**Day 1, Wednesday 14th September**

2:45-2:55pm: nbn

Thank you. If I could ask our panel to return to their seats, you can just leave the mikes where they are. It will give me pleasure now to introduce a speaker about something that has already changed my life. I'm talking about the nbn, and it's my pleasure to invite to the stage Peter Gurney, the general manager of community affairs with the nbn. He's going to talk about the public communications strategy for this major infrastructure project. Please make him welcome.

(APPLAUSE)

PETER GURNEY: Thanks, Julie, and a very good afternoon, everyone. Many thanks for the opportunity to be here today. It's really exciting and I'm grateful for the opportunity to talk to you a little bit about the nbn and where we're at in the life cycle of this major project. Most of you will be aware that this is a long-term strategic project for the government that takes us through until 2020, so we're still a fair way off being completed, but the great news is – and I've been with the company for 3.5 years – is that we now have over 3 million homes and businesses that can order a service on the nbn across all of our technologies. Of those 3 million, 1.3 million are actively connected at this point in time. FY17 and FY18, for us, are the biggest challenge in our corporate career to date. There's a huge amount of homes that we need to get ready for service. And we're really excited about doing that. One of the great challenges, I guess, that we have at the nbn is the way we need to communicate with people in the community, and all of the different verticals that we engage in – business, health, and education. We have multiple technologies and, for all of those different types of technologies, we have to have multiple conversations. Some of our technologies have a mandatory disconnection. Some do not. And we're really conscious of wanting to make sure that people have the right information at the right time. We also have a requirement, as part of our legislative framework, to have a public information migration campaign. That talks to things like migration – it talks to things like medical alarms, it talks to things like fire and Lift, and all those sorts of things that, for a lot of people, it wouldn't necessarily affect. But for those in particular industry verticals, have a specialised interest in a lot of these particular areas. I guess, in and amongst all of that, and as taxpayers, we're very keen, obviously, to try and make sure that we drive early revenue into the company. This is what I want to talk about today. Obviously the main focus of my discussion with you today is around how we communicate with those in the community and those in the various industry segments. We do it in a variety of different ways. I just wanted to walk through a little bit today – what they each look like. We have four, I guess, main focuses in our marketing campaign. Mass marketing, which affect all of us. Above-the-line – those that we run publicly. The types of things you see on TV, in newspapers, are considered above-the-line. Then our below-the-line advertising campaign. So those things that you receive directly – mail in your letterbox, flyers, that type of thing. Really important way for us to communicate with people. I'll get it into what that looks like in just a little bit. RSPs – I guess we work really closely with our customers. Our customers are the retail service providers. And in turn, you are the customers of the retail service providers. So, we need to work really closely and in harmony with them to make sure that the messaging is consistent and the narrative is correct across all of our technologies. Again, there's nuances in what we say and how we say it, and we just need to be really aware of that. Community engagement – this is the area that I speak with the most degree of confidence about, because it's my patch. Again, something that we're very passionate about, and making sure that we communicate to all of those people who have particularly special needs and hard-to-reach segments of the community, in particular. So those that may not resonate with mainstream media, who might not have the ability to go to our website. How do we cater for those people and make sure they're getting the information that they require? And distribution ready – it's a very marketing-type term, but we're referring to other channels that people may resonate with when it comes to the nbn. And retail is one of those things that we're currently exploring, and we've rolled out to Harvey Norman. Again, I'll talk about that in a little bit.

Mass marketing and advertising is one that us, in metro Sydney and a lot of the other metro capitals, wouldn't have seen yet. I expect we'll start to see nbn TV commercials in Sydney some time in around February next year. We've just launched in Melbourne, and all the other capital cities, and regionally we've been on for quite some time. It's a really effective way for us to talk about the network and what we're doing, and give me the insights to be able to make that informed decision about what the nbn means for them and how they need to move to the nbn. You may have seen, if you've been travelling or looked on YouTube, some of the videos that we've created. But in October 2015, we launched a concurrency campaign which was really important, talking about the practical benefits of the network. It was a really logical campaign for us, where we demonstrated that people needed bandwidth if they had multiple devices at home. If they had multiple people in the house. And therefore the nbn was a better experience for them as they had more bandwidth to undertake their day-to-day activities. And that was a really successful campaign for us. Just recently – and this is, I guess, one of my personal favourite campaigns that we've run – we launched our silent reunion campaign. You won't have seen it in metro Sydney yet. Has anyone seen the silent reunion campaign? Super-exciting, and we worked really closely with Deaf Services in Queensland on this. I'd really encourage you to go to the YouTube channel, if you have the opportunity, and have a look at it. This, I guess, was to acknowledge that there are other people in the community who have a way in which they like to learn about the nbn, and there are people who have different requirements when it comes to the nbn. It was a really successful campaign. It's only been in the market around 4-6 weeks currently. We'll start to get some results on how that's going. But overwhelmingly, anecdotally, people have really resonated with this. It's a much more emotional connection with the brand. Some people will respond to facts and information. What are the benefits for me? Other people will want to understand the things that will make a difference to their family, to them personally in an emotional sense. This is what we tried to achieve with the silent reunion campaign. Then we have an infomercial campaign. Again, this is getting down to the cold, hard facts of the nbn. How do I get it? What do I do? And how do I get online? So this, again, tries to address that gap in the market of helping people understand that they obviously need to talk to a retail service provider to order their service, and go through the path to get a service that way.

