Optus Sustainability Report 2023

It starts with Yes

OPTUS

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"Connected Communities" artwork created for Optus by Indigenous artist Rhonda Sampson

Acknowledgement of Country

Optus acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which we live, work and serve. We celebrate the oldest living culture and its unbroken history of storytelling and communication. We pay our respects to Elders – past, present, and future – and we strive together to embrace an optimistic outlook for our future in harmony, across all of Australia and for all of its people.

This report outlines our engagement with First Nations people and the importance of this relationship. Read further on **page 18**.

A message from our Chairman & CEO

At Optus, as a leading provider of communications for Australians, our purpose is to "power optimism with options". As part of this, Optus are committed to serve our community and have a positive impact through our sustainability programs and initiatives. Many of our sustainability initiatives provide our customers with options that positively increase their own impact on the environment and community.

Optus sustainability strategy – delivering to our commitments

We can achieve a more sustainable future when we work together. As a business we have developed a Sustainability Strategy that drives shared value between our customers, the community, and the environment. We focus on measurable and tangible ways to make positive impact through our six pillars – Climate Action, Circular Economy, Digital Enablement, Sustainable Innovation, Future of Work and Equity & Inclusion. We are proud to have achieved and even exceeded some of our FY25 targets this year outlined throughout this report.

Connecting people is at the heart of everything we do, and this year a key focus for us has been connecting our customers with sustainable causes they care about through our services. Here are some ways we have progressed against our sustainability commitments and engaged our customers in positive social and environmental activities:

Climate Action

At Optus, we recognise the role we play in linking our community to a future with reduced carbon emissions.

We have a long-time commitment to enhancing the environmental sustainability of our operations and assisting our community in joining us on the path towards a sustainable and robust future. Through initiatives such as **Optus Eco**, customers have power to personalise their experience and, in a positive way, amplify their environmental impact through the My Optus App, including by supporting local offset projects that are meaningful to them.

In FY23 we reduced our absolute (market-based) emissions by 12.9% year-on-year, getting us closer to our target of 25% reduction by FY25, in line with Scope 1 and 2 Science-Based Targets. Singtel Group was one of the first companies in Asia (ex-Japan) to have carbon emission reduction targets approved by the Science-Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) in 2017. During the year, we completed an internal review of our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emission targets to be in line with a 1.5-degree global climate scenario alongside a roadmap to achieve this. We are in the process of engaging SBTi with these updated 2030 emissions targets and will share details in due course.

Another important aspect of climate management is ensuring access to communications infrastructure during natural disaster weather events. We invested in nine additional Satellite Cell and Trailers (SATCATs) to substantially strengthen our disaster response capabilities and provide mobile network connection where traditional infrastructure was damaged.

FY23 was another difficult year for many rural communities exposed to various natural disaster and extreme weather events. We've been able to adapt quickly and introduce resilient systems to withstand outages. The expansion of our SATCAT fleet has allowed us to provide immediate connectivity support to affected areas during this year's flooding in rural New South Wales and Queensland. Read more about our disaster response on **page 33**.

Circular Economy

Our commitment to circular economy principles for waste reduction remained steadfast this year. Through our Circular Economy Roadmap, we established a plan to attain our targets of making all Optus branded products packaging 100% recyclable, reusable or compostable by FY25.

This year, a key milestone was the launch of our first environmentally friendly modem, made from 95% recycled plastic and packaging that is 100% recyclable with no single-use plastics. This gives our customers the choice to purchase products that will reduce their own environmental footprint. Closing the loop, we also offer customers options to recycle or repurpose their old handsets through our **Donate Your Device** and MobileMuster programs.

Our IT and Networks teams have also contributed significantly to reuse and recycle our e-waste, with 97.3% of our e-waste from Networks and 100% from IT diverted from landfill, a proud achievement as we have already exceeded our goal of recycling 90% by FY25.

Digital Enablement

We continued our commitment to educating young people to be safe digital citizens online. Our **Digital Thumbprint program** delivered free facilitator-led and online learning workshops to 80,547 young people across Australia, exceeding our FY25 target of educating 550,000 young people. Our whole team is incredibly proud of this achievement. We expanded the program this year to deliver in-person facilitated workshops to schools in more regional areas across Australia. More of this on **page 45**.

The Living Network's **Donate Your Data** program continues to be one of the most effective ways to address the digital divide that exists for vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals and families. This year our customers donated over 12 million gigabytes (GB) of data to those who don't have regular access to the internet, were caught in natural disaster crises or are experiencing domestic and family violence.

Sustainable Innovation

We know that technology is a great enabler in addressing social and environmental challenges that we face in society. Through our **Optus Future Makers** program this year, we funded five new social innovators to build and scale their social and environmental tech innovations. As a business we have partnered with three of our Future Makers alumni to pilot their solutions since the program started in 2017. Read more about this year's pilots on **page 52**.

This year we also launched a $1.4 billion sustainability-linked revolving loan facility – the first of its kind in the Australian telecommunications industry. This gives us great insight into investor's sustainability goals, the type of commitments they want to see, and directly aligns our financing strategy to the group's sustainability targets.

Future of Work

Optus adopts a proactive stance in readying for the workforce of the future. We recognise that digital platforms, which now simplify daily life - such as AI, machine learning and cloud services - will be the foundation of this workforce transformation. Our approach provides our employees opportunities to acquire new skills, sculpt their careers, and prosper in a digital future where prioritising customer experience is paramount.

To equip us for the constantly evolving digital landscape, we are providing our people with the opportunity to obtain micro-credentials through Optus U. This year, we introduced new streams-of-learning within Cyber Security, Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (AI). We also tripled our Tech Talent Graduate intake, welcoming 54 students in Software Engineering, Cyber Security, Digital and Data & Analytics. By providing access to advanced learning, our people can gain verified recognition of in-demand capabilities, allowing them and their careers to thrive in the future digital world.

Future of Work also focuses on how we can lend a helping hand to disadvantaged individuals and communities, empowering them to develop their own future focused skills. These initiatives revealed overwhelming feedback from our amazing Optus people who welcome the opportunity to volunteer, mentor and champion those in need of real support. A huge thank you to all our people who put their hand up to volunteer this year through our programs and initiatives. Find out more about this on **page 59**.

Equity and Inclusion

We believe that the strength of our business stands on the foundation of our diverse, vibrant and talented workforce. These diverse backgrounds, life experiences and perspectives of our people enable us to better service our customers, produce innovative offerings, and make better business decisions. Fostering diversity within our team generates a beneficial ripple effect within the larger community.

This year our team designed and developed our first **Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan** (RAP). To launch in early FY24, the RAP is our guide to fostering and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, partners and businesses.

We have been investing into the next generation of leaders, through our Pathways 2 Employment program and partnership with the **Australian Business and Community Network**, having also exceeded our FY25 target in supporting career aspirations through mentoring, skills transfer and employment opportunities for 5,000 disadvantaged youth.

Over the last few years, we have also highlighted the importance of respecting the human rights of people, both within our immediate network and supply chain. In FY23 we released our third **Modern Slavery Statement**, outlining our progress against our action plan to respect the human rights of all people within our areas of influence and reach.

Cyberattack

In September 2022, Optus suffered a cyberattack by a determined, skilled cybercriminal who targeted our customers' personal information. Data privacy and protection have always been important elements of our ESG commitment. Our customers are our most important 'social stakeholder' and respecting and protecting people's privacy is important to us. We are deeply sorry the attack impacted our customers, and we are committed to taking the action needed to do better in the future. We have learned a great deal through the experience, and we have committed to sharing those learnings in the spirit of making Australia stronger and better.

Once we realised the attack had occurred, we were laser-focused on preventing our customers from harm through the potential misuse of their information, and that objective guided all our decisions and actions.

It led us to announce what had happened quickly to put customers on alert. It led us to engage extensively with the government and financial institutions to work together to protect customers, and it led us to communicate openly and transparently even when we didn't have all the answers. We also proactively helped each person understand what was recommended by the authorities for their specific situation and covered the costs to customers of replacing identity documents where advised to do so.

It wasn't the year many of us at Optus expected, but its challenges brought even stronger comradery and dedication from all our Optus people.

Our resilience has been on full display this year, showcasing our unwavering challenger spirit which is an intrinsic part of who we are. We have continued to connect with our customers, communities, network, and each other as we navigate through what has happened, and looking ahead identify where we can improve. And most importantly, we have never lost focus on our customers and our commitments which we continue to honour.

Through the challenges and accomplishments of this year, we are united as a team and are optimistic about the future. We remain steadfast in our vision to power optimism with options. Thank you to all our customers, stakeholders, partners, and Optus people. What we can achieve together is greater than we can ever achieve alone.

We hope you enjoy reading about our continued sustainability journey and progress and always welcome your feedback.

Regards,

Paul O'Sullivan,
Chairman

Kelly Bayer Rosmarin,
Chief Executive Officer

About Optus

As Australia's second largest provider of telecommunications services, Optus is a leading technology company providing over 11 million Australian customers with connectivity services daily.

Through our team of more than 7,000 employees across Australia, Optus delivers a comprehensive range of telecommunications products including mobile and fixed line telephony, fixed and mobile broadband services, multimedia entertainment and technology services, satellite services, and converged business telecommunications applications and solutions.

As the digital world of technology changes and our customers' demands change in unison, we are consistently on a transformational journey to deliver technological solutions beyond basic connectivity. Solutions like our **Optus Living Network** offer our customers the power to connect with each other and the planet in more sustainable ways.

Our vision & purpose

At Optus our actions align with our vision to be Australia's most loved everyday brand with lasting customer relationships.

Our vision underpins our purpose to **"power optimism with options"**. We want to be a business our customers can rely on to provide them with high quality options that enable them to personalise their experience to suit their preferences, lifestyle and sustainability ambitions. We work towards a more sustainable future for our customers and stakeholders, allowing them to partner with us to collectively reduce our environmental impact, and amplify our positive social impact.

Provide customers with more than

11 million

services across Australia each day

7,572

employees

292

retail stores

Network coverage to

98.5%

of the Australian population

Five

employee networks:

Culture Connect, Disability Network, Elevate Women, Express Yourself and United

About this report

Welcome to our 24th annual Optus Sustainability Report, which covers our sustainability approach and performance for the financial year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 (FY23). This report gives our stakeholders a closer look at our sustainability strategy, targets, initiatives, and performance across Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) matters and is aligned with our six sustainability pillars.

Optus is a subsidiary of **Singapore Telecommunications Limited** ('Singtel'). Our sustainability performance and impact are outlined in this report, and these activities are integrated into the **Singtel Group Sustainability Report 2023** and the **Singtel Group Annual Report 2023**. The Singtel Group Report also contains further details of the reporting standards used to guide our reporting, our employee policies and our broader ESG focus as a Group. Since 2008 we have used the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) universal standards as a guide when reporting on sustainability activities and outcomes. You can view our activities against the GRI 2021 topics and indicators in the **Singtel Group Sustainability Report**.

BUSINESS FOR SOCIETAL IMPACT
CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP
VERIFIED
2023

As part of our Group reporting, Ernst and Young has independently assured a selection of our key ESG disclosures and has independently advised on the transparency of this report. You can view their assurance report in the **Singtel Group Sustainability Report**.

We use the Business for Societal Impact methodology to measure and report on our contribution to the community, and Business for Societal Impact has verified that our evaluation of our community investment was correct based on the data we supplied.

Optus is a signatory to, or participant in various voluntary sustainability initiatives and memberships. You can view the full list in our **'Stakeholder Engagement'** section of this report.

Feedback

Optus are dedicated to continuing to improve our reporting and sustainability performance. This report as well as previous years' sustainability reports can be found **here**. We appreciate and encourage feedback from stakeholders, which can be directed to **sustainability@optus.com.au**.

FY23 Performance Highlights at a Glance

Climate Action

Contracted an initial 26% renewable energy mix
above mandatory requirements for years 2025–2029

Optus now has 92 hybrid vehicles,
equating to 51% of passenger vehicles in the Optus fleet, plus our first Electric Vehicle was introduced

13.1% (location-based) and 12.9% (market-based)
year-on-year reduction of our Scope 1 & 2 emissions

Circular Economy

Launched new generation modem made of 95% recycled plastics
with 100% recyclable packaging free from single-use plastics

Developed our Circular Economy Roadmap
for general waste to minimise the amount of general waste going to landfill from our operations

Reduced the size of our new 5G SIM cards by 52%,
removing up to 10 tonnes of single-use plastics
from circulation

New MobileMuster recycling bins introduced in all retail stores
for customers to recycle their old devices, as well as an expansion of range of products accepted – modems, landlines, TV streaming devices and smart home devices

Digital Enablement

Over 51 million GBs donated by 5,674,495
customers through Donate Your Data program since launch in 2019

Supported 38,870 Australian young people
and families through Donate Your Data since the program commenced

Digital Thumbprint Program has reached a total of 552,071 students
nationally since 2013, exceeding our target of 500,000 students by FY25

Finalist in 2022 ACOMMS Awards:
'Cyber Security & Online Safety Innovation'

FY23 Performance Highlights at a Glance

Sustainable Innovation

Five social enterprises
empowered to grow and scale through our Future Makers program

Supporting development of intelligent recycling bins
pilot at Optus Sydney Campus through Future Makers program finalist – Charopy

StandbyU training with 130 Optus frontline employees
to support customers experiencing domestic and family violence

Future of Work

Increase of 62,153 training hours
completed by our 7,572 employees

14,965 hours
of volunteer work contributed by our employees during company time

Optus' total FY23 community investment was $23,259,295

Awarded 5th place in GoodCompany's Top 10 Best Workplaces
to Give Back 2022

2,503 employees participated in learning modules,
through Optus Capability Institutes and Optus U

Equity and Inclusion

32.38% of Optus' workplace are women,
and 27.3% of executive roles are held by women

150 students reached through 8 'Pathways 2 Employment' workshops,
with 75 Optus mentors. 4 students offered employment in Optus retail stores

Mentored over 850 disadvantaged students
through ABCN programs, upskilling them with future employability skills

Published Optus' 3rd Modern Slavery Statement

Sustainability Strategy

Introduction to strategy

At Optus we believe that the power to change our world starts with saying "yes". When we come together with our customers, network and community, we can create a future we can all be optimistic about. We believe that we can make the biggest impact through our six focus areas – Climate Action, Circular Economy, Digital Enablement, Sustainable Innovation, Future of Work, and Equity and Inclusion. These six focus areas were identified through our materiality process, which you can read more about in our **'Sustainability Governance'** section.

