

Telstra and OneWeb seal deal on delivering new satellite solutions.

19 June 2023

Telstra and OneWeb today announced an agreement to deliver one of the world's largest rollouts of OneWeb Low Earth Orbit (LEO) backhaul for a commercial mobile network.

Telstra and OneWeb have agreed commercial terms and later this year will begin moving hundreds of existing remote mobile base stations currently using satellite backhaul to OneWeb's LEO solution. Telstra will also use OneWeb LEO services for future sites where satellite backhaul is the preferred or only viable option.

The strategic agreement will see up to 25 Gbit/s of LEO capacity being delivered to Telstra's most remote mobile sites across Australia overtime, helping enhance the customer experience when using real-time applications such as voice and video calling.

Nikos Katinakis, Telstra Group Executive Global Networks and Technology, said Telstra was excited to have finalised the long-term partnership with OneWeb and the positive impact it would have for customers.

"Part of our T25 strategy was to assess evolving satellite technologies and use them to deliver better services for customers, especially in rural and remote Australia.

"The deal with OneWeb will help us to improve our options for our consumer, small business and enterprise customers living or working in rural and regional Australia – especially those in remote areas that require added redundancy in the instance of a power or transmission incident." Mr Katinakis said.

"Our initial focus is using the service as a backhaul medium to connect remote mobile base stations. In time, it also offers us capability to deliver voice and fixed broadband services to regional Australia."

Mr Katinakis said the capability will help Telstra expand its regional coverage and supports the T25 commitment to deliver an additional 100,000 square kilometres of mobile coverage by the end of FY25.

"We plan to extend the testing program for additional use cases including network backhaul resilience, such as a back-up to fixed backhaul for selected critical sites. As well as into emerging use cases for business, enterprise and government customers like IoT and connectivity on the move for the emergency services agencies, mining, oil and gas sector," he said.

David Thorn, Vice President, APAC at OneWeb, said this was the start of a growing reciprocal relationship between the two companies.

"This is a first for us in terms of its scale and integration. For the first time in Australia, we're working with a major partner to deliver OneWeb's service across an entire continent for the benefit of remote users including consumers, enterprises and government agencies.

"From our perspective, it's one of the largest single rollouts of LEO satellite capacity for mobile backhaul worldwide. Telstra will also be pivotal in collaborating with us on future generations of OneWeb product development."

Telstra has been working with OneWeb to test its latest technology and will continue providing input into OneWeb's future products and capabilities. OneWeb has more than 630 satellites in-orbit today, with global coverage on track for the end of the year. OneWeb's services are anticipated to begin in Australia mid-year, with worldwide service available in early 2024.

The partnership complements Telstra's T25 ambition to grow and extend its network leadership position and extend mobile coverage across the country.

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