



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

ADJOURNMENT

Swan Electorate: Broadband

SPEECH

Thursday, 22 October 2015

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Questioner
Speaker Irons, Steve, MP

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Mr IRONS (Swan) (11:17): This is the second time, recently, I have followed the member for Wakefield in this chamber. I know he was sincere when he spoke about his side of politics but he forgot to mention that no-one in that media report was calling themselves Dasher and speaking in the third person or doing video retakes to show how they had been involved in that situation. He should have expanded on his own side's downfall.

I rise to update the House on the constituents of Swan about the NBN following the release of the proposed rollouts. The completion of the National Broadband Network in the electorate of Swan is on the horizon following the inclusion of all remaining suburbs in the much-anticipated three-year rollout plan released on Friday. My electorate of Swan is already the most advanced in Western Australia, in terms of the rollout. I know that might disappoint you, Madam Deputy Speaker Price, being another West Australian electorate holder.

It is now on track to become one of the first WA electorates to be completed. The dates for the remainder of the rollouts, in the electorate of Swan, are: Como, 2,500 houses in the second half of 2016; Beckenham, Bentley, Cannington, East Cannington, Karawara, Queens Park, Saint James, Waterford, Welshpool and Wilson had 16,400 houses in November 2015. Where we cross the border with Tangney we have: Ferndale, Lynwood, Riverton, Parkwood, Rossmoyne, Shelley and Willetton, which will be 3,100 houses in the second half of 2017. In Ascot, Belmont, Cloverdale, Kewdale, the remainder, and Perth Airport, Redcliffe and the remainder of Rivervale, it will be 14,300 houses for the first quarter of 2017.

The progress of the NBN under the coalition government since the 2013 election has been rapid, particularly in my electorate. Just two years ago, at the time of the 2013 election, there were only 34 brownfield premises connected across the whole of Perth and only 75 connected for the whole state of Western Australia actually connected. There were more announcements leading up to the 2013 election from those on the opposite side than there were actual connections. In my electorate alone, Labor came and announced the NBN is being switched on about 20 times and there were not even 20 connections in my electorate.

In 2013, I asked the then communications minister how the rollout in Western Australia was going, particularly in Victoria Park. The honourable member said in October 2011 that the then government announced construction had commenced in East Victoria Park. The Labor government had announced in 2011 it had started and two years later there were no ready-for-service premises in that area. Indeed, despite barrels of propaganda, reams of leaflets and flyers and lots of claims on election day, in total there were 34 brownfield premises in Perth. The NBN connections in Western Australia, he said, have been as rare sightings of Brian Burke—and he was correct on that as well. The situation was bleak with the WA rollout facing a series of severe issues. The lead contractor, Syntheo, pulled out of the state. The minister said at the time work had basically stopped in WA and the rollout was in chaos under the previous government. There were many subcontractors to Syntheo who never got paid under the previous government and it was just an absolute disgrace.

Today in the electorate of Swan, after two years of coalition government, we have 28,650 premises ready-for-service across a dozen suburbs, 10,475 of them have actually been activated and, on the ground, build is underway across 14 suburbs. I remind the member for Wakefield there were only 14 connections in my electorate at the last election. Now there are over 10,000 so it is a bit of a comparison. The fact that we are now looking at the NBN's completion in Swan with the inclusion of all the remaining areas in the three-year plan is a remarkable turnaround. The advantages Swan will have by being one of the first electorates to be completed will be significant and shared by businesses as well as residents.

I am looking forward particularly to the work starting on the notorious Ascot exchange, which was promised by the previous government to be fixed in 2009. It still has not been touched but we are working on it, getting it underway because the previous government left the NBN rollout in Western Australia and in my electorate of Swan in a shambles.