, Optus and TPG Telecom. Pulse Tasmania reported that Australia's mobile operators made the capability available from 1 October, and that Telstra turned it on for an initial 24 hours before extending it.

Telstra said most people will not need to change settings, though a phone may display a network name such as "Disaster Roaming" or another carrier's name. Its island network is still operating, with crews keeping backup power running because mains power is out. Telstra said, "The situation remains dynamic and we'll continue to monitor conditions and respond as needed".

Telstra has also activated a disaster assistance package for customers in fire-affected areas. Eligible customers on monthly mobile plans will automatically get 100GB of extra data, and eligible prepaid customers can receive 70GB.

The blaze started last Thursday, apparently from a lightning strike, and has now covered about 10 per cent of the island. Stephen Richardson, the Tasmania Fire Service incident controller, said six or more properties had been damaged or destroyed. Killiecrankie remains under an emergency warning.

Reliance on a single carrier has been questioned before. In July a fault on Telstra's transmission link cut mobile and internet services across much of the island, and community member Alison Haines wrote to communications minister Anika Wells saying the situation posed "a serious risk to the health and safety of the community".

REPORTING FROM

1 **Pulse Tasmania** · Telstra opens network to rival customers on Flinders Island

2 **Wisevoter** · Australia Activates Disaster Roaming on Flinders Island

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

AI INFRASTRUCTURE 9 OF 13

# Charlton says reliance on foreign AI could outweigh Australia's oil dependence

Assistant Minister Andrew Charlton told ABC News Australia the country needs its own AI models, arguing that dependence on overseas models could become a bigger weakness than imported oil.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 3 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The remarks indicate the government sees Australia's data centre and compute capacity as a source of leverage over AI, while still wanting foreign models to operate locally under regulation.

Assistant Minister for Science, Technology and the Digital Economy Andrew Charlton has argued that Australia must develop its own artificial intelligence models, because dependence on overseas AI could turn into a larger weakness than its reliance on imported oil. He made the case in an interview with ABC News Australia, reported by The Financial Register on 24 November 2026. "Australia really needs sovereign AI. We can't spend the rest of our lives relying on foreign artificial intelligence," Charlton said.

Charlton pointed to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz this year, which he said revealed a serious oil vulnerability. He said that if foreign AI were the only AI operating in Australia, "that that dependency on foreign tokens, on foreign models will put our dependency today on foreign oil in the shade".

Asked whether Australia could build a model with the reach of ChatGPT or Claude, Charlton said the market is moving quickly. He said open weight models, which can be taken from other companies and adapted, have multiplied, and that several countries are building their own on that basis, an option he sees for Australia. Charlton said he expects Australian models in niche areas of expertise and in areas where security and sovereignty matter most, though they may not compete head-on with the models on people's phones now. "But we will certainly have Australian models that meet Australian needs," Charlton said. He said Australia already has 1,500 AI start-ups working on models, services and applications, and singled out Harrison AI as one of the best healthcare AI models in the world.

Charlton said sovereignty covers more than owning, building and running models; it also means having leverage over other people's models. He said that is why the government wants leading global models available in Australia, where they can be regulated. When it was put to him that this differs from owning models, he replied that sovereignty is a spectrum. In his account,

leverage comes first from Australia's own models and second from controlling parts of the supply chain, as Taiwan does through its chip fabrication plants. He said Australia's strength in data centres and compute would give it leverage in the AI stack. He also said competition among models from around the world is needed so the country does not depend on one model or one nation, warning that otherwise Australia will be overrun by foreign models.

On the removal and reinstatement of Nvidia chief executive Jensen Huang, Charlton said that was a decision for Nvidia's board. He agreed that AI power sits with a limited number of countries, companies and individuals, and said that concentration shows why Australia should have its own AI, giving it options and alternatives.

The interview followed the release of the report by the multi-party AI committee, which Charlton said the government is working through and welcomes "very warmly". He congratulated co-chairs Joe Briski and Jono Duniam. Charlton was also asked whether the Trump administration might push back on the digital duty of care laws, under which big tech firms face fines of up to 5 per cent of global revenue. He replied that the government works closely with that administration. He added that comparable penalties have been applied in Canada and the European Union. "However, this is world leading legislation and we are really proud of that," Charlton said, crediting Communications Minister Anika Wells with the laws.

REPORTING FROM

1 **The Financial Register** · Charlton says foreign AI dependency could dwarf Australia's reliance on foreign oil

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

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 10 OF 13

# GlobalData forecasts Australian fixed wireless connections to grow 3.6 per cent a year to 2031

GlobalData expects fixed wireless access to rise from 10.4 per cent of Australian fixed broadband connections in 2026 to about 11.5 per cent by the end of 2031, driven by regional and remote demand.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 3 sources · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The forecast has FWA taking a modest but rising share of Australian fixed broadband, which keeps regional wireless capacity and plan tiers a competitive focus for NBN Co and retail providers such as Telstra.