We have committed to five-year sustainability targets within each focus area:

Climate Action
Support and enable the transition towards a net-zero emissions world

Circular Economy
From supply chain and product packaging to general day-to-day waste from our operations, there are many opportunities to turn what may have once been rubbish, into resource

Digital Enablement
Empower the vulnerable and disadvantaged Australians to achieve, thrive and belong in the digital world

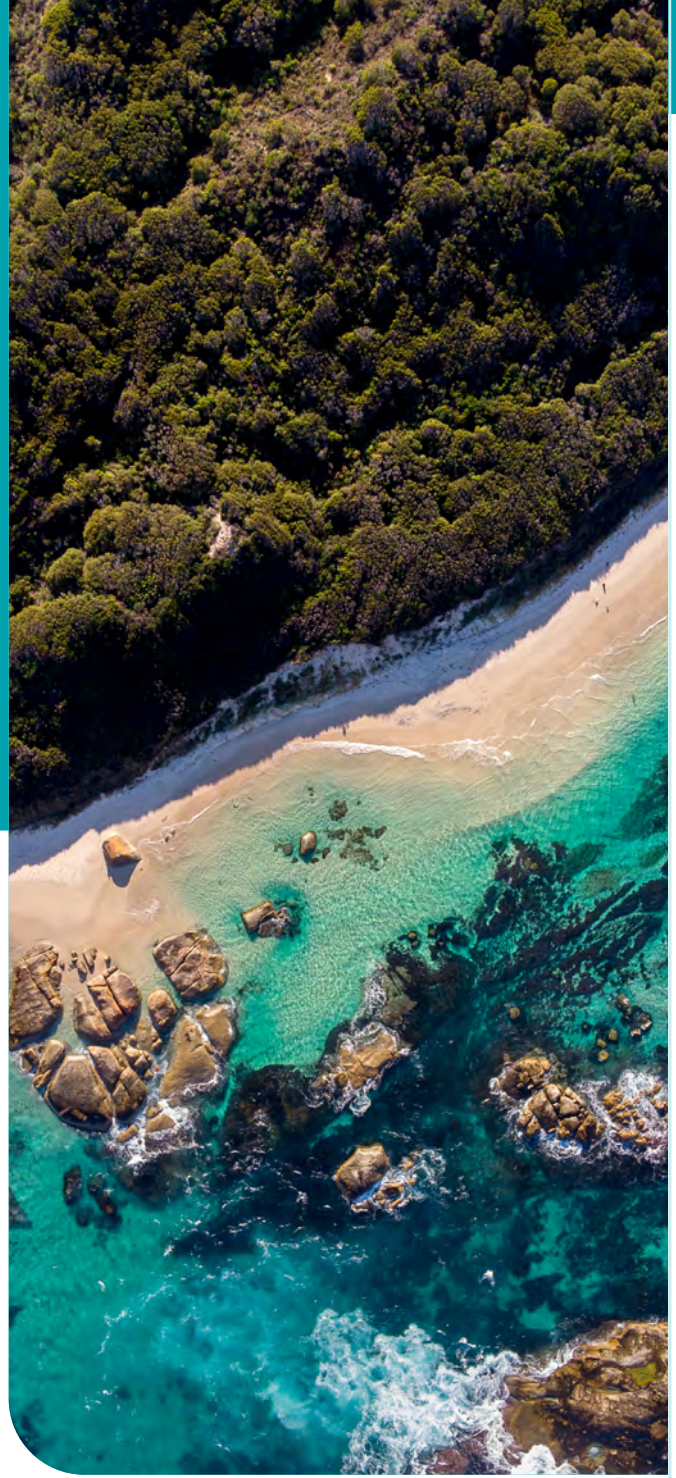
Sustainable Innovation
Help innovators address the most pressing social and environmental challenges through the power of technology

Future of Work
Build knowledge and skills for people to thrive in an ever-changing digital world

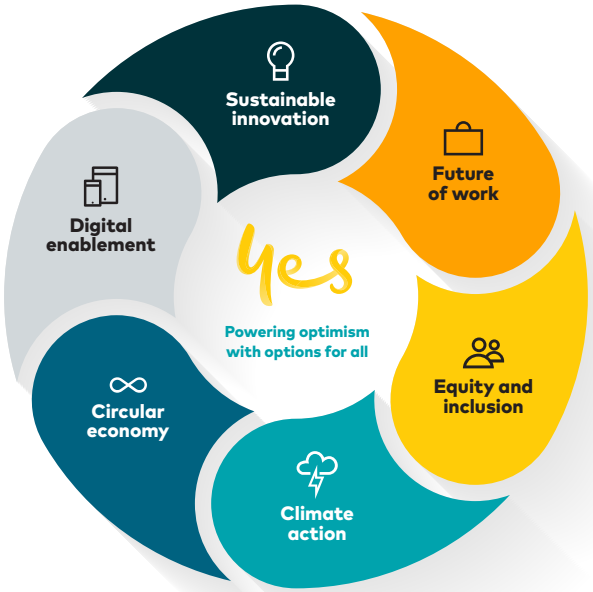
Equity and Inclusion
Empower Australians of all ages, backgrounds, gender and abilities to reach their potential

"The Optus sustainability strategy and our targets focus on the areas where we believe we can have the most significant impact – for our customers, people, planet and communities in which we live and work."

Helen Maisano,
Senior Director, Group Sustainability, Optus



Sustainability Strategy



CLIMATE ACTION

Reduce 25% of our absolute emissions
Collaborate with customers and partners to reduce climate risk and achieve the global goal of no more than 1.5 degrees of warming

Commit 100% of our electricity requirements to be backed by renewable energy sources by the end of 2025
Increasing the proportion of our electricity backed by renewable sources by the end of 2025

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Provide pathways to employment for 5,000 disadvantaged youth
Supporting career aspirations through mentoring, skills transfer, confidence building and employment opportunities

Increase women in leadership to 25%
Working to ensure gender balanced leadership and inspire our next generation of leaders

Zero major human rights incidents in our operations and with major suppliers
Respecting the human rights of people wherever ~~we~~ operate

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

90% waste diversion from landfill
Reusing, recycling and repurposing, keeping everything in use as part of the circular economy

Reuse and recycle over 90% of our e-waste
The more we give back, the more we get back

100% recyclable, reusable or compostable packaging
Moving away from single-use materials, so nothing is wasted

FUTURE OF WORK

Formal future focused skills development for 1,500 employees
Provide access to accelerated advanced learning to gain verified recognition of critical capabilities to thrive in an ever-changing technology enabled and digital world

Harness the power of volunteering to build the knowledge and skills of 1,500 Optus people and community leaders
Fostering knowledge transfer and developing leadership and coaching skills through volunteering, probono, mentoring and coaching programs

DIGITAL ENABLEMENT

Support 550,000 young people to participate safely online
Ensuring everyone has all the tools they need for positive, responsible and authentic online experiences

Connect 100,000 disadvantaged youth and families to help close the digital divide and support Australians in crisis
We believe everyone deserves the chance to reach their potential and be supported in times of crisis and disasters

SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION

Grow and scale five impact innovations
Accelerating ground-breaking innovations to address the most pressing social and environmental issues of our time

FY23 Progress against FY25 Targets

Read more about our progress towards these targets in the following chapters.

Climate Action

TARGET

Commit 100% of our electricity requirements to be backed by renewable energy sources by the end of 2025

FY23 HIGHLIGHTS

25.3% achieved
(including voluntary Large Generation Certificates)

Contracted an average of 158 GWh
per annum of renewable backed electricity for 2025-2029 with Red Energy (including voluntary and mandatory LGCs), representing an average renewable electricity mix of 45% of our estimated electricity demand for that period.

SDG ALIGNMENT

TARGET

Reduce 25% of our absolute emissions (Scope 1 & 2)

FY23 HIGHLIGHTS

13.1%
reduction YoY
(location-based)

12.9%
reduction YoY
(market-based)

In line with a trajectory of 25% reduction by FY25
tied to Optus Sustainability Linked Loans and Bonds (FY15 baseline)

FY23 Progress against FY25 Targets

Read more about our progress towards these targets in the following chapters.

Circular Economy

TARGETS

Reuse and recycle over 90% of our e-waste

FY23 HIGHLIGHTS

97.9%
achieved
surpassing our target

TARGETS

100% recyclable, reusable or compostable packaging

FY23 HIGHLIGHTS

81%
achieved
(including consignment packaging*)

TARGETS

90% waste diversion from landfill

FY23 HIGHLIGHTS

39.5%
achieved

SDG ALIGNMENT

*Consignment packaging is now included as of FY23. Previous metrics are not included.

FY23 Progress against FY25 Targets

Read more about our progress towards these targets in the following chapters.

Digital Enablement

TARGET

Support 550,000 young people to participate safely online

FY23 HIGHLIGHTS

80,547 students participated in Digital Thumbprint program

Cumulative total:

552,071 students educated

through Digital Thumbprint program (since 2013)

SDG ALIGNMENT

TARGET

Connect 100,000 disadvantaged youth and families to help close the digital divide and support Australians in crisis

FY23 HIGHLIGHTS

13,497 people have connectivity through Donate Your Data™

Cumulative total:

38,870 people have connectivity through Donate Your Data™

since launch in 2019*

*Not including support provided over COVID-19 pandemic

Sustainable Innovation

TARGET

Grow and scale 5 impact innovations

FY23 HIGHLIGHTS

Plans for Charopy intelligent recycling bins pilot, to launch in FY24

StandbyU training with 130 Optus frontline employees

to support those experiencing domestic and family violence

Helped grow and scale 4 innovations to date:

StandbyU, Virtual Psychologist, Givvable and Charopy

SDG ALIGNMENT

FY23 Progress against FY25 Targets

Read more about our progress towards these targets in the following chapters.

Future of Work

TARGET

Formal future focused skills development for 1,500 employees

FY23 HIGHLIGHTS

1,908 Optus employees
participated in Capability Institutes, and

595 Optus employees accredited
through Optus U

TARGET

Harness the power of volunteering to build the knowledge and skills of 1,500 Optus people and community leaders

FY23 HIGHLIGHT

897 disadvantaged students supported
through ABCN programs with 229 Optus mentors

SDG ALIGNMENT

Equity and Inclusion

TARGETS

Provide pathways to employment for 5,000 disadvantaged youth

FY23 HIGHLIGHTS

150 students
reached through 8 'Pathways 2 Employment' workshops with 75 mentors. 4 students offered employment in Optus retail stores

Cumulative total:
591 students reached
through program since launch in 2017

TARGETS

Zero major human rights incidents in our operations and with major suppliers

FY23 HIGHLIGHT

Zero incidents

TARGETS

Increase women in leadership to 25%

FY23 HIGHLIGHTS

Surpassed our target to achieve 27.3% of executive roles held by women at Optus

SDG ALIGNMENT

Stakeholder Engagement

Our approach

At Optus, engaging with our stakeholders is about building meaningful relationships and fostering trust. By building meaningful relationships, we can gain insightful feedback from stakeholders, which informs our decision-making as a business and helps to build trust.

We proactively communicate with our diverse range of stakeholders in a variety of ways, such as face-to-face and virtual meetings, roundtable discussions, forums, events, surveys, customer success representatives and direct feedback obtained via email (**sustainability@optus.com.au**). Our sustainability strategy is formed in collaboration with our stakeholders through a thorough materiality review every three to five years. This enables us to prioritise the most relevant concerns of these groups and ensure that we are identifying and addressing the issues that matter most to our stakeholders.

Our stakeholders

Throughout this report you will discover our trusted partnerships and active engagement with a range of stakeholders, as we seek to collaborate on initiatives where we can make a more meaningful and sustainable impact by working together.

- **Our Optus people - Including Employee Networks** **(pg. 66)**
- **Our customers**
- **Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and charity partners**
- **Our suppliers**
- **Our business partners and parent company, Singtel**
- **Government and regulators**
- **Industry bodies and forums**
- **The media**

Additionally, Optus has pledged support or membership to the following voluntary sustainability initiatives and organisations:

- Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO)
- Australian Business Community Network (ABCN)
- Board of Taxation's voluntary Tax Transparency Code (TTC)
- CDP (formerly Carbon Disclosure Project)
- Optus Digital Inclusion Roundtable (with charity partner CEOs)
- Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)
- GSMA (formerly Global System for Mobile Communications)
- MobileMuster
- Modern Slavery Community of Practice
- Science-Based Targets Initiative (SBTi)
- Shared Value Project
- Soldier On Gold Pledge Partner
- Supply Nation
- Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)
- Telco Together Foundation
- United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) & UNGCNA (United Nations Global Compact Network Australia)
- United Nations Business Ambition for 1.5 degrees
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Veterans Employment Program
- Workplace Gender Equality Agency
- Office of the eSafety Commissioner
- Givvable

First Nations engagement

At Optus, we believe we are strengthened by others, and it is our diversity that enables us to serve a nation as culturally rich as Australia. We recognise that First Nations people have been part of Australia's history for over 60,000 years. Before telecommunication as we know it today, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples communicated through word of mouth, art, celebrations, and corroborees.

Given this connection, we aim to deepen our relationships with First Nations communities and cultivate a deeper understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures within our organisation. This is integral to our organisational culture and fulfilling our commitment to being Australia's most loved everyday brand with lasting customer relationships.

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Reconciliation Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) framework is an opportunity to detail our central vision, purpose and strategic commitment to delivering measurable positive outcomes for First Nations peoples, Optus, our customers and broader community. In FY23 Optus designed and developed a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Launched in early FY24, the RAP focuses on how Optus will forge a long-term commitment to meaningful and positive outcomes for and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Optus' mission for reconciliation is "to ensure this future leverages the power of inclusivity. It is with courage, respect and a commitment to listen and to learn that we strive to provide meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop, contribute and be part of the digital economy. We will use our RAP to make meaningful progress and impact, further fostering and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, partners and businesses."

We encourage you to read our **Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan** and commitments via our website.

KARI Foundation

Since 2018, Optus has partnered with the **KARI Foundation** to provide educational opportunities for Aboriginal youth, supporting them to achieve, thrive and belong. Each year Optus provides financial and mentoring support to 20 Indigenous students entering their final years of high school. The financial support covers educational-related expenses for students, including excursions, books and materials, and the mentoring support provides an avenue for young people and Optus employees to share perspectives and build relationships.

Optus and KARI have also come together - through a series of co-designed workshops to create a shared cultural awareness with employees, and canvass greater opportunities for mentored scholarship students.

Furthermore, KARI Foundation is also a partner in our digital inclusion program, **Donate Your Data™**. The program provides a free 4G SIM so participants can access the internet and stay connected to friends and family via free calls and texts. Over 1,000 Indigenous young people and families were supported through the KARI Foundation using Donate Your Data™. Find out more about Donate Your Data on **page 48**.

Engaging an Indigenous supplier network

As outlined in our RAP, we aim to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes for these communities. Our plan involves developing best practices to promote and build confidence across the business to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers, and to further integrate our existing Supply Nation membership within Optus' procurement policies and processes.

Our Contribution to the United Nations SDG's

The United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) encourages businesses across the globe to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies. As a member of the UNGC, we are committed to playing our part in progressing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Along with the multitude of governments who have committed to achieving the 17 SDGs aimed at tackling significant global issues by 2030, we also advocate for the crucial role of businesses in adopting a new mindset and implementing necessary changes at both the strategic and operational levels to attain the SDGs and measure their impact.

In FY18, we conducted an SDG prioritisation exercise and identified 9 SDGs that require the most attention in our countries of operation and supply chains to create sustainable change.

