STAND Community Wi-Fi

Background

The Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters (STAND) program was implemented following the 2019/2020 fire season. As part of this program, $7 million dollars was allocated for the deployment of NBN Sky Muster satellite services to evacuation centres and rural fire depots across Australia. The initial program saw 1,068 services deployed nationally, including Community Wi-Fi.

STAND Program extension and expansion

Existing Community Wi-Fi services were due to expire on 28 December 2025. The Commonwealth Government has allocated funds to allow for the extension and expansion of all Sky Muster satellite services installed under the initial STAND program. The new program includes the following elements;

- Extension of all currently installed Community Wi-Fi services through to 31 December 2027;
- Expansion of Community Wi-Fi services to a further 500 sites nationally
- A limited hardware replacement of Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) units at sites where this is installed and where required.

As part of the expansion of the Community Wi-Fi footprint, the Department is reaching out through State and Territory governments to identify additional suitable sites for Community Wi-Fi. Sites must be in regional, remote or peri-urban locations, and State and Territory governments will have discretion over which sites are put forward for consideration.

What is Community Wi-Fi?

Community Wi-Fi is a satellite based public Wi-Fi broadband connection utilising the NBN Sky Muster satellite platform. This provides back-up communications via satellite at evacuation sites in the event that a bushfire, flood or other natural disaster causes an outage in the local telecommunications network.
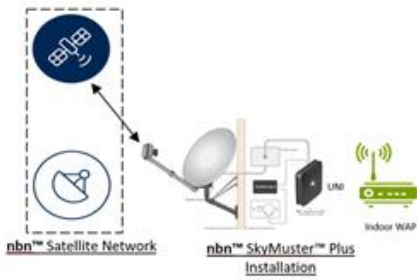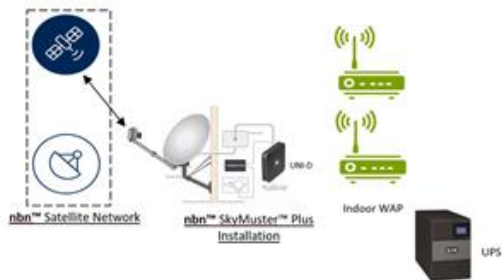
The service is similar to public Wi-Fi you would find in public libraries. Any Wi-Fi enabled device is able to connect and utilise the service. The service operates 24/7 while powered.

STAND Community Wi-Fi utilises mains power, however, is still able to operate if mains power is lost so long as an alternative power supply is available such as a portable generator.

Community Wi-Fi comes in two configurations, a standard site and a large site. A standard site is optimised for up to 40 concurrent users and is most suitable for a small evacuation centre such as a community hall. A large site is optimised for up to 100 concurrent users and includes battery back up for up to 8 hours. A large site is intended for evacuation centres located at facilities such as showgrounds or sports stadiums.

While sites are able to accommodate more concurrent users, site performance is likely to diminish above the optimised number of concurrent users.

A summary of the two configurations is included below.

Product	nbn™ Fixed Disaster Satellite Service	
Installation Type	Standard Installation	Supersite "Large" Installation
Example	Internet connectivity for small evacuation centres and emergency services depot	Large Evacuation Centre (e.g. show ground) requiring additional Wi-Fi coverage and power resiliency
Wi-Fi Capacity	Up to 40 concurrent users	Up to 100 concurrent users
Support Term	To 31st December 2027	
Power	Requires 240v power supply	Requires 240v power supply Uninterruptable power supply (UPS) and shield supplied
Conceptual Diagrams		

What is included in a Community Wi-Fi Service?

Community Wi-Fi services include the following;

- All Hardware including satellite dish and antennae, network termination device, Wireless Access Point (WAP) and cabling.
- Installation of the hardware
- Internet Service Provision
- Content filtering (i.e. gambling and pornography sites are not able to be accessed using the service)
- User support including for restricted hours of operation, if requested by sites.

Where can I go for more information?

For questions about nominations, please contact your state government contact.

For general questions about the program as a whole, contact Stand.Skymuster@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au.