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Australia Selects Amazon's Project Kuiper for Next-Generation Satellite Broadband

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NBN Co, Australia's government-owned wholesale broadband operator, has announced a landmark agreement with Amazon's Project Kuiper, a low-Earth orbit (LEO) satellite network. This partnership makes NBN the first major customer for Project Kuiper in Australia and is set to bring high-speed satellite broadband to over 300,000 customers in regional, rural, and remote areas that are currently unserved by the terrestrial network.

This exclusive deal will see NBN offer Project Kuiper-powered services through its retail service providers (RSPs), with the rollout expected to commence by mid-2026. The new LEO service will eventually replace NBN's current geostationary Sky Muster satellite service, which will remain operational until its planned retirement around 2032 to ensure a seamless transition for customers.

Ellie Sweeney, NBN's Chief Executive Officer, highlighted the strategic importance of the collaboration. "Transitioning from two geostationary satellites to a constellation of low-Earth orbit satellites will help to ensure the NBN network is future-ready and delivers the best possible broadband experience," she stated. Sweeney also noted that this initiative complements NBN's other major network upgrades, including the expansion of full fiber and 5G millimeter wave technologies.

The partnership with Amazon is expected to introduce significant competition into the LEO satellite market in Australia, which is currently dominated by Starlink. NBN will soon begin consultations with RSPs and stakeholders to determine service tiers, wholesale pricing, and a transition plan for existing Sky Muster customers, including the provision of new equipment and installation at no cost.

Amazon's Project Kuiper is in the process of deploying a constellation of over 3,200 satellites. As of now,

78 satellites have been successfully launched, with plans for more than 80 additional launches to complete the network. The initiative aims to provide a reliable, high-speed internet connection by leveraging a mesh network of satellites connected by high-speed optical links.