Measuring Broadband New Zealand

Report 19, April 2024

The Measuring Broadband New Zealand programme measures the quality of New Zealand's fixed line, fixed wireless, and satellite internet. The aim of the programme is to independently measure and report on the actual in-home broadband performance so consumers can assess different providers, plans, and technologies to help them choose the best broadband for their homes. It will also encourage providers to improve and compete on their performance.

Please refer to page 22 for speed test results. The report also includes summary tables at the back that show the results for easy reference.

This report provides an overview of the findings from data collected between 1st January and 31st January 2024.

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Overview

This report presents the key indicators of consumer internet performance in New Zealand from testing during January 2024.

Highlights include:

1. **Continuing to compare results from previous MBNZ reports across the past year for quality of service metrics (download, upload and latency).**
2. **Continued benchmarking of LEO Satellite performance against ADSL, VDSL, 4G Fixed Wireless, Fibre 300, Fibre Max and HFC plans, including YouTube, Netflix, gaming, video conferencing, video streaming and social media.**
3. **Reporting on Fibre 50 performance for the first time.**

This report draws on testing from a wide range of providers including Contact Energy, Farmside, Inspire Net, Lightwire, Netspeed, Sky New Zealand, Starlink, UniFone, Voyager and WIZWireless. A full list of RSPs included in this MBNZ report can be found in Table 2. There are a range of other RSPs to choose from who are not currently included in the testing, and we encourage Kiwis to shop around. Previous reports released by the MBNZ programme can be found here[1].

The MBNZ programme has a code of conduct to ensure that the parties involved act in good faith and in accordance with principles relating to data validation, 'gaming' of results, and appropriate public usage of the MBNZ results. A list of the signatories is included in the code, including the Commission and SamKnows. All tested RSPs complied with the current code of conduct, including validation of the data used in this report. You can see the code of conduct on our website here.[2]

[1] https://comcom.govt.nz/regulated-industries/telecommunications/monitoring-the-telecommunications-market/monitoring-new-zealands-broadband/Reports-from-Measuring-Broadband-New-Zealand
[2] https://comcom.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/334871/Measuring-Broadband-NZ-Code-of-Conduct-October-2023.pdf

Executive Summary

Application Performance

1. Over 99% of Fibre 300, Fibre Max and HFC households were able to support 4 simultaneous UHD Netflix Streams. 60% of LEO Satellite households were able to support 4 simultaneous streams, and 94% could support 3 simultaneous streams.

2. Online gaming shows consistent results for the games included in the previous report, with LEO Satellite results sitting between VDSL and 4G Fixed Wireless. The three games testing to servers in North America showed much higher latencies across all technologies compared to games with gaming servers located in Australia, at a level which could impact user experience for latency sensitive games.

3. Latency to most social media platforms and video conferencing services remained fairly consistent compared to the previous report, with Snapchat seeing a small decrease in latency for users receiving images.

Benchmarking

1. All plans saw stable download, upload and latency results compared to the previous reporting month.

Broadband Plan Comparison

This report includes broadband plans across a range of technologies and areas. The report shows performance comparison split across areas where Fibre broadband is available (urban areas), and where Fibre is not an option (rural areas). This comparison refines and expands our previous urban and rural view to better allow consumers to see how different technologies such as 4G Fixed Wireless perform in different areas. Areas with access to Fibre plans (Specified Fibre Areas) are the locations where Chorus will eventually be able to stop providing copper-based internet services (ADSL & VDSL plans), because Fibre is available. These are typically in more urban areas of New Zealand. More information on the withdrawal of copper-based internet services is available on the Commerce Commission website here[1].

ADSL - Remains suitable for traditional services like web browsing, email, and basic video streaming, particularly when there is only one person using the connection. Due to physical limitations, the highest-performing ADSL lines will never achieve download speeds higher than ~25 Mbps. The distance from house to exchange has a big effect on attainable speeds, with many ADSL lines averaging under 8 Mbps download. The higher latency, more frequent dropouts, and lower upload speeds make ADSL less suitable for video calls and multi-user households.

VDSL - There is a range in performance, some lines will achieve similar download/upload speeds to ADSL, whereas a small proportion of lines will achieve speeds comparable with Fibre 100, and certainly with lower speed Fibre plans. Lower speed lines will be less suitable for applications that use a lot of data, such as video conferencing and Ultra High Definition (UHD) streaming, whereas higher speed lines will generally support more data-heavy applications.

Fibre 50 - Supports latency-sensitive applications such as online gaming. Fibre 50 will also support applications such as UHD streaming and video conferencing. Fibre 50 may be unsuitable for data-heavy households with multiple simultaneous users.

Fibre 300 - Supports latency-sensitive applications such as online gaming. Fibre 300 will also support data-heavy applications such as UHD streaming with multiple simultaneous users or video conferences with a large number of participants. Fibre 300 will cover most users' requirements.

Fibre Max - Higher download and upload speeds than Fibre 300. The idle latency to internet applications, such as online games, through a Fibre Max line is the same as through any other Fibre

[1] https://comcom.govt.nz/regulated-industries/telecommunications/regulated-services/consumer-protections-for-copper-withdrawal