SDG	Optus' position	Optus' effort and initiatives
Good Health and Well-Being Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all ages	Optus takes potential risks to the health and safety of our stakeholders seriously, and we actively promote well-being, health and safety at the workplace	• Equity and Inclusion: Employee Partnership Agreement • Natural Disasters and extreme weather events response
Quality Education Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Optus is committed to enabling the progress, development and inclusion of vulnerable segments of society through the support of education and skills development opportunities	• Digital Enablement: Digital Thumbprint • Future of Work: Optus U, Employee volunteering, ABCN, KARI, Optus Tech Talent, Leaders at Optus, Capability Institutes
Gender Equality Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Optus is committed to treating everyone with respect and consideration at all times, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, language, cultural background, physical ability, religious belief and lifestyle choices	• Equity and Inclusion: Executive Women target, Included@Optus, Elevate Women Employee Network
Decent Work and Economic Growth Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Optus is committed to growing with our people and making the company a vibrant workplace across our global operations	• Equity and Inclusion: Executive Women, Included@ Optus, Veteran community, Employee Networks, Reflect RAP, ABCN, KARI, Pathways 2 Employment, Modern Slavery • Future of Work: Optus U, Employee volunteering, KARI, Optus Tech Talent, Leaders at Optus, Capability Institutes
Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation	Optus is committed to continuously innovating to stay at the forefront and bring the latest and best services to our customers, including working with change-makers to bring creative solutions to solve societal problems	• Sustainable Innovation: Optus Future Makers • Natural Disasters and extreme weather events response
Reduced Inequalities Reduce inequality within and among countries	Optus is committed to creating equal opportunity for both our people and our communities	• Equity and Inclusion: Executive Women, Included@ Optus, Employee Networks, Reflect RAP • Digital Enablement: Donate Your Data
Sustainable Cities and Communities Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable	Optus is committed to leveraging our Information and Communications Technology (ICT) competence to develop solutions that improve quality of living and contribute to building a resilient network infrastructure	• Climate Action: Scope 1 and 2 emissions reduction • Natural Disasters and extreme weather events: SATCATs and DR Skids • Circular Economy: Donate Your Device. Mobile Muster, eSIM, Sustainable modem • Sustainable Innovation: Optus Future Makers • Our Network
Responsible Consumption and Production Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Optus is committed to actively monitoring our waste management practices as part of our business operations and environmental conservation efforts	• Circular Economy: eSIM, Sustainable modem • Equity and Inclusion: Modern Slavery
Climate Action Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Optus is committed to understanding, managing and minimising our environmental footprint across our value chain, including our business operations, suppliers and customers and has a Science Based Emissions Reduction Target approved by the Science Based Target Initiative (SBTi)	• Climate Action: Scope 1 and 2 emissions reduction, Optus Eco • Natural Disasters and extreme weather events response

Sustainability Governance

At Optus, in all areas of our operations, including our Sustainability activities, we are committed to implementing corporate governance practices that include clear policies and processes, and robust controls to establish accountability and give our stakeholders peace of mind. We strive to adhere to the highest standards of personal and corporate integrity, outlined in our Code of Conduct.

We expect our people to embody these principles in all their actions and decision-making, to conduct themselves in line with our organisational values. Our people participate in Appropriate Workplace Behaviours compliance training as part of their onboarding process which covers our Code of Conduct. Employees have access to the Code via our website and the Code is referenced in the various compliance learning modules that each individual must complete annually.

In line with our Code of Conduct, we must comply with all laws, regulations, codes of practice, and legal, regulatory and licensing requirements, including directions and orders of any government or statutory or regulatory authority in the areas in which we operate. This includes tax regulations in Australia – more on this on **page 22**.

Our Code of Conduct aligns with our Anti-Bribery and Corruption, Fraud Investigation and Whistleblowing policies, which are Singtel Group-wide policies.

In FY23 41 complaints were reported to our Whistleblower service, with 12 cases being substantiated, 15 not substantiated and 14 carried forward at 31 March 2023. Of the 14 cases brought forward at the end of FY22, 5 were substantiated and 9 not substantiated. It is a decrease from the preceding years, with 62 and 87 complaints received in FY22 and FY21 respectively.

How sustainability is governed

Optus is led by Singtel Group's sustainability governance and management of ESG and sustainability governance key performance indicators (KPIs). The Singtel Board provides oversight to the Group, along with the Management Committee and Risk Management Committee, on material ESG topics. The Group CEO provides the Board with regular updates on various sustainability programs, upcoming activities, and updates on global trends that have an impact on our sustainability strategy.

Optus has a Group Sustainability team to focus on ESG and sustainability-related activities in Australia and bridge the local strategy to the Singtel Group sustainability strategy. The Australian and Singapore sustainability teams regularly come together to drive and collaborate on sustainability programs and share best practices across the Group. The Singtel Group sustainability governance structure is available within the **Singtel Group Sustainability Report**.

Management of ESG KPIs

Many sustainability issues are consistent across the countries in which the Group operates, and therefore we have linked collective and common ESG targets to KPIs, such as:

- 20% of our Top Executive's long-term incentive plan remuneration policies are tied to specific, time-bound key performance indicators (KPIs) such as reaching 32% of female employees in management by FY25
- ESG targets for our Management Committee's short-term incentive plans represent 10% of their annual balance scorecard performance
- Management Committee's KPIs are cascaded down to their business units, departments and employees, whose performance bonus and other incentives are tied to their KPIs.

These targets cover key sustainability themes such as:

- Climate change and environment - as measured by the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)
- Reputation and responsible business practices - measured by the MSCI ESG Index
- Community impact, in terms of our digital inclusion and enablement targets
- Talent and people including diversity and talent retention.

You can read more about our Group sustainability incentives in the **Singtel Group Sustainability Report**.

Tax transparency

As a leading Australian communications company, we recognise that tax contributions are important to public finances and the social programs they fund, and we are committed to complying with the applicable tax laws of the jurisdictions where we operate. We acknowledge tax transparency improves the community's confidence in the corporate sector. As a signatory to the Board of Taxation's voluntary tax transparency code, we've published Tax Transparency Reports since FY18. You can find out more about our approach to tax, and our latest Tax Transparency Report on our **website**. You can also view more details about our Tax practices in the **Singtel Group Report**.

Security and data privacy

Our **Privacy Policy** outlines our strict procedures that govern the handling and protection of sensitive customer information. We value the privacy of our customers and their data, which is stored within our networks and systems, as our customers may come to harm if their data is compromised or misused. We have in place safeguards and controls for the protection of customer data.

We continue to record customer privacy complaints that are referred to us by our customers, staff, other individuals or regulatory bodies. In FY23 there were 77 cases of non-cyber-related complaints, categorised as privacy incidents. Of these, nine cases were referred by the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO), and one case from the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC). We met the threshold to notify the OAIC on one occasion, which was related to the Optus cyber incident, and reported a Notifiable Data Breach relating to the personal information of 9.8 million customers.

In September 2022, Optus suffered a cyberattack that resulted in the exposure of some customers' personal information. We communicated openly and transparently with all stakeholders affected and worked closely with the government and financial institutions to protect our customers. We took immediate corrective action to prevent similar cases from recurring.

We also committed to covering the cost of replacing identity documents, such as drivers licences, for customers advised to do so. In April 2023, a class action against Optus was filed in the Federal Court of Australia on behalf of customers in relation to the cyberattack. We will defend the proceedings. In addition to the measures already taken, we continue to provide support for customers impacted by the attack.

Fair and ethical marketing

In FY23, Optus did not receive any fines from the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). However, we were subject to one sanction from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) during the year: Optus was fined $13.5 million for allegations of false and misleading representations in relation to the sale of NBN plans in 2019 to about 20,500 customers. The ACCC alleged Optus made representations that customers who acquired an Optus plan would obtain a speed estimate before the line was activated, that Optus would check the speed of the line after connection and that Optus would provide alternate options if the estimated speed could not be met, and that Optus wrongly accepted payments from customers. As a result of Court orders and declarations regarding Optus' breaches in respect of the contraventions to ss 29(1)(g) and (m) to the Australian Consumer Law (ACL), Optus was required to pay a penalty of $13.5 million, plus $100,000 in costs, to undertake a customer remediation program, maintain and update our compliance program. This matter was heard in court on 10 November 2022.

Connecting
Australia

Our Network

Network coverage – enhancing our 5G Network

As a leading telecommunications company, Optus has a significant responsibility to keep our customers and the wider community connected. We remain committed to enhancing the customer connectivity experience while also maintaining existing and forging new partnerships to develop future ways of connecting people and communities.

We are committed to building Australia's fastest 5G network, because a fast and reliable network creates possibilities. It can accelerate impactful innovation, increase productivity for businesses; enable powerful knowledge sharing, and help to build meaningful personal and community connections.

This year, Optus rolled out an additional 1,200 5G sites, bringing our total to over 3,000 5G sites. We have broadened our 5G reach to include additional regional towns and upgraded keysites that many of our customers rely on the most, such as Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide airports.

To serve more customers in areas where mobile coverage would usually be challenging, we have upgraded almost 1,000 sites with a 900Mhz low band spectrum, which extends our 5G coverage by 20% per-site basis.

5G Standalone Network

After almost a year of testing and several customer trials, this year we launched our 5G Standalone network. Our new 5G Standalone network doesn't rely on the 4G radio and core network, which means more of our customers' devices can communicate simultaneously at higher speeds and, in future, can connect to 5G in more places.

As the technology matures, our customers will experience even faster speeds, greater reliability and lower latency. These capabilities will create an ideal environment for delivery of richer user experiences, like gaming, Artificial Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR) and Extended Reality (XR).

Looking forward, we are developing additional 5G Standalone features such as network slicing. This will enable customers to slice the network into different virtual segments, allowing each slice to be uniquely configured to optimise speed, reduce data lags and latency, and increase flexibility.

Greening our 5G Network

Upgrading our 5G networks to provide the best coverage increases our energy demands and resulted in an increase of emissions. Given this, we are progressively upgrading our network with state-of-the-art hardware to enable energy efficient site solution deployment. This addresses both sustainability and site deployment challenges, by reducing total footprint, materials used, and power consumption. This modernisation of hardware, along with its energy saving features, show a reduction of 42.5kWh - which is equivalent to 31kg CO_2eq per site per day - resulting in a realised energy reduction of 31% in the cost per gigabyte (GB). Read more about our environmental network activities in the **'Climate Action'** section of this report.

Radio Access Network (RAN)

Optus and Ericsson have deployed a unique radio access network (RAN) solution to leverage lightweight, new generation ratios and basebands that reduce energy consumption by up to 25%. This solution supports the sustainable growth of Optus' mobile network whilst contributing to Optus' sustainability commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 25% by FY25.

Following the initial deployment at the Moorebank site, Optus is beginning to upgrade equipment at sites across its network: resulting in a decrease in energy consumption, aiming to save approximately 40kWh per day when coupled with energy-saving software features. You can read more about this carbon reduction project on **page 29**.

Resilient Network

We continue to undertake extensive climate scenario analysis to pre-empt worsening natural disasters and invest in adaptation of our network for climate resilience, indicated in our inaugural **Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) report**, published in FY22. In FY23 we continued collaboration with our stakeholders across the infrastructure ecosystem and have together identified vulnerable sites which will be incorporated into a microgrid pilot. This will help to ensure our sites remain operational at times when the main power supply is affected by extreme weather events.

New Satellite technology

While we have a strong track record in delivering services to rural areas, Australia's vast landmass and rugged terrain have made it difficult to provide mobile coverage everywhere needed, especially in remote locations.

This year we successfully conducted a live demonstration of satellite direct-to-mobile technology. This technology enables a standard mobile device located outside of the terrestrial network to access the satellite network, offering a much-needed solution for customers and communities not covered by the existing network. This will benefit those living in remote communities, and even those out at sea off the Australian coast, allowing them to stay connected. We will continue to explore the rollout of this technology in FY24.

"At Ericsson, sustainability is integral to our business and has become a fundamental part of how we operate and innovate. This new RAN deployment represents an important step toward our mission to achieve net-zero across our value chain by 2040 and cut emissions by 50% in our portfolio in use and supply chain by 2030. We are proud to have collaborated with Optus in creating a RAN solution that will continue to support the development of Australia's sustainable future."

Martin Wiktorin,
Head of Ericsson Global Customer Unit, Singtel

Climate Action

Supporting and enabling the transition towards a net-zero world

Climate Action

At Optus, we believe we play a role in addressing climate change by reducing absolute emissions in our network and encouraging our customers to reduce their environmental footprint through technology.

Our two targets drive our strategic focus on Climate Action: to reduce 25% of our Scope 1 and 2 emissions, and to procure 100% of our electricity requirements from renewable-backed sources by the end of 2025. Aligning with SDGs 9, 11, and 13, we aim to reduce our organisational carbon footprint, and provide opportunities for our customers to reduce their individual carbon footprint in partnership with us. Through initiatives such as **Optus Eco**, customers have the power to personalise their experience and amplify their environmental impact through the My Optus App, including by supporting local offset projects that are meaningful to them.

The Singtel Group was one of the first companies in Asia to have carbon emission reduction targets approved by the SBTi in 2017. During FY23, we completed an internal review of our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emission targets against a 1.5-degree global climate scenario. The refreshed target will be announced in due course when revalidated by SBTi. We are continuing to engage with our suppliers on our shared emissions and are working collaboratively to build a roadmap to guide future emission reduction strategies that we can achieve together between FY24 and FY30.

Highlights at a glance

Energy efficiency initiatives have resulted in approx

19GWh

of electricity savings in FY23

Reduced Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions by 13.1% (location-based) and 12.9% (market-based) compared to last year

Contracted an initial

26%

renewable energy mix above mandatory requirements for years 2025–2029

FY23 Progress against FY25 Targets

Climate Action

TARGET

Commit 100% of our electricity requirements to be backed by renewable energy sources by the end of 2025

FY22 PERFORMANCE

Launched our first National Renewable Energy tender

FY23 PERFORMANCE

25.3%
including voluntary LGCs
(7% excluding mandatory LGCs)

Contracted an initial 26%
renewable energy mix
above mandatory requirements for years 2025-2029

TARGET

Reduce 25% of our absolute emissions (Scope 1 & 2)

FY22 PERFORMANCE

- Peaked net Scope 1 and 2 emissions in FY21 and reduced them by 8% for the first time in FY22
- Surrendered 42GWh equivalent of large-scale generation certificates from Australian renewable energy sources
- Completed a full scope 3 emissions inventory for all 15 categories for Australian operations
- Completed Optus' first full TCFD disclosure, as part of Singtel Group's first standalone TCFD report
- Successfully concluded a $300m sustainability-linked bond in Australia tied to absolute emissions reductions
- Improved carbon emissions intensity from 0.08tCO_2e/TB in FY21 to 0.06tCO_2e/TB in FY22
- Reduced absolute Scope 1 and 2 emissions 428,458tCO_2e in FY21 to 394,253tCO_2e in FY22

FY23 PERFORMANCE

- Reduced Scope 1 & 2 emissions by 13.1% (location-based) and 12.9% (market-based) between FY22 and FY23
- Surrendered 35GWh equivalent of large-scale generation certificates (LGCs) from Australian renewable energy sources
- 18,959 MWh energy reduced through decommissioning of legacy infrastructure including some parts of our 3G network
- Improved carbon emissions intensity from 0.06tCO_2e/TB in FY22 to 0.04tCO_2e/TB in FY23
- Reduced absolute Scope 1 and 2 emissions from 394,253tCO_2e in FY22 to 343,367tCO_2e in FY23

Renewable energy

In line with our FY21 commitment to raise our level of renewable energy (RE) backing, we launched an RE tender in FY22 to meet our national electricity demands. We have seen the Ukraine War unfold and the energy crisis that followed, as well as supply chain challenges. These developments have resulted in cost increases in electricity and renewable energy project developments which have significantly changed the economics and supply capacity of our energy needs, including our renewable energy plans, which we will share in due course.