The other area that we obviously communicate with people quite frequently is via direct mail. Despite the fact we're in an increasingly digital world and moving towards online communications, we can't get away from the fact that, for some people, that just doesn't work, and they don't have the ability to look at those types of avenues that are available. So for that reason, it's really important that we tell people when they can get the nbn network and the importance of migrating it. So for those of us in our fixed-line environment, we need to make sure that they have the ability to understand what they need to do to get on the nbn before we disconnect their phone and internet services. This is one great way we do it – we send a number of letters throughout the 18-month migration window, which outline all of those issues.

One of the other key channels that we have is the website. Obviously this is the one that is front and centre for those of you surfing the web. We had our 6 millionth visit to the website in FY16. Last month alone, we cracked 1 million site visits – again, giving you a sense of the magnitude of interest in the project, and those wanting to know when they're going to get it and the types of technologies they're going to receive. We've also got our blog where we talk about some of the things you can do on the nbn – so more benefits-led conversations for people in that respect.

This is just an example, I guess, of some of the ways we talk to our retail service providers. We're really conscious, I guess, of some of the confusion that can arise, or the overwhelming choice that people have. In some areas, we have over 150 different service providers offering the nbn into the community. They, I guess, at times find that really problematic to work out and differentiate the different product sets that are available, so we work hard to make sure that all of the communication is clear and concise. This is just, I guess, some of the ways we do that through their marketing, directly to you as end users. Just conscious of time, so I won't spend much here. This is some of the initiatives we do with our customers. We work really closely with them from planning, to undertaking surveys on a quarterly basis, to weekly marketing updates. Our success is really dependent upon their success. We need to make sure that they're communicating effectively along with us in total alignment. This is a new thing for nbn – the retail environment. We're obviously a wholesaler, and that means that we don't sell services direct to the public or to businesses. That said, I think our experience and insights tell us that not everyone will want to engage in a telesales environment to order an nbn service. They will want to understand what it means from somebody educated about the nbn. So we've just launched two stores in Harvey Norman in Queensland and NSW, with an nbn set-up – they can check their address, talk to trained Harvey Norman staff about the nbn, and have a conversation if they didn't want to directly talk to a retail service provider. Community engagement, again, is another really key area for us in the nbn. I'm really passionate about this. One of the cool things we did, that I think is relevant to the last session we just had – last month, we hosted, for the first time, an nbn information session for those that were Deaf and hard-of-hearing, and those communities associated with them. We had 40 participants join us for that via Skype. So we had one of my team in Tasmania – ironically on one of our Sky Muster sessions – doing a session up in Queensland with an Auslan interpreter on that session. So we're really keen to make sure that we're communicating with the right people who may need some specialised information. In and amongst that, obviously, we have things like engagement with local government, we have experiential marketing in shopping centres, and helping people to understand what all of that means.

The last thing I thought I'd finish on is to share with you what is a really cool part of, I guess, the job, which is going to talk to people about the nbn and helping them understand. These are our satellite demonstration vehicles. We have six of them. They're currently touring around Australia at the moment. We've got one up in the Kimberley in Western Australia, we've got one currently in Canberra in front of Parliament House, another one in Cairns heading to Longreach. Again, we're really conscious that not everyone will have the ability to get to a major metro centre and engage with the nbn. So we want to go to them and help them understand the types of things that are available in terms of information and content. I'm conscious that's really brief, but I will be around for afternoon tea, so if you do have the opportunity to stick around, I'd love to say hello. If you've got any feedback of things that we can do better or things you think we should be thinking about, again, really grateful for any suggestions you might have.

JULIE McCROSSIN: Thank you so much. Thank you. A round of applause, please, for Peter.

(APPLAUSE)

Very pleased to hear a reference to Tasmania! Did anybody notice?

(LAUGHTER)