



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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Fast broadband powering the nation's productivity

The Morrison Government welcomes new research released today on Australian internet use. The research demonstrates the social and economic benefits of the National Broadband Network (NBN) and underlines its important role in supporting Australians to stay productive and connected through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The research, undertaken for NBN Co, shows four in five (83 per cent) of respondents agreed they could not have completed their jobs without fast internet and more than two-thirds (67 per cent) said they expect to work from home more after the pandemic has ended.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said the research demonstrates the importance of the Liberal National Government's sustained, multi-year focus on rolling out the NBN across Australia as quickly and cost effectively as possible.

"The immense challenges presented by COVID-19 have prompted businesses and their people to become more flexible, adaptable and innovative in how they go about their work. The NBN is available to more than 11.4 million homes and businesses and has been essential in enabling a rapid shift to remote working," Minister Fletcher said.

"If the NBN was still being rolled out in line with Labor's original plan, some 3.5 million fewer households would have been able to connect to the NBN when Australia was hit by COVID-19 earlier this year.

"The network has stood up to considerable increases in demand with downloads soaring up to 70 per cent during work hours since social distancing requirements came into effect. Thanks to the NBN Australians have been able to keep working productively from home and stay connected with their colleagues, clients and stakeholders."

NBN Co's Behavioural Change Survey looks at how Australians' internet habits have changed during social distancing, and how they may change once restrictions ease. It found four in five people (81 per cent) reported that remote working has had a positive impact on their work-life balance, and of the people working from home almost four in five (79 per cent) have purchased one or more devices to support their online activities during COVID-19, and more than half (56 per cent) have created a new or dedicated office space.

"The research shows people are interested in making remote work part of a longer term lifestyle change – they're setting up home offices and reporting working from home provides better work-life balance. This demonstrates the critical role the NBN has played and will continue to play in supporting Australians' productivity, social and connectivity needs," Minister Fletcher said.

“With the rollout of the NBN very close to completion, Australians are better placed than ever to realise the full potential of fast internet to work or learn from home, access essential services and connect with family and friends.”

NBN Co is actively monitoring and managing network demand and has provided retail service providers with up to 40 per cent more network capacity at no additional charge through to July. The company is also providing a \$150 million financial relief and assistance fund to help retail service providers assist vulnerable customers affected by COVID-19.

More than seven million homes and businesses are already connected to the NBN.

For more information on the survey and NBN Co’s COVID-19 support visit [NBN Co’s website](#).

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Further information:

- This research was undertaken by Venture Insights on behalf of NBN Co in April 2020.
- The survey was conducted nationally across Australia and required a representative survey sample across available geographic regions. 1,006 respondents aged 18+ completed the survey.
- 77 per cent of the respondents belonged to a metro area, and 23 per cent to a regional area.

Media contact:

Brad Hatch | 0448 162 679 | Brad.Hatch@communications.gov.au

Rebecca Papillo | 0439 892 771 | Rebecca.Papillo@communications.gov.au