Despite these challenges in FY23, we signed our first Renewable Energy Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Red Energy, including their TrueGreen product, for approximately 158GWh of our national load. Our contracting pipeline for additional renewable energy PPAs is currently a work in progress. While this may pose supply and inflationary risks to our original RE targets, we will continue to update and disclose the developments of RE contracting with our customers and other stakeholders as we progress.

Energy reduction initiatives

In FY23, we continued to make progress on our energy reduction target by initiating a project to identify opportunities throughout our network. Through this project, we realised a reduction of 18.9GWh of electricity from the decommissioning of legacy, redundant, defunct and end-of-life network elements and their associated components.

Platform	Description	Estimated annual savings (MWh)	GHG emissions avoidance (tCO2e)
Internet Protocol Network Engineering (IPNE)	284 network elements (ex HFC) power down and removed	3,982	2,708
Digital Networks (DN)	438 network elements power down and removed	4,307	2,929
Access Network Planning and Quality (ANPQ)	5,526 cells were locked down and 300 U2100 sites were switched off	10,670	7,256

Case Study: Embodied Carbon – Upstream Supply Chain emissions

This year we worked closely with Nokia and Ericsson to better understand and quantify the embodied carbon emissions associated with our 5G network infrastructure. Embodied emissions include emissions associated with the construction processes and materials used in building and upgrading our mobile network. We are also working with our major suppliers to refine the embedded emissions allocations to understand their own emissions reduction targets and commitments.

As a result of this collaborative engagement, we now have a more comprehensive understanding of our emissions inventory and clear insights on targeting future emissions reduction improvements. This will ensure that, together with our suppliers, we are focused on maximising the emissions reduction opportunities that have the most impact on our shared environmental ambitions.

Our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions

We recognise that we have a responsibility to collaborate to reduce our Scope 3 emissions, which represent the GHG emissions produced by the goods and services we buy from our suppliers, and the products we sell to our customers. Scope 3 represents Optus' largest emissions source, making up 81% of our total emissions.

In FY23, our Scope 1 and 2 (market-based) emissions decreased by 0.4% and 12.9% respectively compared to FY22, resulting in an overall reduction of 50,889tCO_2e from the previous year. In addition, we made improvements to our Scope 3 accounting method for Category 1 and 2 which resulted in lower estimated emissions this year when compared to FY22.

We have also seen an increase in our Category 5, 6 and 7 emissions as staff return to work and business travel resumed after COVID-19 restrictions eased. The table, right, depicts the performance of our Scope 1, 2 and 3 since FY21.

Scope 1	FY23 (tCO2e)	FY22 (tCO2e)	FY21 (tCO2e)
Total Scope 1 emissions	1,591	1,579	1,894
Fugitive emissions (refrigerants)	48	195	215
Fuel Combustion (stationary)	487	286	364
Fuel Combustion (mobile)	1,056	1,098	1,315
Scope 2			
Electricity (location-based)	366,357	425,015	426,564
Electricity (market-based)	341,792	392,674	426,564
Scope 3			
Total Scope 3 emissions	1,464,851	3,786,708	4,408,439
Category 1: Purchased goods and services	670,395	2,397,584	3,124,287
Category 2: Capital goods	294,717	1,193,179	1,055,409
Category 3: Fuel and energy related services	40,605	43,007	41,981
Category 4: Upstream transportation and distribution[1]	4,149	5,690	9,385
Category 5: Waste generated in operations	258	189	183
Category 6: Business travel	4,702	581	95
Category 7: Employee commute	5,103	3,011	4,517
Category 8: Upstream leased assets	N/A	N/A	N/A
Category 9: Downstream transportation and distribution[1]	N/A	N/A	N/A
Category 10: Processing of sold products	N/A	N/A	N/A
Category 11: Use of sold products[2]	442,040	562,523[2]	811,619[2]
Category 12: End-of-life treatment of sold products	697	1,027	1,169
Category 13: Downstream leased assets	N/A	N/A	N/A
Category 14: Franchises	2,185	2,499	2,695
Category 15: Investments	N/A	N/A	N/A

[1] Restatement: We are reporting our emissions from transport and distribution to Category 4 from Category 9 from last FY, following the GHG protocol Scope 3 calculation guidance - ' Outbound logistics services purchased by the reporting company are categorized as upstream because they are a purchased service'.

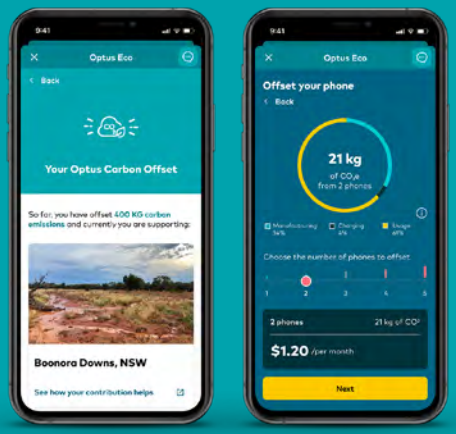
[2] Restated FY21 and FY22 Category 11 figures to reflect suitable power consumption for modems sold.

Case Study: Optus Eco – supporting our customers to reduce their environmental footprint

In May 2022, we launched **Optus Eco**, our new Living Network feature, designed to help our customers manage their own environmental impact in partnership with us. Customers have the option to offset some of their mobile phone's environmental impact and support Australian carbon reduction projects, which is further amplified by Optus matching what our eligible customers offset.

In the My Optus App, customers can:

- Go paperless by opting to receive their bills and invoices online to reduce paper waste and carbon emissions
- Connect to a plastic-free digital eSIM to reduce plastic usage and waste
- Offset some of their mobile phone's carbon emissions by supporting Australian carbon reduction projects, with additional offset-matching provided by Optus to eligible customers



Combating climate change is a collective effort and we all have a role to play to halt and reduce global carbon emissions. Our support of selected Australian carbon reduction projects is in addition to, and amplifies, our existing climate action commitments to meaningfully reduce our emissions and switch to renewable energy.

Together with our partner GreenCollar, we invest in local offset projects that have meaningful impact on the Australian environment and adhere to the government's accreditation standards. We purchase Australian carbon credit units (ACCUs) to offset our carbon emissions and invest in, and support, locally run sustainability initiatives.

"Our research shows that consumers want to take tangible environmental action, but they don't always know how to go about it. Optus Eco is a simple and transparent mechanism for Optus customers to contribute to the environment and support high quality, local projects focused on restoring native bushland and supporting habitats."
GreenCollar

13,375
participants
in FY23

555 tonnes
CO_2 eq offset in total

364 tonnes
CO_2 eq offset
through Boonora Downs, NSW

191 tonnes
CO_2 eq offset
through Tallering Station, WA

Case Study: Our road to reduced transport emissions

This year we continued our progress towards reducing the emissions associated with our Optus vehicle fleet. As of 31st March 2023, Optus has 92 hybrid vehicles, equating to 51% of passenger vehicles in the Optus fleet. A further 51 hybrid vehicles are expected for delivery in FY24 and 7 more are projected for FY25.

As Optus' regional network operations require vehicles that can carry heavy equipment loads, there are limited commercial electric vehicle options available in the Australian market. While this makes setting a target to fully electrify our company fleet challenging, we were excited to pilot our first electric vehicle (EV) with our Sydney-based Networks Building Operations team, to evaluate which vehicles best support our sustainability practices whilst maintaining operational efficiency. The key factors for consideration are the vehicles' fit-for-purpose features, battery range, business usage and the availability of public EV charging infrastructure.

At this stage our transition plan continues to be an ongoing process, but we remain optimistic about the potential electric vehicles have in enabling our sustainability goals. In addition, at our Sydney Campus we have made EV chargers available in our employee car park for our staff to use at no additional cost.

Switching to LED lighting

In line with our focus on reducing energy consumption, this year our Retail Property and Operations team rolled out LED lighting upgrades across our retail stores and network sites nationally. This not only provides excellent lighting levels for our employees and customers, but significantly reduces our overall energy consumption. By the end of FY23, we completed lighting upgrades in 12 retail stores, and in 98% of all network sites across Australia.

Sustainability-linked financing

Sustainability-linked financing refers to debt instruments for which the interest cost is linked to the achievement of predefined sustainability targets. They are designed to encourage entities to invest in initiatives that promote sustainable growth and development.

In FY23, a $1.4 billion sustainability-linked revolving loan facility was launched by Optus under 'Olives', Singtel's sustainable financing program. This is the first sustainability-linked revolving loan facility by an Australian telecommunications company.

The interest rate discounts are linked to Optus' achievement of reducing its absolute greenhouse gas emissions by 25% (Scope 1 and 2 in tCO2e) by FY25, compared to its 2015 baseline. Optus was supported for this loan by a syndicate of 12 banks.

This $1.4 billion sustainability-linked loan facility is a continuation of our $300 million bond which was issued in FY22. This extension will help us achieve our goals and allow our investors to participate in our sustainability practices.

Natural disasters & extreme weather events

Telecommunications services are vital to keeping our communities safe, informed, and connected, especially during times of emergency or disaster. We understand that our role as one of the largest telecommunications providers in Australia means that Australians rely on our services to keep businesses running and people connected in their time of need.

Over the last year, Australia has experienced natural disasters and extreme weather events at an increasing frequency and intensity. Extreme weather events and natural disasters caused damage and disruption to many Australians and tested our individual and collective resilience.

Previous climate change risk assessments undertaken in 2015, 2020 and 2021 have informed various network adaptation and resilience initiatives that have enabled us to continue serving our communities and our emergency service providers to stay connected during times of crisis.

At Optus, we are dedicated to ensuring that our network remains robust, and resilient. Our climate risk work is included within the **2022 Singtel Group TCFD report** (Task Force for Climate Risk Related Financial Disclosures), which provides details about our Governance, Strategy, Risk Management and the Metrics and Targets we use to adapt to a changing climate.

Case Study: Supporting communities during natural disasters and extreme weather events

Maintaining connectivity during a natural disaster can be a lifeline for those affected. To support our customers and communities, Optus invested in additional disaster response innovations to keep our network strong and resilient, and to keep people connected with their loved ones and disaster relief services. We are proud of the role we play in supporting people in their time of need. Doing so is about living our purpose, supporting our community and inspiring our people.

We have invested in nine additional Satellite Cell and Trailers (SATCATs) to substantially strengthen our disaster response capabilities, bringing our total fleet to 13. SATCATs act as backup mobile network connections when traditional infrastructure is damaged: they provide temporary mobile coverage and public WiFi for customers and communities.

The portable nature of the SATCATs allows us to deploy them rapidly to communities in disaster-affected areas. Over the past 12 months, we have proudly supported communities isolated by floods and other natural disasters across New South Wales, including Lismore, Gooloogong, Wisemans Ferry, Cattai, Windsor and Eugowra.

We also designed and manufactured six Disaster Recovery Skids ('DR Skids') through a co-funded strategic initiative with the Federal Government. DR Skids are mobile sites that can be deployed to provide longer-term connectivity in regions affected by natural disasters. Our DR Skids utilise solar energy as a complementary energy source to standby generators, which extends their standby power and means communities' connectivity is supported for longer.

The first DR Skid was deployed in November 2022 in response to the severe flooding in Gooloogong, New South Wales. The DR Skid helped Gooloogong customers and the broader community to remain connected in challenging times while the existing telecommunications infrastructure was under repair.

Further, to minimise mobile outages when the power grid fails in affected areas, we have invested in innovative backup battery solutions. These solutions ensure that transmission mobile sites have power and connection for an additional 10 to 20 hours of service during a power outage.

Case Study (continued)

This provides power authorities with additional, and much-needed time to restore services, or to allow Optus to access a site safely with a portable generator.

Optus Mobile Deployment Engineering Manager, Michael van der Lit shares,

"The new DR Skids are a leap forward in terms of emergency telecommunications infrastructure. They bring together in-house engineering innovations that enable off-grid power, high-speed deployment, and a solution that can quickly restore or provide new coverage to support customers and communities in the event of a natural disaster and in their time of great need."

Severe weather in the Kimberley region

Early in 2023 residents in the remote Kimberley region of Western Australia experienced severe weather conditions, which resulted in many people evacuating their homes and losing power due to heavy rain and flooding. Our people worked to ensure impacted customers were kept connected during this challenging time by maintaining network resiliency and offering additional support.

Despite the flooding, our network services continued to operate as usual for our customers. We had two autonomous mobile base stations (SATCATs) ready for deployment at Lockridge Exchange, along with a generator and technical support on standby at a mobile hub site in Broome in case conditions worsened.

We also provided impacted customers with additional support including data boosts, internet assistance kits, one month access free credit to assist covering the cost of setting up temporary phone or internet services, and power banks for use in evacuation centres in the region.

Supporting our customers and community in this way was a cross-functional and collaborative effort, bringing to life what we can achieve when we are united by our challenger spirit, thinking ahead, and going the extra mile to put our customers first.

Eugowra flooding

After flooding in Eugowra, NSW Health needed help providing extra telecommunications coverage to the local hospital. We deployed three Field Operations employees to Eugowra to commission our SATCAT mobile tower to provide coverage during the outage.

Many flood victims were displaced and were staying at Orange Ex-Services Club. To support these people, we provided at no cost 15 prepaid devices with $30 SIM recharge cards included, 50 rechargeable power banks, 50 multi-charger cables, 5 power surge boards for people to plug into, 25 reusable drink bottles and 50 prepaid $30 SIMs.

In partnership with the local Orange Harvey Norman and the Optus Business Centre, we also provided 20 wireless modems to local businesses to help keep them connected. View our SATCAT case study **page 33** to find out more.

Expanded satellite connections for NSW Emergency Services

This year we expanded our partnership with the New South Wales Telco Authority, by increasing the reach of the Authority's current regional network to provide lifesaving communication solutions for the state's emergency services. This partnership ensures we can keep Australians informed and connected during state emergencies like bushfires and floods.

In line with this, we supplied the Authority with an additional eight ruggedised Kymeta U8 flat panel antenna (U8 antennas) to use in times of state emergencies. This type of antenna is a portable 'Comms on the Move' antenna, which we provide in a ruggedised case to allow for easy transport and setup.

The U8 antenna will enable the Authority to leverage the vast Optus satellite footprint to establish a virtual point-of-presence, supporting critical communications even when existing infrastructure is compromised. The antenna is also easy to deploy with minimal technical expertise required, and it will primarily support data connectivity for deployable Cell on Wheels infrastructure.

Optus already provides a managed satellite network to the New South Wales Telco Authority, supporting the agency in carrying its radio-over-IP traffic, as well as its 4G traffic, for fixed, transferable and temporary locations. With the additional Authority deployments, we are building further on our position as the largest commercial supplier of Kymeta antennas in Australia and New Zealand, with a strong presence in regional Australia to provide seamless, cost-effective access.