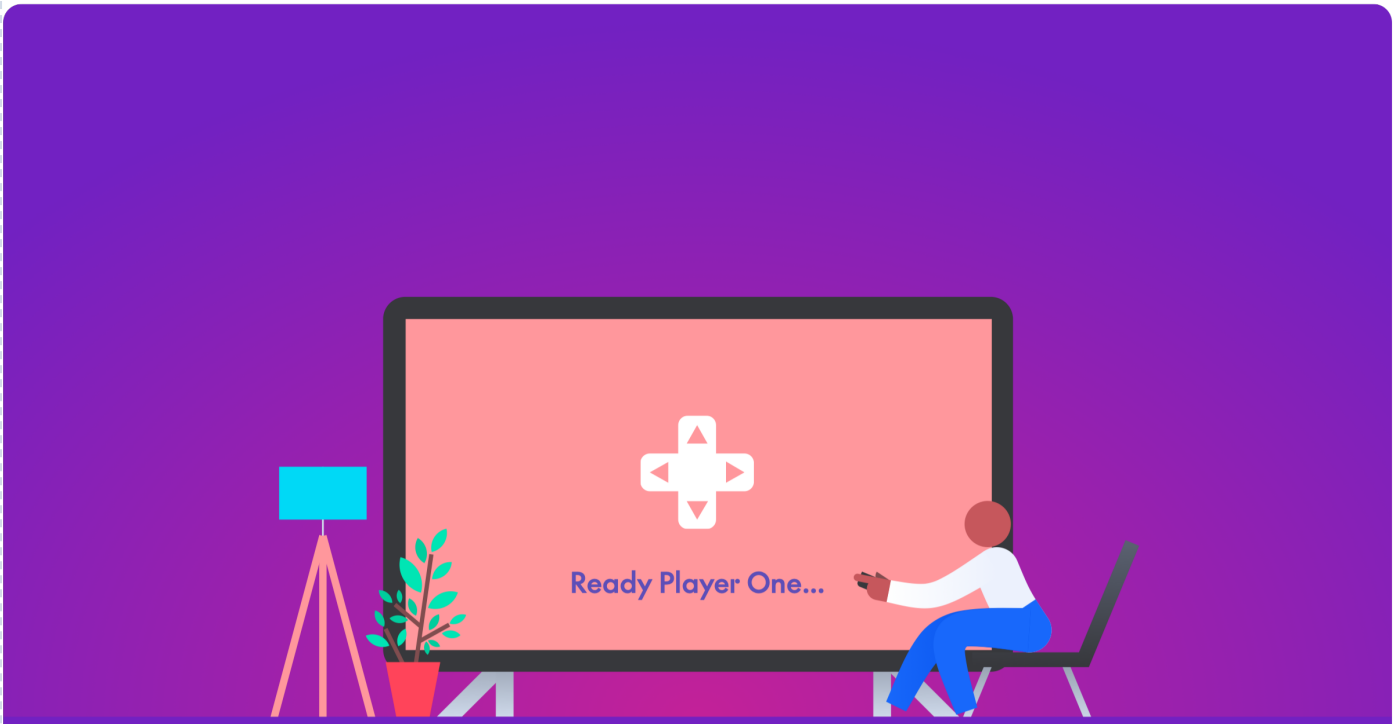
plan. Latency under load is lower for Fibre Max plans than for Fibre 300. Performance can vary depending on RSP, and Fibre 300 will support most modern internet applications and multi-user households. Fibre Max might be needed in cases where there is a genuine need for more bandwidth (e.g. frequently uploading or downloading large files) or when using extremely latency sensitive applications on a busy connection.

HFC (Cable) - Available in some areas (Wellington, Upper & Lower Hutt, the Kapiti Coast, and parts of Christchurch). HFC is also referred to as Cable and DOCSIS. One New Zealand is the only provider operating an HFC network in New Zealand. HFC lines achieve similar download/upload performance to Fibre Max, however latency can be higher due to the difference between Cable and Fibre technologies.

4G Fixed Wireless - Can offer higher download speeds than ADSL, and on average similar speeds to VDSL. Users will experience higher latencies due to the cellular technology underlying these plans. 4G Fixed Wireless has the highest latency of all technologies, and also delivers lower download/upload speeds and more frequent dropouts than Fibre. This range of performance factors means 4G Fixed Wireless should not necessarily be preferred to Fibre on performance grounds, however in some areas 4G Fixed Wireless is the only option for consumers, and even in areas where Fibre is available there are other reasons consumers might choose this option (ease of installation for example).

LEO Satellite - Available in both rural and urban areas and is transmitted wirelessly using a satellite and ground based satellite dish. Typically higher download speeds than a Fibre 100 plan, but this can vary with location. While speeds can be expected to handle most applications, including video conferencing and streaming, it is not as consistent as fixed line broadband due to factors such as congestion and bad weather. Starlink is currently the only LEO Satellite provider included in the MBNZ report.

Other Broadband Plans - There are other plans available that are not currently reported on by MBNZ. Fibre 30, 100 and 200 plans should be broadly consistent with results measured for Fibre 50, 300 and Fibre Max for latency and reliability metrics. The main differences for these lower speed Fibre plans would be lower download and upload speeds, meaning it would take longer to download and upload larger files, and they would be able to support fewer users at the same time when using video streaming services. For WISP and 5G Fixed Wireless plans it is not possible to give any firm advice around their suitability for different applications at this stage due to the variety of implementations and low sample size.



Application Performance

In this section we report on the performance of a number of common applications that consumers in New Zealand use on a regular basis.

