Media Release

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Enable delivers digital foundations for Christchurch with new UFB services

Today, Enable began to transform the way people in Canterbury do business and use technology in their lives with the launch of new wholesale ultra-fast broadband (UFB) services for business and announcement of its fibre-to-the-home services to be launched in June 2012.

"These new UFB services mark a major milestone in Christchurch's new fibre network and will make a huge contribution to the rebuild and future of our city," said Enable CEO Steve Fuller.

"We've begun building Christchurch's fibre-to-the-home network. We've now announced the fibre broadband services that will run over it and when the first customers can connect," said Mr Fuller. "Today marks the beginning of the end for the old copper telephone network that was first built in Christchurch in 1881."

The announcement from Enable, the UFB joint venture between Crown Fibre Holdings Ltd and Christchurch City Holdings Ltd, includes business services available immediately over its existing extensive fibre network.

"Today's announcement will benefit local businesses as they look to grow a stronger future in the post-earthquake Christchurch," said Mr Fuller.

"UFB services significantly reduce cost for existing fibre users, and mean more local companies can connect and enjoy the access to markets and services fibre offers. It also provides a catalyst for local innovators to develop new applications and create new business opportunities."

Enable has also announced the deployment of its UFB network to more commercial areas in Christchurch.

"We already have the most extensive fibre coverage in Christchurch covering 80 percent of commercial areas. We are currently deploying our UFB network in commercial parts of Woolston, Hornby and Middleton," said Mr Fuller.

Quickly to follow the business services will be fibre broadband services with download speeds of up 100Mbps available to the home and small businesses from June 2012. Consumers will be able to enjoy much greater broadband speeds over fibre at prices similar to today's broadband.

This fibre-to-the-home network will enable the delivery of Voice, Video / TV, fast internet and exciting new services.

"We are working with telecommunication and internet retailers to be ready to provide retail services to the thousands of consumers that are champing at the bit for much faster and affordable fibre-based broadband services," said Mr Fuller.

"Fibre-to-the-home opens the opportunity for companies such as Google and Microsoft, TV networks and other technology innovators to create the exciting new applications that will run over our network."

Construction of the network in the suburbs started in Halswell in November and it is expected that around 20,000 homes and businesses will have fibre coverage by June 2012. By July Enable's construction contractor is expected to be installing fibre to the boundary of up to 120 premises per day, increasing the number of businesses and homes that can benefit from Enable fibre.

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About Enable

Enable is a partnership between Crown Fibre Holdings Limited and Christchurch City Holdings Ltd established to build and operate the ultra-fast broadband (UFB) network for Christchurch and surrounding centres.

Today Enable owns and operates a world-class fibre network connecting approximately 7,000 Christchurch business premises. In November 2011, it began building the UFB network in Christchurch that will pass 180,000 homes, schools and businesses in Christchurch, Rangiora, Kaiapoi, Woodend, Lincoln, Prebbleton and Rolleston.

The Enable UFB network will play a vital role as Christchurch rebuilds – it will sit at the heart of our vision for a 21st century city. It will generate new industry, provide unprecedented access to global markets and services for local businesses, and enable the people of Christchurch to connect with each other in exciting new ways.

More information about Enable is available from enable.net.nz.