ANU Optus Bushfire Research Centre

Due to Australia's high risk of bushfire disasters, Optus partnered with the Australian National University (ANU) in late 2020 to develop the ANU-Optus Bushfire Research Centre of Excellence. The Centre was formed under the university's School of Engineering, for students majoring in Environment Studies to participate.

The project is focused on the development of bushfire management strategies using various platforms of technology. In FY23, the Centre focused on projects such as autonomous drones for water control, evaluation techniques, tower-based camera video analytics, ground-based IoT (Internet of Things technology), and an extension of the drone fire response.

This research project will be completed in 2025, and we will share the Centre's developments in due course.

Circular Economy

From supply chain and product packaging to general day-to-day waste from our operations, there are many opportunities to turn what may have once been rubbish, into resource.

Circular Economy

At Optus, we recognise the need to create an environmentally sustainable future for generations to come, and our circular economy approach is centred around having the right systems in place, substituting non-recyclable materials and eliminating waste. We believe that by replacing, reusing and recycling, we can create a more sustainable and resilient future for all.

Our Circular Economy strategy is driven by our three goals: to divert 90% of our waste from landfill; to reuse and recycle over 90% of our e-waste; and to use 100% recyclable, reusable or compostable packaging in our Optus products by FY25. These targets support SDGs 11 and 12 – 'Sustainable Cities and Communities', and 'Responsible Consumption and Production' – which drives our focus on the broader global effect of our actions.

Highlights at a glance

Launched new generation modem made of

95%

recycled plastic with 100% recyclable packaging and no single-use plastics

Developed our Circular Economy Roadmap for general waste to minimise the amount of general waste going to landfill from our operations

New MobileMuster recycling bins introduced in all retail stores

for customers to recycle their old devices, as well as an expansion of the range of products accepted – modems, landlines, TV streaming devices and smart home devices

Reduced the size of our new 5G SIM cards by

52%

removing up to 10 tonnes of single-use plastics from circulation

FY23 Progress against FY25 Targets

Circular Economy

TARGET

90% waste diversion from landfill

FY22 PERFORMANCE

Diverted
20%

FY23 PERFORMANCE

Diverted
39.5%

TARGET

100% recyclable, reusable or compostable packaging on Optus-branded products

FY22 PERFORMANCE

89%

FY23 PERFORMANCE

81%
(including consignment packaging) *

*Consignment packaging is now included as of FY23. Previous metrics do not include

TARGET

Reuse and recycle over 90% of our e-waste

FY22 PERFORMANCE

IT:
100%
diversion from landfill

Networks:
97%
diversion from landfill

FY23 PERFORMANCE

IT:
100%
diversion from landfill

Networks:
97.9%
diversion from landfill

Enabling responsible use of materials in our operations

In FY23, we developed our first Circular Economy Roadmap for general waste, to align material management within our retail, corporate and network operations to our 2025 goals. This roadmap takes a lifecycle view, which encompasses the environmental impact of our products before they reach our stores, during our operations, and after their useful life.

We are collaborating with Charopy, one of the five finalists in our **Optus Future Makers** program in FY23, to deploy smart bins in the outdoor spaces of our Sydney Campus. This collaboration is helping us to eliminate the contamination of the materials we recover and support the recycling of valuable materials from our operations for re-use in the future. Read more about Charopy on **page 53**.

Simply Cups

Simply Cups is Australia's first coffee cup recycling program, allowing businesses and schools to close the loop on coffee cup usage. We continued running this program at our Sydney Campus in FY23 and also rolled it out to our new Adelaide Campus. Since we partnered with Simply Cups, we have recycled over 63,000 coffee cups. This is a great way to reduce the amount of coffee cups ending up in landfill – a direct link to our 2025 target.

Ensuring our packaging is recoverable

We report annually to the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) and support the implementation of the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) in our products to continue improving kerbside recovery in Australia.

During FY23, we continued implementing the actions identified in our Circular Economy Roadmap for Packaging developed in FY22. The roadmap highlights key opportunities to reduce waste and provides actions across our supply chain streams to minimise the amount of single-use and non-recyclable packaging used in Optus products. In FY24 we will continue to implement our roadmap and, where practical, update it with new initiatives as identified by our stakeholders.

A critical component of our Circular Economy strategy is collaborating with our suppliers and finding ways to design waste out as much as we can. We have included material requirements in our contracts, so we continue working with those suppliers who are taking active steps towards the elimination of single-use plastic and supporting the increase of recycled content in the packaging of their products.

Case Study: Sustainable packaging for Modems

From work to entertainment, communication to education, the Internet has become a necessity for everyday life. However, the devices we use to access the internet, such as modems, can have a significant impact on the environment.

In partnership with Arcadyan and Sagemcom, the Optus Home Devices team developed Optus' first environmentally friendly modem, made with 95% recycled plastics. All the modems' packaging is single-use plastic free. This is an important contribution towards our target of using 100% recyclable, reusable or compostable packaging in our Optus products by FY25.

Jack Shamoon, Optus Associate Director in the Supplier and Commercial Devices team shares,

"Our modem sustainability strategy makes Optus Home devices central to delivering future solutions to help combat environmental impact. It is one of the ways we are enabling customers to reduce and offset emissions to deliver a more sustainable world."

Creating a more sustainable future is important to Optus. Our Home Devices team has now embedded recycled materials and plastic-free requirements in all ongoing device-sourcing initiatives and agreements with supplier partners.

Repurposing and Recycling Our Devices

Donate Your Device

Repurposing previously loved devices is one of the best ways to reduce landfill. Our Donate Your Device program leverages the impact of our **Donate Your Data** program, providing donated devices to Australians in need to help bridge the digital divide. Find out more about our Donate Your Device and Donate Your Data in our **Digital Enablement** section of this report.

MobileMuster

As a founding member of MobileMuster, this year we continued to support the nationwide initiative to recycle old mobile phones and accessories to minimise landfill. The industry-wide collaboration and stewardship scheme allows customers to recycle their mobile phones at any Optus retail store.

We also continued to encourage our customers to recycle their old devices by including reply paid recycling satchels in Optus prepaid mobile bundles. This makes it easier for our customers to return their unwanted devices to us to recycle, at the same time that they are upgrading to a new device.

Further, we expanded our in-store recycling program to include modems, smart watches, smart home devices and gaming consoles. Customers can now recycle these electronics with confidence, knowing that up to 99.3% of the materials in their devices are recovered through our partners in the supply chain. In FY23, we received over 26,832 devices, equivalent to almost 40 tonnes[3] of mineral resources saved – a great effort from our customers.

[3] The environmental benefits are calculated only for the total of mobile phone components (handsets, mobile phone batteries and accessories) and do not include the expanded range of devices collected through the program such as modems, smart home and landline phones.

Case Study: Providing digitised options to our customers using eSIMs

With over 4 million SIM cards ordered by customers each year, we continue to investigate how to reduce the amount of plastic used in our products. Reducing plastic in our SIM cards not only reduces waste, it can also improve our customers' experience.

During FY23 we collaborated with our SIM suppliers to design and launch SIM cards that are less than half the size of the traditional SIM card. This has resulted in a 52% reduction of plastic per unit, which equates to an overall reduction of 10 tonnes of plastic across the year.

Steven Small, Optus Strategic Portfolio Manager shares,

"Our proactive approach to sustainability best practice in the Optus SIM space has produced a plastic reduction result we are very proud of."

In addition, we continue to offer our customers the option to use electronic SIMs (eSIMs), including our wholesale customers who can now connect to the Optus 4G and 5G network more quickly and more sustainably. Optus is the first mobile network provider in Australia to offer eSIMs to the customers of our Mobile Virtual Network Operators (MVNOs) partners. This latest SIM card evolution allows customers to immediately activate their eSIM by scanning a QR code. eSIMs also allow customers the option to have two contact numbers on one device, which can eliminate the need to carry both a work phone and a personal phone, and also reduce device wastage in the longer term.

Ben White, MD of Optus Wholesale, Satellite and Strategy shares,

"We are launching eSIMs because our MVNO partners want to offer their customers a more simple, sustainable and convenient way to join Optus' strong, nationwide network. Now, customers of our wholesale partnerships will have a simple new way of connecting without needing to acquire a physical SIM card. It also provides more Australians with new ways to make sustainable, environmentally friendly changes to their everyday lives."

In FY23 our Optus Wholesale team was named 'Best Host Operator' globally at the 2022 MVNO World Congress in Berlin. The award recognises the very best in operational achievements, innovation, and excellence in the industry around-the-world. We are so proud of this achievement as we continue to find new ways to serve our Wholesale customers.

Digital Enablement

Empowering vulnerable and disadvantaged Australians to achieve, thrive and belong in the digital world.

Digital Enablement

We know that in today's digitally connected world, access to technology and digital skills are critical for education, job opportunities, business success and staying connected with friends and family.

We have set goals to accelerate digital enablement for disadvantaged individuals and communities. By FY25, our Digital Enablement goals are to "support 550,000 young people to participate safely online" and to "connect 100,000 disadvantaged youth and families to help close the digital divide and support Australians in crisis".

We are dedicated to supporting the next generation in achieving their potential in this digital era. The digital divide exacerbates existing social and economic inequalities which creates a cycle of disadvantage that can be difficult to break. This is why we are working towards bridging that digital divide to ensure everyone has equal access to the opportunities that digital technologies offer to all Australians. We are committed to helping prepare and educate young people to be safe online and provide them with resources to help them become confident and resilient online citizens.

In FY23 we continued our **Digital Thumbprint program**, delivering educational digital safety and wellbeing workshops to 80,547 Australian primary and secondary school students.

Through our **Donate Your Data™** program, customers can donate excess data to those who need it. This year, 13,497 participants received free connectivity through Donate Your Data. Read more about this initiative on **page 49**.

At the heart of everything we do, we want to bring people together. In partnering with us, our stakeholders and customers play a role in empowering the digital future of disadvantaged people and communities. Our Digital Enablement strategy allows us to improve digital inclusion for those in need and support young people to be safe and confident online, through our many initiatives we continued to progress in FY23.

Donate Your Data™ Program

Over 51 million GBs donated by 5,674,495 customers through Donate Your Data program since launch

Supported 38,870 Australian young people and families in need since the program commenced*

Implemented Digital Inclusion Roundtable with Optus CEO, Sustainability team, and range of charity partner CEOs to discuss empowering vulnerable people to thrive in the digital world

*not including support provided during the COVID-19 pandemic and disaster relief

Digital Thumbprint Program

Program has reached total **of 552,071 students** nationally since 2013, exceeding our target of 550,000 students by 2025

Launched new digital interactive workshop for primary students around **cyberbullying and respectful relationships online**

Successful re-accreditation with the Office of the eSafety Commissioner

Finalist in 2022 ACOMMS Awards 'Cyber Security & Online Safety Innovation'

FY23 Progress against FY25 Targets

Digital Enablement

TARGET

Support 550,000 young people to participate safely online

FY22 PERFORMANCE

80,260

FY13-20 (baseline) – 330,000
FY21 – 61,264

FY23 PERFORMANCE

80,547 total

40,615 metro,
20,122 regional,
19,810 digital interactives

Cummulative to date (since 2013):
552,071

TARGET

Connect 100,000 disadvantaged youth and families to help close the digital divide and support Australians in crisis

FY22 PERFORMANCE

25,373

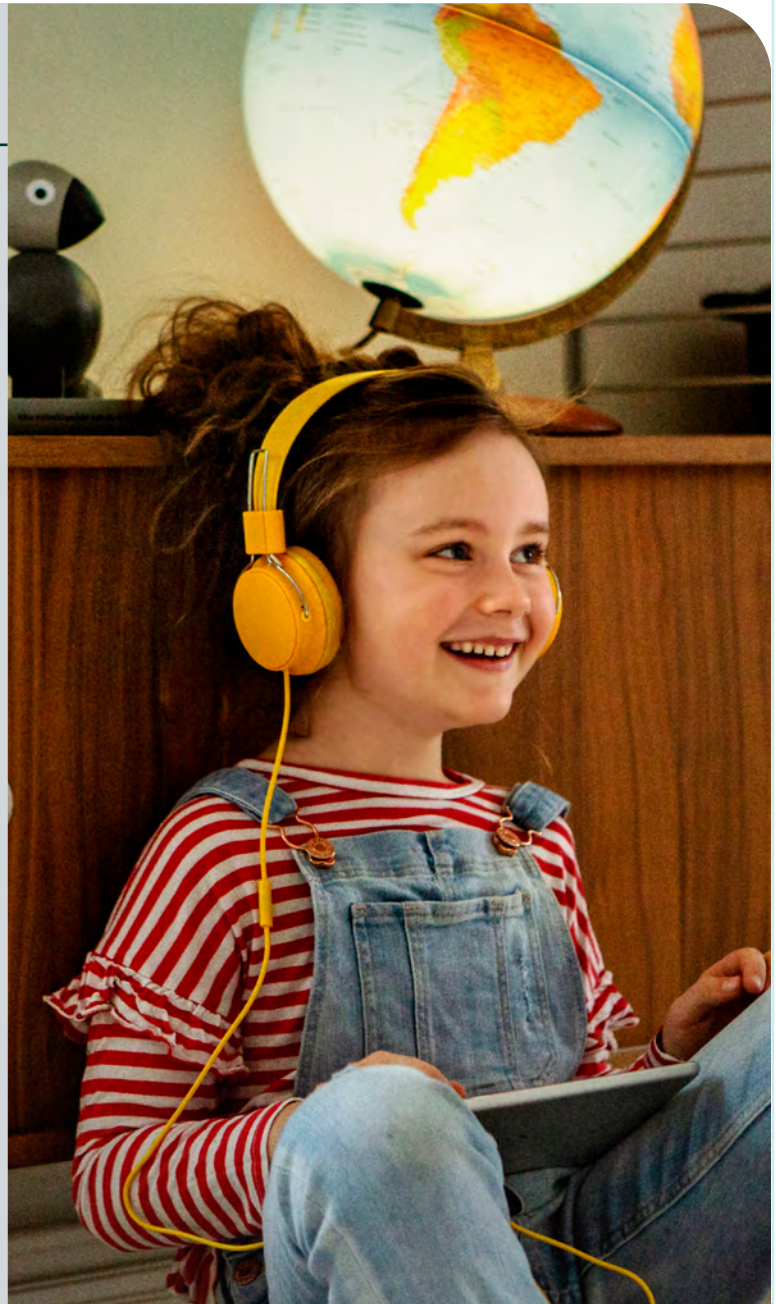
FY20 (baseline) – 13,059
FY21 – 14,897
(cumulative totals)

FY23 PERFORMANCE

13,497

Cummulative to date (since 2019):
38,870

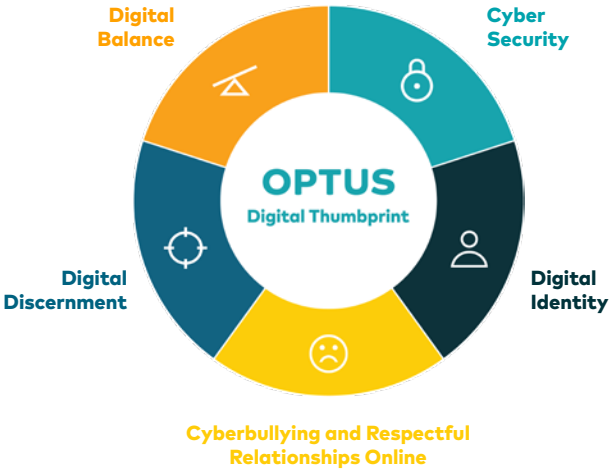
(does not include support provided over the COVID-19 pandemic)



Digital Thumbprint

Since 2013, Optus has been running our free, award-winning **Digital Thumbprint Program** in schools across Australia – an initiative to educate young people around key digital safety and well-being topics. This program has been endorsed by the eSafety Commissioner as a Trusted eSafety Provider. Through facilitator-led and teacher-led digital interactive workshops, students learn about the importance of cybersecurity, digital identity, digital discernment, digital balance, cyberbullying and respectful relationships online.