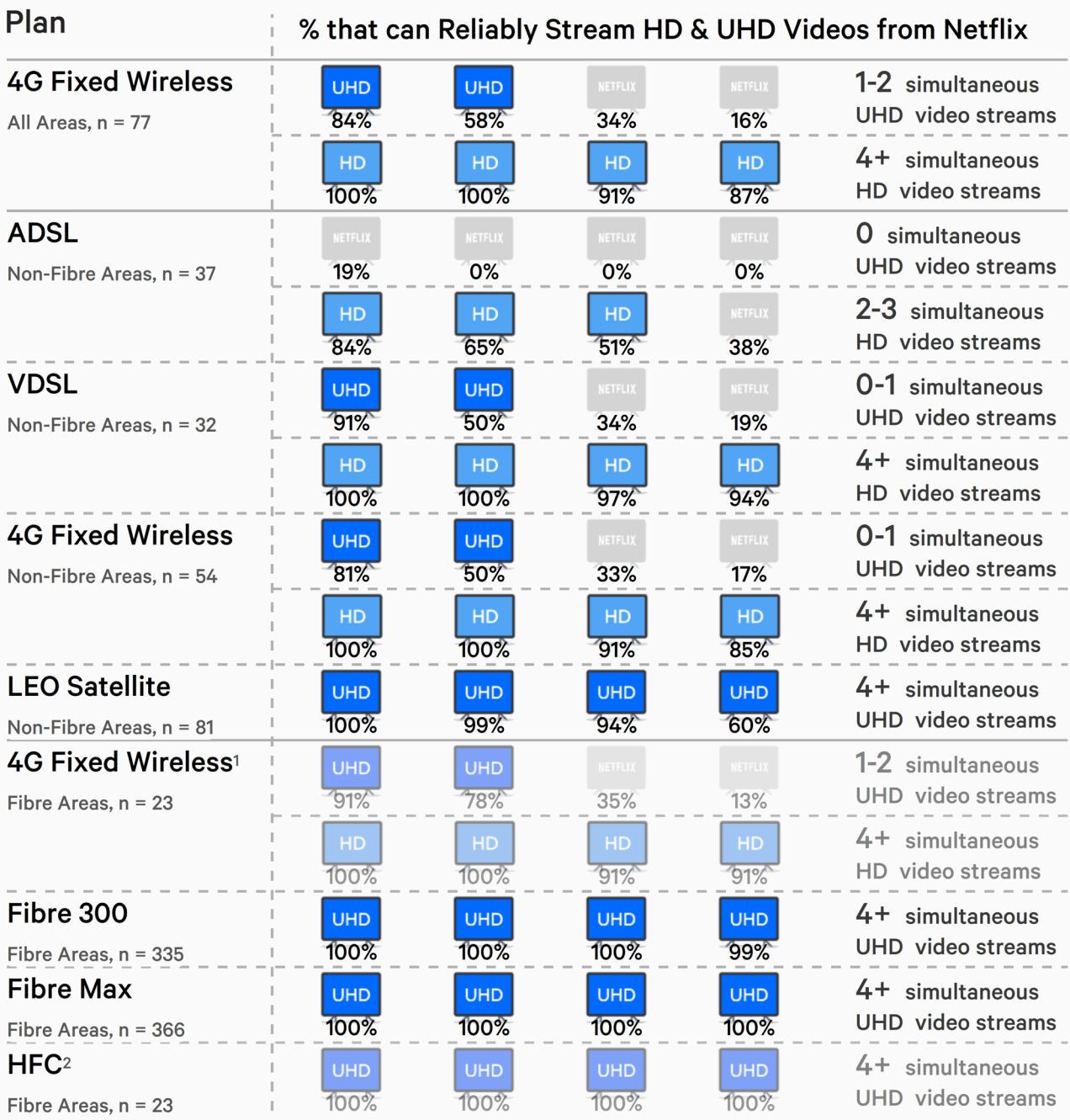
Some results in this section are shown with error bars representing the 95% confidence interval for each plan. This means that if we had repeated our measurements 100 times, we would expect the result to have fallen within the black bands in at least 95 cases.

The transparent bars show plans with a sample size lower than we would typically include within reporting. These plans have larger error bars due to the smaller sample size and care should be taken when comparing these plans against others. We recommend consumers factor in the error bars when comparing plan averages, especially those with smaller sample sizes.

Netflix

Video streaming is a good example of an application where the quality of a user's experience is more affected by bandwidth (capacity) than by latency (lag). The Netflix measurement streams real video from the live Netflix service [1]. Traffic for this service is often delivered from within broadband provider's network to improve performance. The transparent screens show plans with a sample size lower than we would typically include within reporting.

Figure 1:



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[1] This test runs on an idle connection, results may be affected with simultaneous usage. HD is measured at 3 Mbps, and UHD at 15 Mbps in accordance with Netflix guidelines.

Key Observations

- 60% of LEO Satellite plans were able to stream 4 simultaneous UHD Netflix streams, an increase compared to the previous 47% .
- 84% of households on Fixed Wireless across all areas of New Zealand were able to support a single UHD stream, and 87% of households could support at least 4 simultaneous HD streams. In non-Fibre areas, 81% of households were able to support a single UHD stream, and 85% of households could support at least 4 simultaneous HD streams. In Fibre areas[1], 91% of households were able to support a single UHD stream, and 91% of households could support at least 4 simultaneous HD streams.
- At least 99% of households on Fibre 300, Fibre Max or HFC[2] plans were able to support 4 simultaneous UHD Netflix streams.
- 91% of households on VDSL plans in non-Fibre areas were able to support a single UHD stream, and 94% could support 4 simultaneous HD streams. For ADSL households in non-Fibre areas, only 19% were able to support a single UHD stream, while 51% could support 3 simultaneous HD streams.