Fixed wireless access (FWA) connections in Australia should expand at a compound annual rate of 3.6 per cent from 2026 to 2031, according to a GlobalData forecast. The research house links the growth to demand for fast internet in regional and remote areas where fibre coverage is thin.

In its Australia Fixed Communication Forecast for the third quarter of 2026, GlobalData has FWA at 10.4 per cent of all fixed broadband connections in 2026, climbing to about 11.5 per cent by the end of 2031. It describes this as steady uptake in underserved areas.

GlobalData telecom analyst Srikanth Vaidya said FWA was "emerging as a critical component to the National Broadband Network (NBN) and private carrier deployments, especially in areas where fiber rollouts are slower or cost prohibitive."

The release cites several recent developments in the market. NBN Co's upgraded network has reached 800,000 premises. In August 2026, every NBN Fixed Wireless cell met the 6Mbps busy-hour performance threshold. Telstra introduced two NBN Fixed Wireless plans in June 2026: Premium (Homefast), averaging 183Mbps in busy periods, and Ultimate (Superfast), averaging 298Mbps.

In regional New South Wales, a tower at Narrabri East, paid for by NBN Co and the state government, has served more than 700 homes and businesses since March 2026. Another five towers are being built in the Narrabri local government area.

GlobalData expects smart homes, SME connectivity, Industry 4.0, remote education and telehealth to push adoption through the forecast period. Vaidya said operators with flexible data plans for residential and SME customers, plus value-added services over FWA, "will be well-positioned to capture new revenue opportunities and strengthen their competitive edge in the evolving broadband market."

REPORTING FROM

1. **Saudi ICT Shopper News** · Australia FWA connections - Growth Forecast to 2031
2. **CYBER ERA: Catalyzing the Digital Economy** · Australia FWA Connections To Grow At 3.6% CAGR During 2026-2031, Forecasts GlobalData – CYBER ERA: Catalyzing the Digital Economy
3. **Radio TV Link** · Australia FWA connections to grow at 3.6% CAGR during 2026-2031, forecasts GlobalData.

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

---

CARRIERS & NETWORKS 11 OF 13

# Telstra launches Dynamic 5G, a slice-based wireless service with a throughput guarantee

Telstra is selling business customers a wireless service on its 5G standalone network that comes with a minimum speed, hourly reporting and no charge for periods when the guarantee is missed.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

For enterprise buyers, a wireless service with a throughput commitment and no charge for missed periods offers another option beside a second fibre path or unmanaged failover, and the retailer example shows fibre paths can share one point of failure.

Telstra has introduced Dynamic 5G, an enterprise wireless service that uses network slicing on its 5G standalone network to guarantee a minimum level of performance. The company reports measured results hour by hour, and customers are not billed a performance charge for any period of the slice where the guarantee is missed.

Juliet Tompkins, Telstra's mobility product executive, said a performance commitment over radio was not possible before 5G advanced network slicing arrived. Telstra sees the service as a new category, she said, because high-

performance cellular networking with a commitment has not been widely available. She added that a business already well served by Telstra's standard mobile network has no reason to switch.

Each customer gets a dedicated, prioritised slice with throughput matched to its needs, and the network shifts resources around to keep that floor under load. Customers pick a minimum speed tier, and Telstra's analytics engine checks performance against it continuously. The bill splits a reservation charge from a usage charge.

Two versions are on sale: a slice covering all traffic at a fixed wireless site, and an application-specific slice that gives Microsoft Teams its own slice and minimum throughput while other traffic stays on the standard enterprise wireless service. Telstra describes the latter as Australia's first commercially available application-specific 5G slice.

Telstra sees the strongest fit at sites where fixed links are uneconomical or unavailable, including construction projects, regional critical infrastructure and new stores. Redundancy is the second use, with Tompkins arguing that failing over to satellite, Wi-Fi or mobile broadband usually means joining a congested network because neighbours are affected too. She said that with Dynamic 5G a customer can "fail over into a service with committed throughput".

Telstra pointed to a large Australian retailer that had bought several fibre services for resilience, only for a cable cut to show they all passed through one pit. The store lost the ability to process transactions, pay staff, fill click and collect orders or receive deliveries. After a rooftop installation of Dynamic 5G, service returned within hours with round-trip latency under 20 milliseconds.

Telstra links the product to its Network as a Product strategy and says it can lift the fibre constraint at sites it is able to qualify. It is also working with partners on bringing committed performance to mobile use cases.

