

Nextgen Group to provide fibre-optic connectivity to Australia's energy sector in north-west Australia

Nextgen Group has signed an agreement with global resource leaders, Shell and INPEX, to deliver an optical fibre cable system delivering critical infrastructure for the nation's resources industry.

Nextgen will build, own and operate the cable system supporting INPEX and Shell's operations in north-west Australia's Browse Basin. The system will also include key connections to Darwin and Port Hedland.

The cable will enable INPEX and Shell to provide a full range of communications services for the life of their operations.

With a design capacity of more than 8Tbps and the potential to be upgraded to more than 32 Tbps, the subsea cable, which will be based on Alcatel-Lucent's undersea technology, has been designed to meet data needs well into the future for north-western Australia.

Nextgen Group CEO, Peter McGrath, said the project would deliver essential support to Australia's oil and gas industry while providing alternative fibre optic infrastructure to Australia's north-west.

"Nextgen understands Australia's resource industry will need increasingly high speed and robust communications links over time," Mr McGrath said.

"As an Australian company we're delighted to support two global leaders working in a sector that is the heartbeat of the national economy," Mr McGrath said. "This project builds on our successful track record of delivering high speed communications links for businesses, government and other users in underserved regional and remote markets," he said.

Both projects will connect to Nextgen Group's extensive telco infrastructure in Western Australia, including the Shenton Park data centre launched on 5 March, 2014.

The cable system also has significant capability to service other oil and gas operators in the region including resources companies in the Pilbara.

Nextgen Group has proven credentials in delivering innovative, next generation transmission services to the market. This includes delivering the Regional Backbone Blackspots Program (RBBP), an Australian Government initiative with the specific objective of providing competitive wholesale backbone services to underserved regional markets.