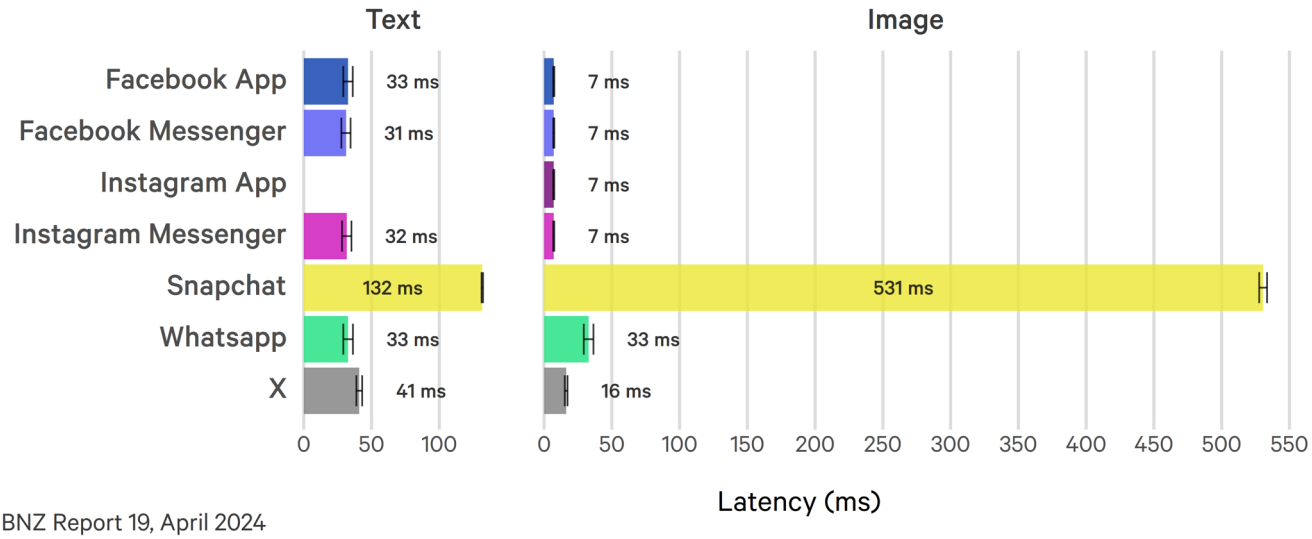
[1] Results for 4G Fixed Wireless in Fibre areas are based on a sample size of 23 Whiteboxes. The lower sample size can be attributed to Fixed Wireless being a new area of focus for the MBNZ programme and we hope to increase this number for subsequent reports.
[2] Results for HFC are based on a sample size of 23 Whiteboxes. The low sample size can be attributed to the relatively small coverage area of One New Zealand's Cable network and the competing influence of Copper, Fibre and Fixed Wireless in those areas.

Social Media

Social media applications generally involve fetching a large number of relatively small pieces of information (single images, short pieces of text, and so on). Applications such as Facebook serve different types of content from different servers - for example, an image will come from one server while its caption will come from a different server. Due to this, latency to the server will be a large factor of how responsive social media applications will be, however there are other factors that can also influence performance.

Figure 2: The Latency to Servers of Different Social Media Platforms.

Average of household average latency to content servers, lower is better.
Fibre plans only.



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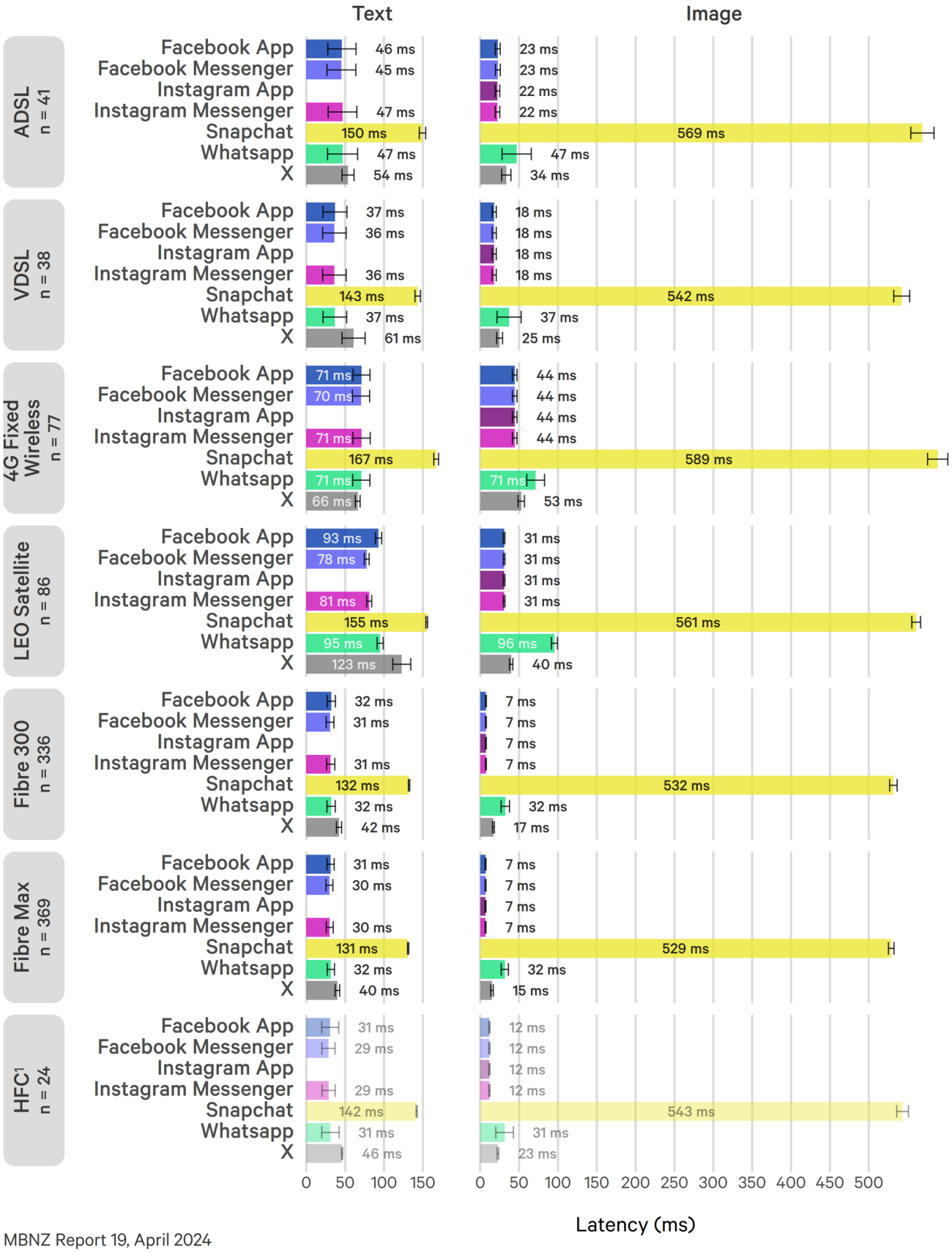
Key Observations

- Latency values for all social media services remained consistent for Fibre plans compared to the previous report.
- Snapchat image latencies decreased compared to the previous report and remain higher than all other social media platforms tested for both Image and Text downlink. Consumers may notice a several second delay when using Snapchat, to download an image for example, compared to other social media platforms due to Snapchat's hosting location. This is outside the control of RSPs.
- Latency results are shown for Fibre plans only. Results for social media split by individual plans can be seen in the figure below, and results for all RSPs can be seen in Table 5.