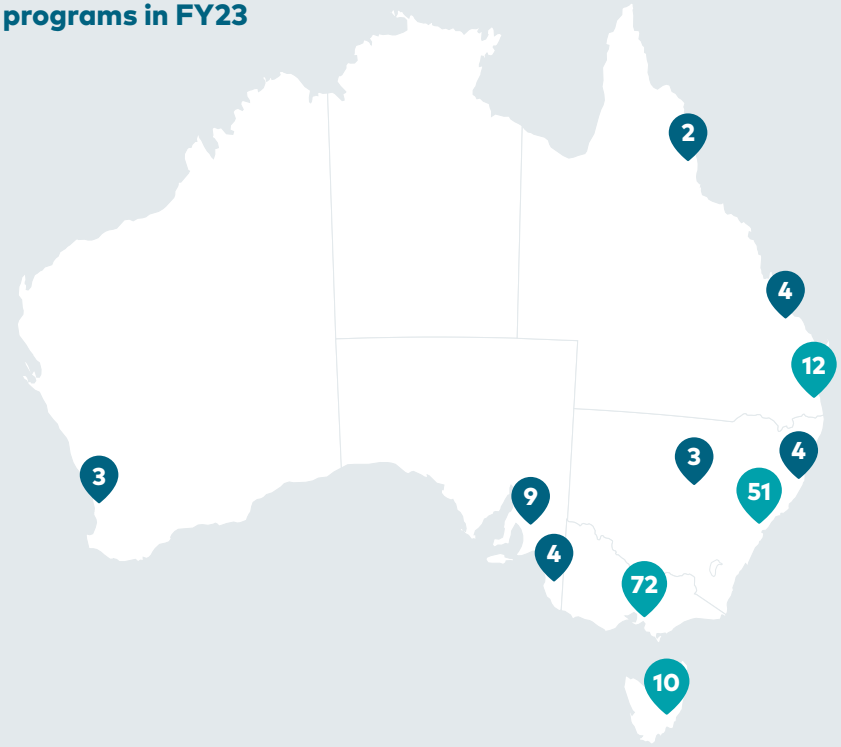
In FY23, 80,547 primary and secondary students participated in a free Digital Thumbprint workshop. This takes our total student participation to 552,071, exceeding our target of reaching 550,000 students by FY25. Optus' commitment to educating young people and their families about digital safety is one of our key areas of focus as we continue to rebuild consumer trust in Australia, and these results reinforce this commitment.



This year we announced an expansion of the program, to provide more opportunities for regional Australian students to learn about digital safety and well-being. We had 20,122 regional students participate in a Digital Thumbprint workshop. This expansion also offers a variety of resources for parents, teachers, and trusted adults to facilitate conversations with kids about digital safety and well-being.

We also expanded our teacher-led digital interactive for primary students, launching workshops on 'Staying safe on games and apps' and 'Keeping my information private online' for Years 3 and 4 students, and a 'Cyberbullying and respectful relationships' for Years 5 and 6. Participation in teacher-led digital interactives has grown rapidly, with 37,253 students supported since its launch in Term 4, 2020.

Locations of schools participating in Digital Thumbprint programs in FY23



Measuring change – impact of Digital Thumbprint

As a behavioural change program, we aim to achieve measurable change in student attitudes towards digital safety. Digital Thumbprint is helping students to participate safely and authentically online through five key topic areas, and the impact of the results shared here has been positive. For more information see our **Digital Thumbprint Impact Report**.

Table 1: Digital Thumbprint participant impact feedback.

% of students that agree or strongly agree with the statement	Before Digital Thumbprint	After Digital Thumbprint	% Change
Cybersecurity			
I am aware of how to keep my personal data secure online	81%	87%	6%
I feel safe online	73%	77%	4%
Cyberbullying			
I feel confident taking action if I am being cyberbullied	63%	73%	11%
I feel confident supporting my friends if they are being cyberbullied	78%	82%	4%
Digital Discernment			
I am aware of strategies to identify fake news	69%	75%	7%
Digital Identity			
I understand the importance of my personal brand for future job opportunities	74%	81%	7%
Digital Balance			
I am able to focus on tasks without digital distractions	53%	63%	10%
I feel in control of my use of technology	60%	76%	16%

Donate Your Data™

Through our **Donate Your Data™ program** (DYD), we are helping to bridge the digital divide for Australians in need. The program is designed to support disadvantaged individuals and families in crisis, providing them with SIMs fuelled with data that has been donated by Optus and our customers. Recipients have access to free calls, text and 10 GB of data provided by Optus, plus an additional 40 GB through customer donations.

In FY23, our Donate Your Data™ program has provided over 12,007,408 GB of data to those in need. Since its launch in December 2019, the program has supported over 38,870 individuals, including 13,497 individuals in FY23. Through our partnerships with charities such as **The Smith Family**, **Good360 Australia**, and the **KARI Foundation**, this program provides much-needed internet access to young people, families and other Australians who might be doing it tough, so they can access education sites, look for work and connect to vital services and their loved ones.

The Smith Family's 2022 Evaluation Report shares some of the impact Optus' Donate Your Data™ program has on their participant families. View these key findings on the right.

"I cannot thank Optus and this program enough everything is so expensive at the moment and it's very good not to have to worry if my children can call me when they need me it's great not to have to worry about another bill to pay."

Parent/carer of DYD participant supported by The Smith Family

Donate Your Data™ is one of the most powerful ways Optus, together with our customers can support the community in ensuring no one is left behind when it comes to digital inclusion. Find out more about the direct impact of these donations through our recipient stories on our **website**.

Key findings: Impact Data from The Smith Family

Optus DYD continues to be highly successful in achieving it's intended goals of enabling access to technology and data, demonstrating sustained outcomes for participants over multiple years:

95% Parents report satisfaction with the free SIM and plan

87% Parents report that using the SIM helped their child/ren with online learning and education

75% Parents report that using the SIM helped their child/ren to participate in The Smith Family programs

87% Parents would recommend the DYD to other families

*Impact data from The Smith Family's 2022 Evaluation Report

Optus Digital Inclusion Roundtable

Donate Your Device

As we work towards minimising the amount of e-waste in landfill, we can also empower someone in need of digital connectivity. Through our Donate Your Device program, Optus customers can donate their spare mobile phone devices to someone in need.

Together with our partner Good360 Australia, donated devices are distributed to disadvantaged individuals and families who can then use the devices to access education, employment opportunities or vital services. This year we saw over 900 devices donated; these were paired with a Donate Your Data™ SIM. To participate, customers bring their old device into an Optus store, where our team refurbishes the device for donation. We then pair the device with a Donate Your Data™ SIM so it's ready for the new owner. This is one of the most tangible ways our Optus customers can make a direct impact on someone else's life.

Within the business, older laptops and monitors which were previously used by our Optus people were donated to disadvantaged schools and charities. Many older, but good quality monitors were unable to be redistributed within the business, so our Operations team instead donated 120 monitors to a selection of charities.

Ukraine crisis

In response to the war in Ukraine, Optus supported newly arrived Ukrainians displaced by the war through the donation of 900 mobile phones, paired with Donate Your Data™ SIM cards.

Optus supported activation events across South Australia, Queensland, Victoria, and New South Wales in collaboration with our charity partners Good360 Australia, the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations (AFUO), Welcoming Australia (SA) and St Vincent de Paul (Queensland). At these events we helped to connect newly arrived Aussies with loved ones and support their access to vital programs and services.

Our people collaborated to create this outreach by volunteering their time at the Ukrainian events, distributing phones, and activating SIM cards.

The Donate Your Data™ and Donate Your Device programs are both part of Optus' Living Network, which play a role in bridging the digital divide experienced by many Australians in need. Read more about these initiatives in the **Digital Enablement** section of this report.

Digital Inclusion Roundtable

In May 2022, Optus held its annual Digital Inclusion Roundtable: "Empowering vulnerable and disadvantaged Australians to thrive in the digital world." The Roundtables are a critical forum that bring together the Optus CEO, senior leaders including our Sustainability team, and our charity partners who are helping deliver our digital inclusion programs of Donate Your Data™ and Donate Your Device to those in need. The session covered topics such as digital literacy, and the participation for vulnerable cohorts.

Charities shared the positive difference the programs are making to those experiencing disadvantage, and insights into vulnerabilities faced by different cohorts such as First Nations peoples, refugees and new Australians. Also discussed were opportunities for charities to work together and share learnings as a collective; and building digital knowledge and capabilities within staff and participants.

Sustainable Innovation

Helping innovators address the most pressing social and environmental challenges through the power of technology.

Sustainable Innovation

At Optus, we know that the success of our digital future relies on our innovation today, which is why we're partnering with forward-thinking start-ups to develop innovative technologies to shape the future.

Highlights at a glance

Five social enterprises
empowered to grow and scale through our Future Makers program

Plans for Charopy intelligent recycling bins pilot, to launch in FY24

Conducted StandbyU training with 130 Optus frontline employees to support customers experiencing domestic and family violence

FY23 Progress against FY25 Targets

Sustainable Innovation

TARGET

Grow and scale five impact innovations

FY22 PERFORMANCE

One impact innovation with givvable,

2020 Optus Future Makers finalist

FY23 PERFORMANCE

Supported five Optus Future Makers finalists,

with one pilot planned for FY24 with Charopy to support their rollout strategy

Optus Future Makers: Empowering social innovators

At Optus, we believe that innovative technology can play a crucial role in addressing some of the most complex environmental and social challenges. This year we ran our sixth **Optus Future Makers program**, supporting five new social innovators who have developed solutions to address one of the following categories: 'good health and wellbeing', 'environmental sustainability', and 'supporting vulnerable communities'.

This six-month program is open to social innovators within start-up enterprises, social entrepreneurs and not-for-profit organisations who are ready to grow and scale their technology-based minimum viable product. The program ran face-to-face workshops with Optus mentors covering go-to-market strategies, product development and pitch training. At the end of the program, the five Future Makers program finalists had the opportunity to pitch for a share in a $200,000 funding pool. An additional financial bonus of $10,000 for the Yes Impact People's Choice was awarded to the finalist with the most votes on the night. For a summary of the event, you can view our media release **here**.

Our FY23 Future Makers:

- **Danielle Owen-Whitford (NSW)** – Pioneera's AI bot 'Indie' uses linguistic analysis and psychology to improve workplace mental health and well-being.
- **Colin Pudsey (VIC)** – SilVR Adventures seeks to eradicate loneliness and isolation in elderly adults through meaningful and shared virtual reality experiences.
- **Fiona Holmstrom (QLD)** – STEMPunks TV is a worldwide online streaming platform for STEM education aimed at school students.
- **Sarah Conron and Jane Strangward (VIC)** – My Family Unit is a therapeutic intervention solution providing organisations with a way of supporting mothers in the workforce.
- **Martin Collings (NSW)** – Charopy aims to solve the problem of out-of-home recycling bin contamination through its Internet of Things technology.

Optus' relationship with our Future Makers program participants continues after the completion of the program. We take a shared value approach and have proudly supported our Future Makers through the connection with our program's alumni.

Charopy

At Optus, we aim to continually support our Optus Future Makers alumni to help them grow their solutions. One of our FY23 Optus Future Makers finalists, **Charopy**, aims to eradicate recycling bin contamination by limiting the items that can be disposed of in out-of-home recycling bins. Since the completion of the Future Makers program, Optus is partnering with Charopy to pilot their smart bins at our Optus Sydney Campus. This will significantly reduce the amount of contaminated recycling waste from our campus. This pilot will be rolled out in mid-FY24.

Standby U training with some of our Customer Response Team

StandbyU Foundation

We continued our collaboration this year with our 2017 Optus Future Maker finalist 'StandbyU'. We understand that the recent Optus cyberattack could escalate danger for our customers experiencing domestic violence, and we wanted to ensure our customers could access additional help and safety support if they need it.

StandbyU works with people experiencing domestic violence by providing them with solutions to support prevention and protection. One of their innovations is the 'StandbyU Shield' – a discrete device that vulnerable Australians can use to trigger help from their network of safe people in times when they are in danger.

Chris Boyle, founder of StandbyU Foundation, also worked with our people to deliver vulnerable customer support training with our Customer Response Teams. The training equips our customer-facing people with effective responses when a person experiencing domestic or family violence reaches out to them. In FY23, 130 Optus people attended these training sessions, which provided practical resources for our team on how to support customers in these instances. Our Customer Response Team has also created a Domestic Family Violence Playbook, which educates our people on the considerations and solutions we can offer customers experiencing domestic or family violence.

Future of Work

Building knowledge and skills for people to thrive in an ever-changing digital world.

Future of Work

At Optus, we're committed to preparing for the future workplace and addressing any skill gaps that may arise within our workforce. We recognise that digital platforms such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning and cloud services will play a fundamental role in the future workplace. We're committed to empowering our people with the necessary opportunities to upskill, shape their careers, and succeed in a digital future that prioritises exceptional experiences for our customers.

Our Future of Work strategy consists of two main streams – employee volunteering, and employee upskilling. This year our yes4good employee volunteering initiative saw 14,965 Optus people putting up their hand to support community and charitable causes. This is driven by our target to see the "power of volunteering harnessed to build the knowledge and skills of 1,500 Optus people and community leaders by FY25". Our Optus people can take the opportunity of up to three days of paid skilled volunteer leave, and we are proud to have seen many of our people rolling up their sleeves and participating. Read more on this **here**.

The second stream of Future of Work is employee upskilling. Driven by our target to support "formal future focused skills development for 1,500 employees by FY25", we have created opportunities for our Optus people to proactively elevate their skill sets.

In FY23, our Optus U program saw 595 employees graduate as we continued to build out the Optus U curriculum with new digitally focused upskilling courses. Read more about our Optus U program Optus U program on **page 59**. We also tripled our 'Tech Talent' graduate intake, welcoming 54 graduates in the areas of Software Engineering, Cyber Security, Digital and Data & Analytics. Read our **Tech Talent case study** in this report.

