



OPEL Network Fact Sheet

OPEL Network: a wholesale-only broadband business

OPEL Network is a wholesale-only business which will offer wholesale services to its joint venture partners, Elders and Optus as well as other ISPs and service providers on an open and transparent basis.

- OPEL will be structurally and operationally separate from Elders and Optus.
- OPEL has committed to full operational separation. Providers purchasing services from OPEL can be fully reassured that they will receive services on the same terms and price as Elders and Optus.

OPEL network: improved wholesale access for backhaul and local access broadband

OPEL will offer a wide suite of attractively priced wholesale services, including end-to-end broadband services for resellers, as well as various other options for wholesale broadband, voice services and bundled products.

In particular OPEL will offer access to high speed broadband initially up to 6Mbps, increasing to 12Mbps by 30 June 2009.

OPEL will offer all of its broadband products over its WiMAX wireless and ADSL2+ networks at standard metropolitan comparable prices.

Of critical importance for regional ISPs, OPEL will offer greatly improved backhaul access across its network, with prices estimated to be reduced by at least 30 per cent on current commercial regional backhaul rates.

OPEL will assist regional ISPs and service providers to link into its network, through its extensive spur transmission links, or where necessary through building additional connecting links.

OPEL will have a regional presence through Elders 400 shopfronts around Australia, to provide ongoing service to regional and rural providers.

Before locking in OPEL service commitments in a funding deed, the Government and OPEL will undertake consultation with the broadband industry, focussing on service levels, service commitments, and the delivery of fair, transparent and fully open wholesale arrangements.

The ACCC will also be consulted to ensure compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements.

OPEL Network: wide coverage across regional and rural Australia

OPEL's wireless network will cover almost 9.5 million premises across Australia, offering broadband speeds initially up to 6Mbps, increasing to 12Mbps by 30 June, 2009. The network will comprise 1361 new state of the art wireless broadband 'WiMAX' sites, including in remote areas such as Birdsville and Bedourie. Each premises will receive the full suite of high quality, next generation broadband (and other) services being offered by OPEL.

OPEL will deliver 1.9 million premises in regional areas access to even faster speeds of up to 20Mbps by enabling an additional 312 exchanges with ADSL2+ broadband. Optus is enabling a further 114 ADSL2+ exchanges on a commercial basis. This will provide Australia with a total of 426 new ADSL2+ exchanges.

OPEL will also offer a broadband solution for most blackspot premises in metropolitan areas.

OPEL's extensive broadband coverage will be underpinned by a high capacity backhaul network across Australia, comprising long term leased links from joint venture partner Optus (10 200km), leased links with other major carriers such as Nextgen (2200km), including from Dubbo to Toowoomba , and new backhaul construction where this is the most effective approach (2400km). OPEL will establish two undersea links to Tasmania (including utilising Basslink), to ensure a fully redundant link to that state. OPEL has committed to increase the capacity on its backhaul network by 15 per cent each year for ten years to ensure that it is more than capable of meeting increasing demand.

Once OPEL is rolled out, only 1 per cent of premises across Australia will not have access to a high quality, metro-comparable broadband service. These premises will be covered by the Government's *Australian Broadband Guarantee*, which offers a subsidy of up to \$2750 (GST inclusive) per household to provide either a land-based or satellite-based broadband service for those Australians living in the most remote or difficult to reach areas.

OPEL Network: a state-of-the-art technology solution

OPEL will use the very best WiMAX wireless technology available to ensure that regional Australia gets a network that will be 'world's best practice.'

There have been large scale deployments of this technology in the UK and across Europe, in parts of Asia, across the USA and Canada, and in South America.

Both the ACCC and the OECD support the suitability of WiMAX for regional and rural areas.

OPEL has identified the world-leading WiMAX vendor, Alvarion, as its provider of choice, but will fully test the market to ensure that the ultimate solution put in place is both world's best technology and great value-for-money.

OPEL has committed to ensuring that its technology solution is based on open standards, and is fully interoperable with 'down-stream' networks seeking to connect with it.

OPEL is also committed to peering arrangements with other regional broadband Internet networks that are fair, efficient and optimise performance for Internet users.

Major companies, such as Intel, have invested huge amounts in WiMAX, first in research and development, and now in WiMAX equipment for the market. WiMAX chip sets will be incorporated in a whole raft of electronic devices including PCs, cameras, personal music devices and PDAs.

OPEL is absolutely confident that its claims for coverage and service quality are real and deliverable. To confirm these service metrics, the Government will fully assess the OPEL coverage and service quality claims, using an independent testing laboratory, before entering into a funding deed.

OPEL intends to utilise class licensed spectrum (5.8GHz), or licensed spectrum if it is commercially available.

This class licensed spectrum band is utilised by the majority of wireless broadband providers in regional areas and has been assessed by Consultel and the ACMA as being capable of supporting the high quality of services which OPEL will be implementing.