Figure 3: The Latency to Servers of Different Social Media Platforms by Plan.

Average of household average latency to content servers, lower is better.

The number of Whiteboxes contributing to each result is shown under each plan name (eg n = 24).



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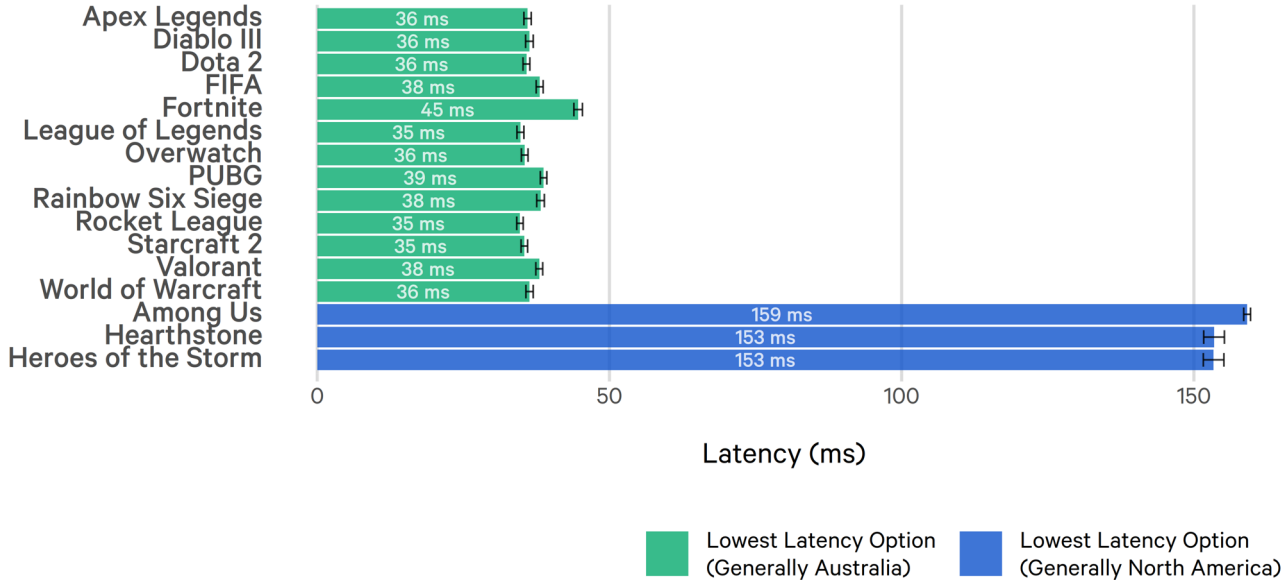
[1]Results for HFC are based on a sample size of 24 Whiteboxes. The low sample size can be attributed to the relatively small coverage area of One New Zealand's Cable network and the competing influence of Copper, Fibre and Fixed Wireless in those areas.

Online Gaming

Online gaming applications require low latency between users' machines and the central host server. If it takes a long time to pass messages between the users' device and the server where the game is hosted, then disruptive stuttering or lag will result. This is usually when latency increases beyond 50 or 100ms – some game servers will simply refuse to admit players who have triple-figure latency because this will ruin the game for everyone else.

Figure 4: The Latency to Various Online Gaming Servers.

Average of household average latency to gaming servers, lower is better.
Fibre Plans Only. Lower latency means that lag is less likely.



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Key Observations

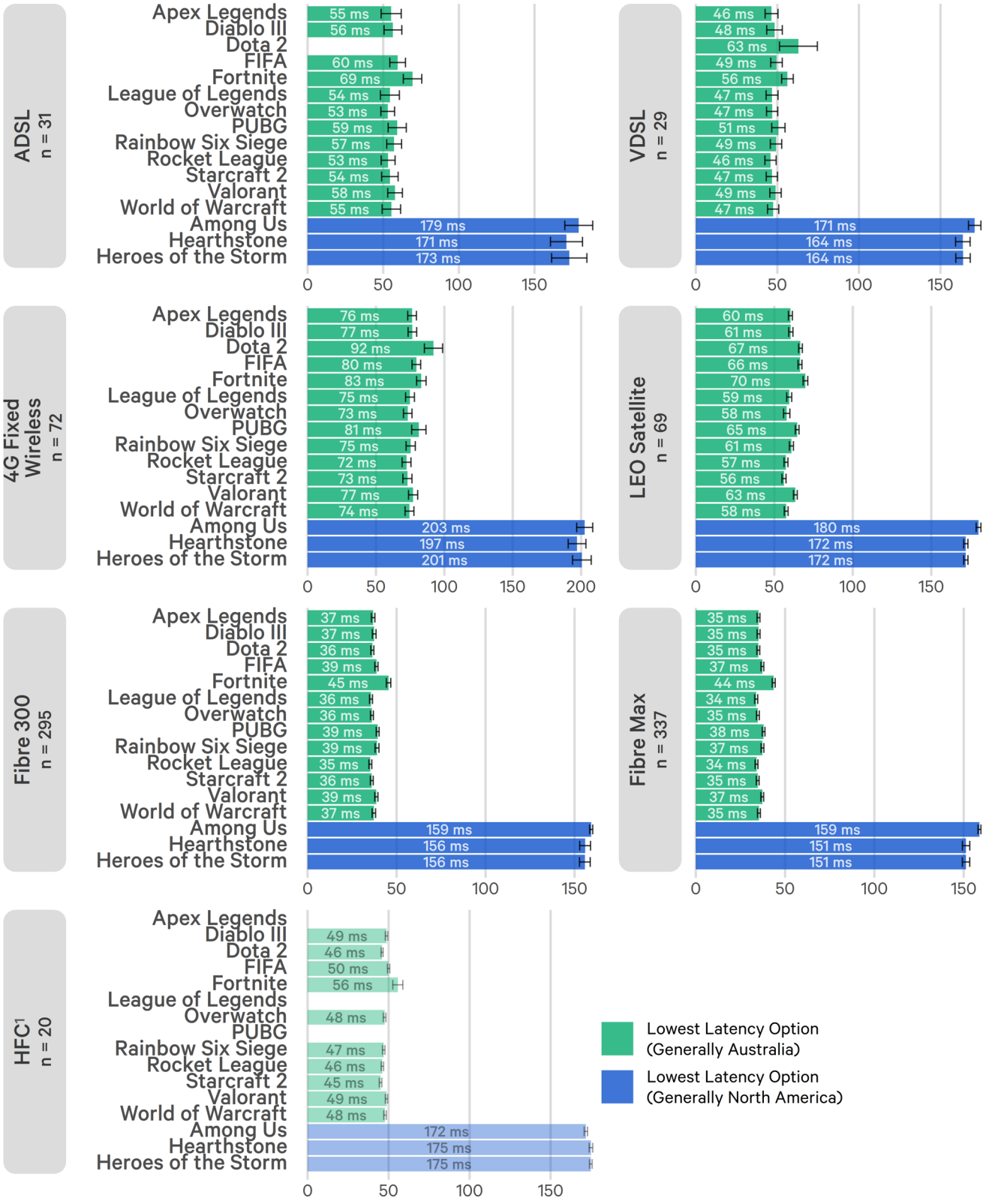
- Among Us, Hearthstone and Heroes of the Storm all tested to servers in North America. These games show average latencies around 150 ms, much higher than the remaining games which tested to servers located in Australia.
- The impact of latency on consumers also depends on the type of game being played. For example, high latency would be noticed more by consumers playing first person shooter games than turn based strategy games, and could have a negative impact on game play experience if it was too high.
- The latency results above are shown for Fibre plans only. Results for latency split by individual plans can be seen in the figure below, and results for all RSPs can be seen in Table 6.