Highlights at a glance

Increase of
62,153
training hours completed for our 7,572 employees

14,965
hours of volunteer-work contributed by employees during company time

Optus' total FY23 community investment was
$23,259,295

Optus U almost doubled its intake this year to
595 graduates

plus **1,908 Optus employees** participated in learning modules through our Capability Institutes

Awarded
5th place
in GoodCompany's Top 10 Best Workplaces to Give Back 2022

FY23 Progress against FY25 Targets

Future of Work

TARGET

Formal future focused skills development for 1,500 employees

FY22 PERFORMANCE

1,200+ employees

FY23 PERFORMANCE

2,503 employees participated in learning modules,

through Optus Capability Institutes and Optus U

TARGET

Harness the power of volunteering to build the knowledge and skills of 1,500 Optus people and community leaders

FY22 PERFORMANCE

310 Optus people

Cummulative total:
513

FY23 PERFORMANCE

408 Optus people

Cummulative total:
921

Our community impact

Impact through volunteering

At Optus we strongly believe that we can spread optimism by actively engaging with our communities and supporting those who need our help. We are dedicated to using our resources, relationships, and abilities to support our community, whilst also building the knowledge and skills of our people.

We participate in a wide range of social impact programs and initiatives that aim to make a positive impact. We focused on enhancing educational outcomes and creating employment opportunities for disadvantaged individuals and groups. This year 408 Optus people volunteered in Future of Work opportunities to support various charitable causes.

ABCN Mentoring

Optus is a founding member company of the **Australian Business and Community Network (ABCN)** spanning a 17-year partnership. Optus is committed to helping students from low socio-economic backgrounds to achieve their full potential in life, and ensuring young people have the necessary tools to help them succeed through ABCN mentoring programs. This year 229 Optus volunteers mentored 897 students from 34 schools. Read more about the ABCN program in our **'Equity and Inclusion'** section of this report.

The Smith Family

We strengthened our long-term partnership with **The Smith Family** following a call to support their Marketing team to develop a better understanding of the benefits of Agile Ways of Working. As part of our commitment to upskill community leaders by leveraging skilled volunteer leave, our Agile coaches stepped in to support and shared basic principles of Agile, then dived deeper into practical implementation across multiple teams and projects.

KARI Foundation

Our continued partnership with the **KARI Foundation** (KARI) allows us to invest in the next generation of Indigenous students, while also allowing our Optus people to participate in skilled mentoring volunteering opportunities. This year, 35 of our people were involved in 4 KARI Workshops, supporting a total of 20 students. Our KARI mentors are volunteers empowered to develop their leadership capacity, while giving back to the community. Read more about our partnership with KARI in the **'First Nations'** section of this report.

Workplace giving

Through our yes4good workplace giving program, our generous Optus people donated $176,135 to 300 charities and causes, including **Care Australia**, **World Vision**, the **Humpty Dumpty Foundation**, and the Turkey and Syria appeal run for **Hasene Australia**. Optus matches all employee giving through our yes4good program, taking our total charitable giving in FY23 to $325,404.

Thanking our First Responders

Optus recognises the important contributions that our veterans and volunteers have made to our local and national communities. In June 2022, we wanted to show our support for the extraordinary work that people in our communities do, so we partnered with the **Australian Retailers Association** to celebrate their First Responders Day in June 2022.

We offered eligible consumer and business customers who are First Responders access to an exclusive offer of 10% off plan fees for the first 12 months on selected mobile plans when they sign up or recontract on a new plan with Optus. This is just one small way we can say thanks for their service to our communities.

Spreading optimism in Lismore

We're proud to support customers in the moments that matter, and help communities keep connected. This year we extended our support to the Lismore community which was devastated by the NSW floods, to help them get back on their feet after such a challenging time.

Our connections at Channel 7 Sunrise alerted us to a group of school children from Blakebrook Public School in Northern NSW who sadly couldn't attend their excursion to Canberra due to the impacts of the recent flooding in their area. Out of the 18 children in Years 5 and 6, 14 families had either lost their home or their job, or both.

At Optus, we're guided by our purpose – to power optimism with options – so we decided to surprise the students by donating the $15,000 funding needed so they could go on their much-wanted excursion, as well as donating a few extra items to support them, such as backpacks, sugar glider toys and water bottles.

Our people

Optus Capability Institutes and Optus U

As part of our commitment to developing the future focused skills of our Optus people, this year we launched Capability Institutes, offering capability development opportunities across Technology, Business and Personal Excellence.

We had an uptake of over 500 accreditations, over 180,000 hours of learning, and over 9,000 visits to our Capability Institute webpage.

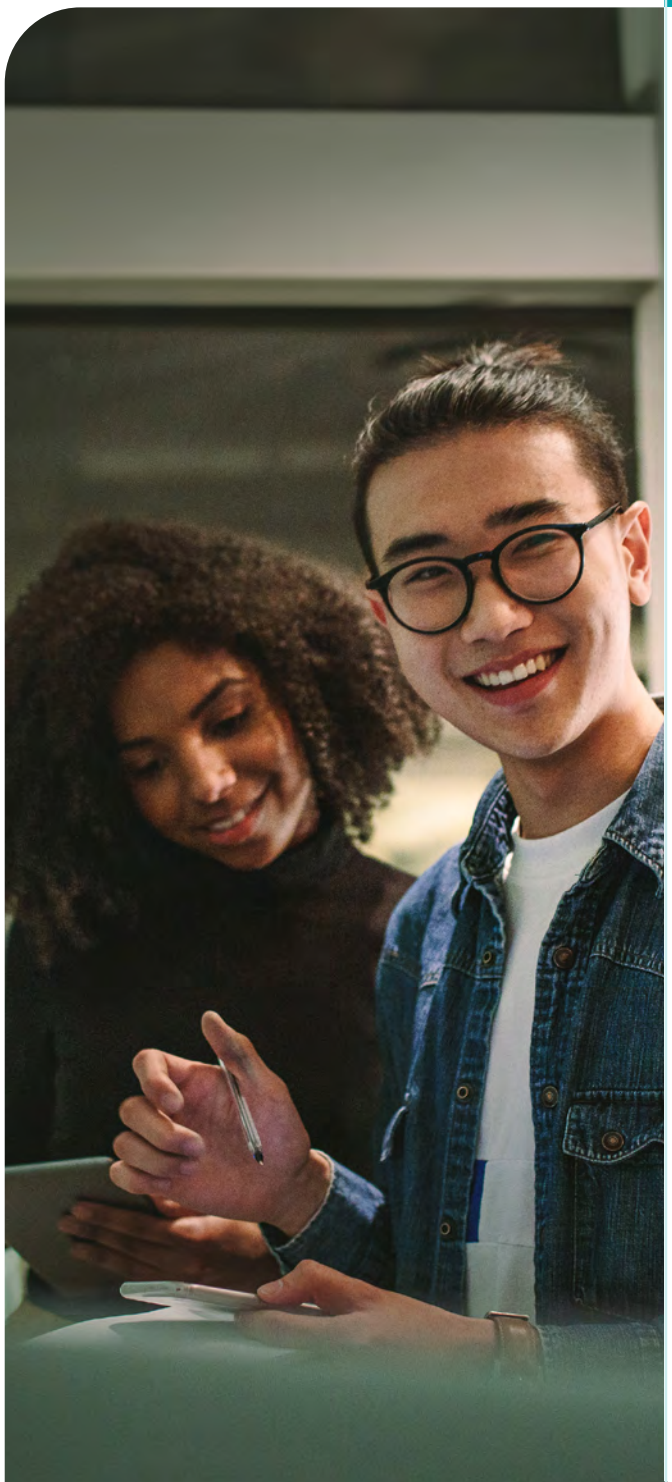
We also strengthened our partnerships with strategic vendors like Google, AWS and Microsoft, offering pathways to industry-recognised certifications. We continued our partnerships with universities to offer high-impact, future focused micro-credentials in areas like Data & Analytics, Customer Experience, Cyber Security and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Through the Institutes, we have had 1,908 employees complete various programs, courses and activities across several strategic capabilities including: Cloud, Data & Analytics, AI, Cyber Security and 5G.

Our people at Optus continue to have access to digital learning platforms like Percipio, Udemy and Coursera, where they can access a multitude of courses, books and audio libraries on a wide range of topics. This enables flexibility for learners as they can create their learning pathways and study at their own pace.

Optus U is our partnered university academy that delivers on micro-credentials. Since November 2021, our Optus U micro-credential program has grown significantly and in FY23 we had 595 employee accreditations, bringing us to just under a thousand Optus people having received accreditations since the program's inception.

These learning and development offerings are one of the many ways we make personal and professional development accessible for our people.



Case Study: Optus Tech Talent

Optus has increased its investment in the future of Tech Talent. We believe we have a part to play today in securing the quality of employees for the future, which is why we have set the target of providing "formal future focused skills development for 1,500 employees" by FY25.

A key focus throughout FY23 was the development of the Tech Talent Incubator program - an intensive two-year program that recognises the unique needs and expectations of our Tech Talent pipeline, but also the broad spectrum of skills and experiences our business needs now and in the future.

Optus' Tech Incubator graduates will bring their acquired skills, testing and using them in our rapidly changing environment to develop applied agility and innovation, as well as broaden their capability in a professional environment.

The Tech Incubator Program is the key to our Early Careers focus and allows graduates to develop their skills, invest in their career paths, and make a real impact within our business and the broader community.

This year, we:

- Tripled our tech graduate intake, welcoming a total of 54 new graduates in positions of Software Engineering, Cyber Security, Digital and Data & Analytics. This program includes boot camps, hackathons, seminars and certification opportunities, as well as tangible hands-on experience with our talented team of Optus people. Optus has committed to hiring 50 tech graduates again in FY24 and FY25.
- We began a three-year partnership with **42 Adelaide**, an innovative free coding school disrupting traditional education models, requiring no prior experience and pioneering peer-to-peer learning in Australia. This program is designed to jumpstart the careers of software engineers. Through this partnership, Optus will offer valuable on-the-job experience to cadets from 42 Adelaide.
- We have also grown our Winter and Summer Internship programs and University Co-Op Scholar program across the business as we continue to invest in building a cohort of future leaders.
- We are proud to have been placed in the Top 100 GradConnection/Australian Financial Review Graduate Employers list, and in the Top 10 for our industry category this year.

Optus and LaTrobe Cyberskills course

Through our focus on developing future focused skills, Optus has been working with LaTrobe University to increase cyber skills through a range of cyber short courses. Partnering with other industry partners such as Quantum Victoria, CISCO, Wiley, GHD, War on Wasted Talent and Practera, the Cyber Security Project is designed to increase cybersecurity capability in the industry, as part of a Commonwealth Government Cyberskills Grant Fund program.

The Project is split into three streams, focusing on upskilling high school students, cyber professionals, and university student placements. High school students are introduced to cyber concepts and education, with over 100,000 high school students having participated in the program. 6,805 industry professionals have enrolled in the micro-credential program and 166 industry-based work placements are open for university students for completion by the end of FY24.

Case Study: Leaders at Optus

As an employer of over 7,500 people, we have responsibility to build the future workforce. Highlighting the impact of leadership can help us live our purpose, achieve our vision and foster a positive behavioural culture.

At Optus, we've created a framework called 'Leaders At Optus', to lift our leadership capacity, strengthen our impact and build better relationships across the business. This framework describes the specific role of leaders, four leadership expectations, and supports our leaders with success elements, learning experiences and daily practices. Our Leaders at Optus mantra is

"energise and empower people to create lasting value for our customers, our business and each other".

Throughout FY23, there were opportunities for Optus leaders to engage in learning programs to enhance their capability, strengthen their impact, and build collaborative relationships across the business.

The four leadership expectations we have implemented across the business are to be: Clear, Connected, Capable and Courageous (known as 'The 4Cs').

- **Clear** – cut through complexities and align priorities to Purpose and Vision
- **Connected** – bring people together on the things that matter
- **Capable** – secure the critical skills, talent, time and resources, to execute great work
- **Courageous** – create conditions for openness, challenge and innovation

Talent Ambassador Program

At Optus, we want our people to be passionate about the place they work, and our Optus Talent Ambassador Program is one of the ways our enthusiastic Optus people can get involved.

This year we had 125 Talent Ambassadors, which is our biggest cohort yet. Our Talent Ambassadors shared authentic stories about how proud they are to work at Optus and what their day-to-day job looks like as part of the team. Through posting on social media, our Talent Ambassadors have celebrated, promoted and showcased their careers at Optus through a united hashtag #OptusLife.

The program generated over 1.5 million organic views from #OptusLife posts, and we saw over 25,000 likes and 5,000 comments from Ambassador posts. This exposure has driven engagement in company-driven content, increasing the Optus LinkedIn page followers to over 138,000.

As part of the Talent Ambassador Program, our people were given behind-the-scenes views of Optus' newest initiatives and were provided with tailored training and networking opportunities to amplify their personal brand and social media marketing skills.

Veronica Redman, Optus Talent Ambassador Program Manager shares,

"This program is proving to be a successful two-way exchange – our Ambassadors are standing out from their colleagues and our Talent Acquisition Team is receiving more applications from top talent in the market."

As we continue to focus on the future of our workforce, creating opportunities to elevate our people's voices will always remain a priority. Through showcasing their work, they become proud promoters of our optimistic team culture, while showcasing Optus as an employer of choice in the market.

Equity and Inclusion

Empowering Australians of all ages, backgrounds, gender and abilities to reach their potential.

Equity and Inclusion

At Optus, we believe in the power of a diverse and inclusive workforce. Our team's diverse backgrounds, perspectives, skills and life experiences enable us to develop meaningful connections with our customers and communities, innovate new products and services, and make better-informed business decisions.

Gender equality remains a dedicated focus for Optus. We continue to strive for gender equality in the workforce, and this year we retained our Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WEGA) status.

In FY23 we exceeded our FY25 goal of 25% of executive roles being held by women, with 27.3% of roles held at the close of the year. This is just the beginning for Optus – as we continue to grow as a business we continue to aim for a greater proportion of women in leadership positions.

Future focused equity and inclusion strategies are important to us. Providing employment opportunities for the next generation of workers will help to set them up for a favourable working career, which is why we aim to provide pathways to employment for 5,000 disadvantaged youth by FY25.

As part of our strategy to enhance equity and inclusion at Optus, we want to drive and demonstrate equity in all areas of our business and network, including our supply chains. Modern Slavery is a human rights issue, and one of the ways we aim to address this is through regular assessment of operations and supply chain risks. Our target to have zero human rights incidents in our operations and with major suppliers reaffirms our commitment to human rights at Optus.

Highlights at a glance

32.38%
of Optus workforce are women

150 students
reached through 'Pathways 2 Employment'
with 75 Optus mentors
4 students offered employment at Optus

Published Optus' 3rd Modern Slavery Statement

Reached over 850 students
through ABCN programs,
upskilling them with future employability skills

FY23 Progress against FY25 Targets

Equity and Inclusion

TARGET

Provide pathways to employment for 5,000 disadvantaged youth

FY22 PERFORMANCE

2,436 students

Cummulative total:
4,360 students

FY23 PERFORMANCE

1,058 students
through our ABCN and Pathways 2 Employment programs

Cummulative total:
5,418 students

TARGET

Increase women in leadership to 25%

FY22 PERFORMANCE

Increased women in leadership to
26%
exceeding our 2025 target of 25%

FY23 PERFORMANCE

27.3%

*27.3% for Optus Consumer team, with the incorporation for Optus Enterprise team, Optus will be resetting its ambitions for FY24.