REPORTING FROM

1 **CIO** · Innovation at the edge enables Telstra Dynamic 5G to deliver committed wireless performance

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

AI INFRASTRUCTURE 12 OF 13

# Firmus chases US$4 billion debt package to keep Indonesian AI project on schedule

Firmus is trying to raise US$4 billion before Christmas to fund Nvidia chips for a Batam Island project due for Meta in March, Rampart reported, as Nvidia winds back support for neoclouds.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 1 source · 1 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

Firmus is one of the best-known Australian companies built around Nvidia's financing, so its ability to fund a roughly US$10 billion chip order without fresh equity is a test of how debt markets treat neocloud projects as Nvidia pulls back, according to Rampart.

Australian AI infrastructure company Firmus is trying to raise US$4 billion before Christmas to keep a project in Indonesia on track for a March handover to Meta, Rampart reported on 26 November 2026. The company is led by co-chief executives and cousins Oliver Curtis and Tim Rosenfield.

Bloomberg reported on Monday that Firmus wants to raise US$1.5 billion through bonds, as part of a US$4 billion debt package being shopped around by Morgan Stanley. Rampart said the money is needed to pay for about US$10 billion worth of Nvidia graphics processing units.

People familiar with the plans told Rampart that Firmus considered a large private-market equity raising after its initial public offering collapsed in October, but dropped the idea soon afterwards. According to sources familiar with the negotiations, Firmus hopes prepayments for the Batam Island project will be enough to persuade lenders to proceed without another large equity injection.

Rampart said Nvidia has been Firmus' cornerstone backer and helped build relationships between its leaders and the rest of the industry. It also reported that Nvidia is gradually reducing its funding of neoclouds, which buy AI chips to rent out compute to large technology companies, and named Nscale and SharonAI alongside Firmus as businesses in Nvidia's orbit. Rampart said Nvidia chief executive Jensen Huang is under shareholder pressure over the arrangement.

Firmus supporters told Rampart the company was caught off guard by Nvidia's lack of communication in the days before the float. Rampart's own view was that the IPO's valuation and escrow terms, pushed by Firmus and its bankers, also contributed to its failure.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Rampart** · Firmus, Nvidia and the art of the pivot

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

POLICY & REGULATION 13 OF 13

# ACT still investigating Triple Zero outage after backup power systems failed to hold

A four-minute power loss at the ACT Emergency Services Agency's Fairbairn communications centre on 19 November dropped four in-progress calls. The agency is still working out why the first backup failed and the second was slow to start.

**Best Effort desk** · Fri 27 Nov 2026 · 3 sources · 2 min read

WHY IT MATTERS

The incident was a backup-power failure at a call-answering centre rather than a failure of a phone network, and it shows that emergency call handling depends on backup power taking over when needed. The ESA has not yet explained why the backups behaved as they did, and the findings are promised once the investigation concludes.

The ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) has not yet established why backup power failed at its Fairbairn communications centre, where a four-minute power loss on Thursday 19 November cut four in-progress Triple Zero calls. Power was lost from 8:11pm to 8:15pm, according to VoIP Forum's account of the ABC's reporting.

The first backup battery system did not work, and the second took four minutes to take over. ESA Commissioner Wayne Phillips said investigations were continuing into the cause of the outage, why the first backup failed and why the second system lagged. Phillips said the second system is expected to start "straight away", though his remarks as published also include an ellipsis, so only the fragment is quoted here.

The ESA is working with the Digital Canberra Directorate to find the root cause. VoIP Forum reported, citing the ABC, that Phillips raised lightning or a power surge as possibilities but said neither was confirmed. Phillips promised to be open about the findings, saying: "Once we know exactly what happened, I'll be transparent about what occurred, how it occurred, and what our steps are then to rectify it and make it even better."

Staff moved to the backup communications centre in Hume, working from there from Thursday evening until Sunday morning before returning to Fairbairn. The ESA said no other calls arrived during the outage, and any attempt to reach fire or ambulance would have been diverted to ACT Policing's call centre, which was not affected. Phillips told the ABC that no Triple Zero calls were lost and that the dropped calls were retrieved.

Phillips praised the response, saying it "shows that we have a resilient Triple Zero network". The Transport Workers' Union, which represents ambulance workers, said it was very concerned by the outage.

REPORTING FROM

1 **Region Canberra** · Still no answers on what caused Triple Zero outage to ambulance, fire services
2 **VoIP Forum** · Power failure at ACT emergency call centre cuts four Triple Zero calls
3 **AU Now** · Triple Zero calls dropped in Canberra after four-minute power loss · AU Now

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