Figure 5: The Latency to Various Online Gaming Servers by Plan.

Average of household average latency to gaming servers, lower is better

The number of Whiteboxes contributing to each result is shown under each plan name (eg n = 31).

Lower latency means that lag is less likely.



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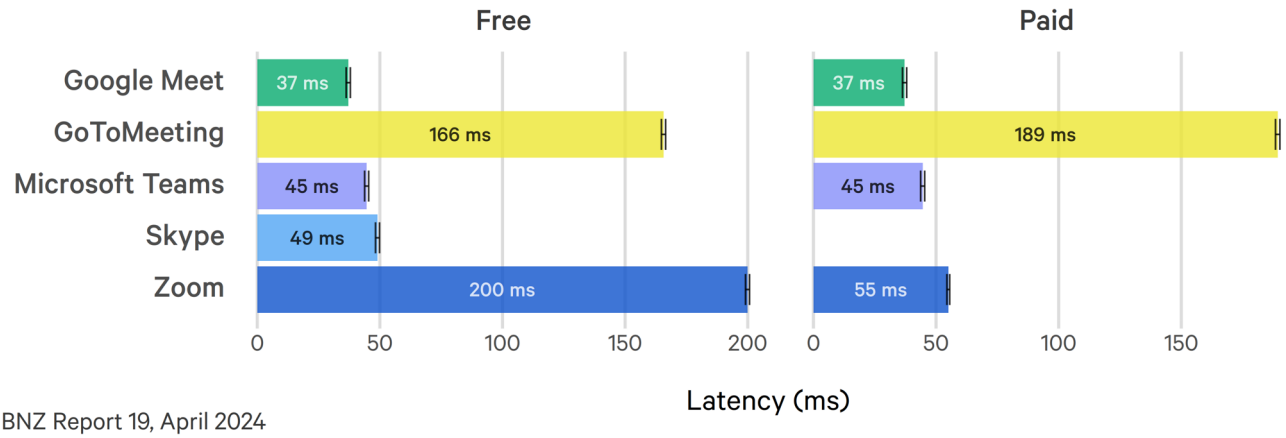
[1]Results for HFC are based on a sample size of 20 Whiteboxes. The low sample size can be attributed to the relatively small coverage area of One New Zealand's Cable network and the competing influence of Copper, Fibre and Fixed Wireless in those areas.

Video Conferencing

Latency is not the only factor impacting on the quality of a video call. Packet loss and jitter can result in stuttering and dropouts, and these are not captured in the round-trip times measured here. Application specific attributes such as audio/video encoding and proprietary communication protocols can lead to different performance characteristics for different services.

Figure 6: The Latency to Servers of Different Video Conferencing Services using Free and Paid Accounts.

Average of household average latency, lower is better. Fibre plans only.