TARGET

Zero major human rights incidents in our operations and with major suppliers

FY22 PERFORMANCE

No validated incidents

FY23 PERFORMANCE

No validated incidents

Case Study: Included@Optus

In FY23 we launched 'Included@Optus' – a signature learning and development program that drives shared accountability for creating a safe, respectful and inclusive culture at Optus. The program takes an innovative, positive and proactive approach to inspiring employees to think about what inclusion means to them, and our collective role in fostering an inclusive culture where we all belong.

The program combines virtual reality, workshop activities and powerful conversations with a virtual reality (VR) experience enabling employees to metaphorically 'walk in someone else's shoes' to elicit empathy and enable employees to feel and experience the world from other perspectives.

Since commencing the program, almost 3,000 employees have participated. It has a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of +74 and a favourability rating of 98%. These results make this one of the most popular programs delivered at Optus.

Case Study: Diversity Employee Networks

Optus' Diversity Employee Networks drive engagement and understanding and create a two-way conversation. Employee Networks ensure our people have a place to come together, celebrate who they are, connect with others, innovate and elevate engagement and inclusion. Diversity Employee Networks have been established across five key pillars, each with an Executive Sponsor:

- **Culture Connect** – building greater understanding and appreciation for the rich culture and heritage diversity we have at Optus
- **Disability Network** – empowering people living with a disability or caring for those with disabilities
- **Elevate** – for those who champion and support women in the workplace
- **Express Yourself** – nurturing a safe and inclusive environment for the LGBTQIA+ community
- **United** – supporting and uniting veterans, volunteers and their families who have or currently serve in the Armed Forces, Police Force or Emergency Services

These Networks aspire to create an inclusive Optus community that empowers and elevates our people through meaningful connections and opportunities to develop, grow and create impact.

To support our investment in early career talent, Optus also launched a Young Professionals Community – focused on fostering a supportive and inspiring community for the next generation of Optus leaders and game changers.

Image: Diwali – Caption: Some of our Optus Culture Connect Employee Network members celebrating the arrival of Diwali, wearing their cultural clothing and sharing a 'conversation guide' they created to encourage others to start a meaningful conversation about Diwali.

Celebrating International Day of People with Disability and partnering with What Ability

Supporting our mission to be Australia's most loved everyday brand with lasting customer relationships, we want to ensure we are accessible and inclusive for our people, customers and communities. Our Disability Network formed last year to help empower Optus people living with or caring for those with a disability.

International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD) was celebrated at Optus this year with employee engagement events and activities. IDPwD is an opportunity to challenge the way we think about disability and continue to enhance our inclusive workplace practices.

The day involved many diverse activities, including a wheelchair basketball game hosted by Wheelchair NSW/ACT, with our amazing people taking up the challenge to play a game against each other. We also had a live panel discussion which featured special guest Ellie Cole, Optus Ambassador and Paralympian, along with Steve Dresler, former Parramatta Eels player and founder of What Ability, and Optus' own Shantel Sager, Director of Product Development and Disability Network Deputy Chair. Other guests included Paralympic Boccia player, Scott Ellsworth, who our Optus people had the opportunity to verse in a game or two. We also welcomed disability support organisations Cerebral Palsy Alliance and the Australian Network on Disability (AND), Bus Stop Films and Friendship Bakery to be part of the day's festivities.

As part of IDPwD, we announced our sponsorship of **What Ability** – an NGO service that specialises in community access and providing disability support to Australians.

Celebrating and recognising Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week

Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week are recognised at Optus through a number of celebrations and educational offerings. We engaged with our partners at the **KARI Foundation** to participate in a Cultural Awareness Workshop on Aboriginality to increase our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal people, diversity, and protocols. KARI also shared a wonderful artefacts display and held live performances with Eric Avery at our Optus Sydney Campus.

Our celebration of Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week is just one way we demonstrate our support for reconciliation and celebrate First Nations cultures and histories. Our partnership with First Nations peoples plays an integral role in paying our respects and working towards reconciliation. Read more about our Indigenous and First Nations engagement on **pages 57** and **65** of this report.

Supporting the Veteran community

Optus is a signatory to a Veteran Employment Program. As an extension of this commitment, Optus is a Gold Pledge Partner with **Soldier On** – a not-for-profit providing support services to current and former defence force personnel and their families. We have also expanded our existing health insurance partnerships with BUPA, nib and AIA to now include Navy Health. Our involvement in these partnerships amplifies our existing initiatives that drive veteran-friendly recruitment, transitioning, retention and providing a supportive workplace culture for all.

Case Study: Executive Women

Growing our executive women population and accelerating the growth and development of women talent is a key priority for Optus. Executive Women targets are set across the organisation and are embedded into Key Performance Indicators to drive progress and accountability.

We have an Executive Women in Leadership program for senior executives to support this priority. This program involves formal assessments of potential, coaching, mentoring, and bespoke learning initiatives for identified gaps or areas of aspiration.

This year we launched an Emerging Executive Women Leaders which aims to bolster our pipeline of women stepping up into executive roles. In this crucial transition, the program includes both group learning and individualised assessments as well as mentorship.

In alignment with the performance management framework, there are dedicated talent and succession discussions specifically focussed on women in leadership and talent pipeline. Our Executive hold annual discussions focussed on top women talent, their development and mobility options across the business.

Vogue Codes

This year, Optus again partnered with Vogue Codes – an event series that profiles female industry leaders and technology innovators to Australians through virtual events, panel discussions, personal profiles and in-person conferences. Across the year, Optus was involved in their Vogue Codes Summit, Vogue Codes Campus, The Visionary Women's Dinner and Vogue Trajectory Series.

The Vogue Codes Summit is a STEM-focused career series which featured some of our amazing Optus talent, including Theresa Eyssens (Optus VP, Customer Solutions & Cloud), Kate Aitken (Optus VP, People and Culture), and Belinda Lofts (Optus Senior Director, Mobile Data Service Engineering). This forum was an opportunity to encourage women in STEM and provide a platform for them to have a voice in the competitive technology industry.

Optus also participated in the Vogue Trajectory Series – a digital content series featured on Vogue, to highlight the importance of female roles in STEM. Four of our Optus people participated, showcasing their role at Optus and their vision for women in STEM.

These opportunities empowered our female employees who were chosen to speak on important topics and amplified the voice of women looking to pursue a career in STEM. In particular, our Group Sustainability Senior Director, Helen Maisano was featured in the August edition where she shared the importance and impact of social and environmental sustainability.

International Women's Day

Optus celebrated International Women's Day (IWD) with events and activities that highlighted the theme 'Embrace Equity'. Our Elevate Employee Network led the celebrations.

As part of the event, we hosted a panel discussion around the 'Embrace Equity' theme, which showcased how we can all play a part in actively seeking out difference as a necessary and positive enabler to success. Our panel included four diverse speakers - Robyn Stubbs (Executive Coach and Mentor at SMG and ASX200 Board Director, HomeCo Daily), Asifa Sherazi (Head of Technology, Westpac), Louise Vidal (CEO & Founder, 42 Schools), and Andrew Buay (Group Sustainability Vice President, Optus). These panellists each represented one of Elevate's strategic pillars – Culture, Nurture, Grow and Give.

Our Employment Partnership Agreement

We're committed to creating an environment at Optus that is the right place for the best people to do their best work. Our Employment Partnership Agreement (EPA) – approved by the Fair Work Commission – is an integral part of how we create and foster our workplace culture and maintain our employee relationships.

Our EPA includes several benefits for our people, including:

- **Connected Day** – a day for our people to connect with the things that they love most, whether it's culture, family, health or well-being
- **Blood donation leave** – allows employees to take up to 2 hours of paid leave up to 4 times a year to donate blood
- **Increased Partner Leave** – from 2 weeks to 4 weeks of paid leave
- **Kinship** – recognised for employees taking bereavement and compassionate leave
- **Primary Carer Leave** – increased from 12 weeks to 14 weeks paid leave
- **Gender Affirmation Leave** – up to 4 weeks for employees to dedicate time to transition
- **Emergency Services Leave** – enhanced by providing an additional day of paid leave to rest and recover
- **Family and Domestic Violence Leave** – provides certainty of 10 days paid leave a year if required

Case Study – ABCN Mentoring

Optus is committed to empowering the next generation to reach their full potential. In line with our company purpose to power optimism with options, we provide a range of employment pathways for disadvantaged youth, and one of the ways we do this is through our **Australian Business and Community Network (ABCN)** partnership and mentoring programs.

As a founding member company of ABCN, we celebrated 17 years of collaboration and investment into the next generation. We work closely with ABCN to support students from low socio-economic backgrounds with the support of our amazing Optus people who volunteer their time to mentor these students.

Throughout the 2022 school year, Optus ran over 40 programs in primary and secondary schools across five states. We had 229 Optus people who were voluntary mentors, enabling us to reach 897 students in total across the school year.

Optus people participated in ABCN's Regional, Rural and Remote (RRR) programs, now in their second year. 60 students living in remote areas participated in this program covering four workshops, developing the student's confidence, skills and aspirations.

Optus people also continued to support ABCN's 'Focus' program. The 'Focus' program is designed to build leadership skills for young women in Years 10-11, teaching them how to set goals and develop a sense of belief in their potential. During FY23, Optus implemented five 'Focus' program workshops.

Some of the impact results included:

Rating area	Before	After	Increase
I see myself as a leader	36%	94%	58%
I am aware of my strengths that can make a good leader	33%	98%	65%
I have confidence in my leadership potential	24%	85%	61%

"The most important thing I have learnt in the [ABCN] Accelerate program is – don't be afraid to ask. I have been privileged to work with an amazing mentor who guides me and provides a comfortable and safe space to talk."

Leilani, ABCN student

"This is exactly what our students need, opening their eyes to what's out there for them. You can't be what you can't see. For these kids' experiences like this are so important."

Teacher, Western Australia

We are grateful to our Optus people who have offered their support, and for the ABCN students who allow our people to grow their mentoring skills. We are proud of our contribution to the community and know that with ongoing support, we can raise up great leaders who will drive our digital future.

Case Study: Pathways 2 Employment (P2E)

In 2016, Optus launched the P2E program. An initiative developed in collaboration with our community partners, including ABCN, to empower disadvantaged students. The program not only enables Optus to tap into a diverse talent pool, we provide opportunities for these students to develop employability skills, gain confidence and experience and potentially secure employment as a Christmas casual in an Optus retail store, or the broader retail sector.

In FY23, 150 students participated in eight P2E workshops across Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, bringing our reach to a total of 741 students who have participated in the program since 2016.

One of the workshops delivered this year was exclusive to our First Nations scholarship students from the KARI Foundation. Following their participation, over 50% of the students involved were able to gain part-time employment in a retail environment.

76 of our Optus people volunteered to mentor P2E students this year. As part of the program the mentors help the students to identify their strengths and develop non-technical skills required for their future careers, such as public speaking.

One mentor shared that it's

"inspirational to see the students try over and over to perfect presentations and watch their confidence grow."

A teacher from Copperfield College, one of the participating schools in Victoria shared,

"The Optus Pathways 2 Employment program was fantastic! Our students greatly benefitted from all the activities, tips and mock interviews."

Together with our ABCN program, this initiative has enabled us to exceed our FY25 target, having now provided pathways to employment for 5,418 disadvantaged youths.

Modern Slavery and Human Rights

People are at the heart of our business. Optus is dedicated to respecting the human rights of all people throughout our operations and supply chains, including the right to freedom from slavery.

Identifying and managing potential risks related to modern slavery is fundamental to our people-focused approach as a business. As part of our Sustainability Strategy, our FY25 goal within our 'Equity and Inclusion' pillar is to have "zero human rights incidents in our operations and with major suppliers". Combating modern slavery also aligns with one of our priority UN SDGs: 'Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth' (see more on **page 20** – 'Sustainable Development Goals').

In FY23 we published our third **Modern Slavery Statement**, followed by a human rights risks assessment to better understand our business and supply chain risks. The FY23 Optus Modern Slavery Statement is a consolidated description of the actions we have taken to address our modern slavery risks, and is published as a joint Modern Slavery Statement in accordance with section 14 of the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth)(MSA). We have also undertaken a risk assessment of our major suppliers, which includes the issuance and assessment of questionnaires to our suppliers to inform our risk management response and ongoing training.

In FY23, we also undertook a salient human rights assessment to enhance our understanding of the areas where we may be at risk of involvement in human rights harm. In line with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), we define our salient human rights issues as those areas where the most severe actual or potential human rights impacts could occur through Optus' activities or business relationships.

The assessment involved a collaborative, cross-functional consultation process across our business, including a series of interactive workshops and a desktop review of relevant Optus materials. As a result, we identified six salient human rights issues as outlined below.

Our salient human rights issues

Completing the salient human rights assessment has supported us to deepen our understanding of how our actions to manage modern slavery risks align with our broader work to respect all human rights.

This year, we updated and expanded our content for our employee training on modern slavery, to help empower our people to better understand our approach to modern slavery and our whistleblower processes. All people leaders are required to undertake annual modern slavery training through online learning modules that we have developed.

Optus is committed to providing for, or cooperating in, remediation where we identify that we have caused or contributed to human rights harm such as modern slavery, and during this reporting period we developed an internal Modern Slavery Incident Response Plan. This Response Plan provides us with a framework to help guide our response to any future modern slavery incident or allegation and we continued to promote the Optus Whistleblower Hotline through relevant materials.

We have continued to focus on enhancing our modern slavery response, guided by our Modern Slavery Action Plan. We will continue to improve our knowledge and strengthen our actions, through training, reviewing our current modern slavery contract clauses focusing on suppliers and countries with higher modern slavery risks, and exploring opportunities to work collaboratively with our suppliers to strengthen knowledge sharing and capacity building to better manage our shared risks.

Telco Together Foundation partnership

This year, Optus continued our membership with **Telco Together Foundation (TTF)** - a not-for-profit working with the telco industry in Australia, to drive social change collaboratively, and to make a substantial impact than what companies can do individually. Through their Industry Impact hub in conjunction with members, issues of large social importance are addressed as an industry, with the current issues being the reduction of modern slavery in supply chains as well as the reduction of domestic and family violence.

Optus is involved in both streams of work. This year, along with the CEOs of 17 other telecommunications companies, Optus signed the Telco Industry Domestic and Family Violence pledge. One of the commitments of this pledge is to produce an action plan using the DFV Action Framework developed in conjunction with TTF and its members.

In conjunction with four other Australian telcos, Optus is part of an initiative to roll out a software platform, provided by FRDM (pronounced "Freedom") and managed by Telco Together Foundation. The software allows member companies to identify, address, segment, manage and report upon potential modern slavery risks throughout all tiers of their supply chain.

Addressing this issue as an industry can have the greatest impact in reducing the occurrence of modern slavery by identifying and managing the risk. As well as this, the other objectives are to reduce duplication amongst members and reduce supplier fatigue in answering questionnaires.

OPTUS