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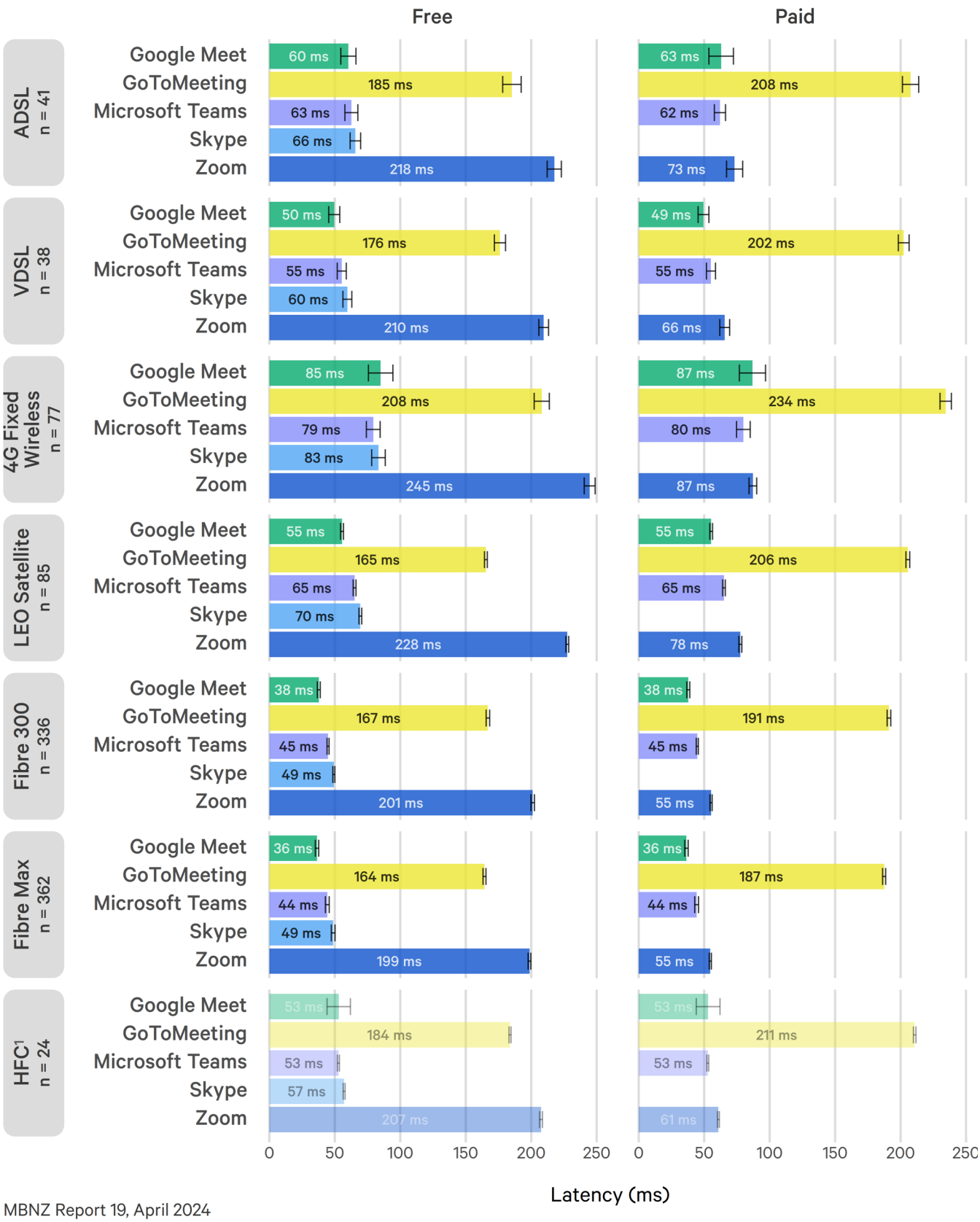
Key Observations

- Zoom provides paid subscribers with geographically nearer servers than unpaid subscribers resulting in lower latency for paid subscribers. Video conferencing services that use international servers usually see similar performance, however as the traffic is travelling further and subject to international routing, this could account for small differences in consumer experience like users talking over one another more frequently when using these unpaid services.
- Latency is only one factor that affects video conferencing quality of experience. Other differences between free and paid accounts such as holding longer meetings or inviting more participants are not included here.
- The latency results above are shown for Fibre plans only. Results for all video conferencing split by individual plans can be seen in the figure below, and results for all RSPs can be seen in Table 7. Results for Webex are not included in this report as we make improvements to the test to make it more relevant for consumers.

Figure 7: The Latency to Servers of Different Video Conferencing Services using Free and Paid Accounts by Plan.

Average of household average latency, lower is better.

The number of Whiteboxes contributing to each result is shown under each plan name (eg n = 24).



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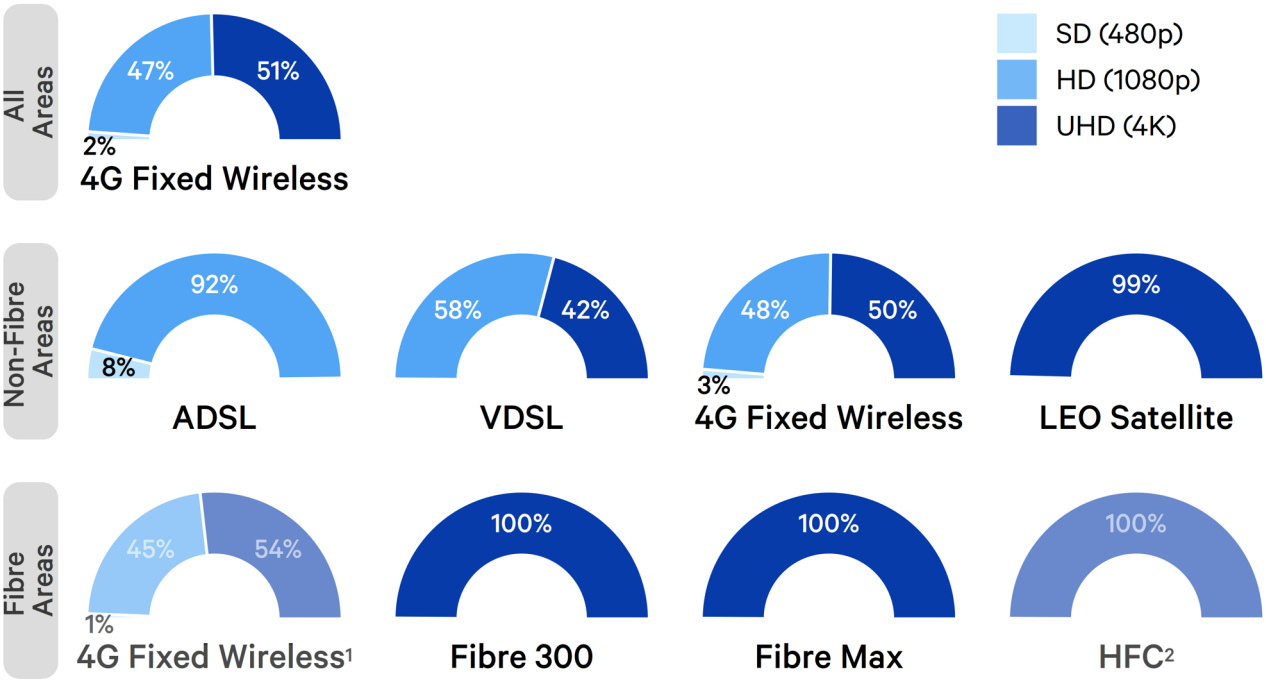
[1]Results for HFC are based on a sample size of 24 Whiteboxes. The low sample size can be attributed to the relatively small coverage area of One New Zealand's Cable network and the competing influence of Copper, Fibre and Fixed Wireless in those areas.

YouTube

The YouTube measurement streams a real video from the live YouTube service. Traffic for this service is often delivered from within the broadband provider's networks, through the use of Google Global Caches (GGCs). These are servers installed by the broadband provider inside their network to cache YouTube and other Google content to improve performance.

Figure 8: Highest Quality that can be streamed over YouTube by Plan



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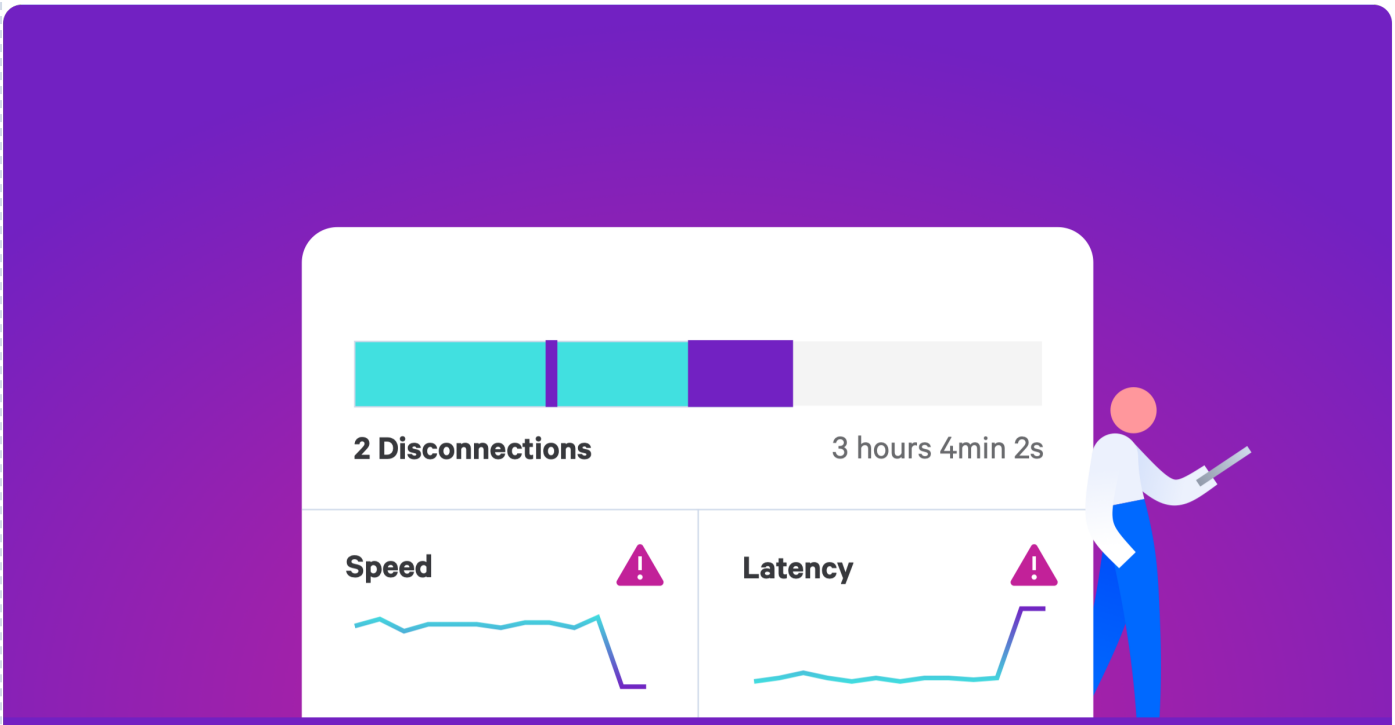
Key Observations

- 51% of Fixed Wireless households across New Zealand were able to stream an UHD YouTube video. In Fibre Areas, 54% of Fixed Wireless households[1] could stream an UHD video, compared to 50% of households in non-Fibre Areas.
- 42% of VDSL households in non-Fibre areas were able to stream an UHD video, compared to 0% of ADSL households.
- Over 99% of LEO Satellite households in non-Fibre areas, and 100% of Fibre 300, Fibre Max and HFC[2] households in Fibre areas were able to stream an UHD YouTube video.

[1] Results for 4G Fixed Wireless in Fibre areas are based on a sample size of 23 Whiteboxes. The lower sample size can be attributed to Fixed Wireless being a new area of focus for the MBNZ programme and we hope to increase this number for subsequent reports.
[2] Results for HFC are based on a sample size of 23 Whiteboxes. The low sample size can be attributed to the relatively small coverage area of One New Zealand's Cable network and the competing influence of Copper, Fibre and Fixed Wireless in those areas.



Quality of Service & Reliability

In this section we report on the performance of a number of popular plans across New Zealand for quality of service metrics.

Some results in this section are shown with error bars representing the 95% confidence interval for each plan. This means that if we had repeated our measurements 100 times, we would expect the result to have fallen within the black bands in at least 95 cases.

The transparent bars show plans with a sample size lower than we would typically include within reporting. These plans have larger error bars due to the smaller sample size and care should be taken when comparing these plans against others. We recommend consumers factor in the error bars when comparing plan averages, especially those with smaller sample sizes.

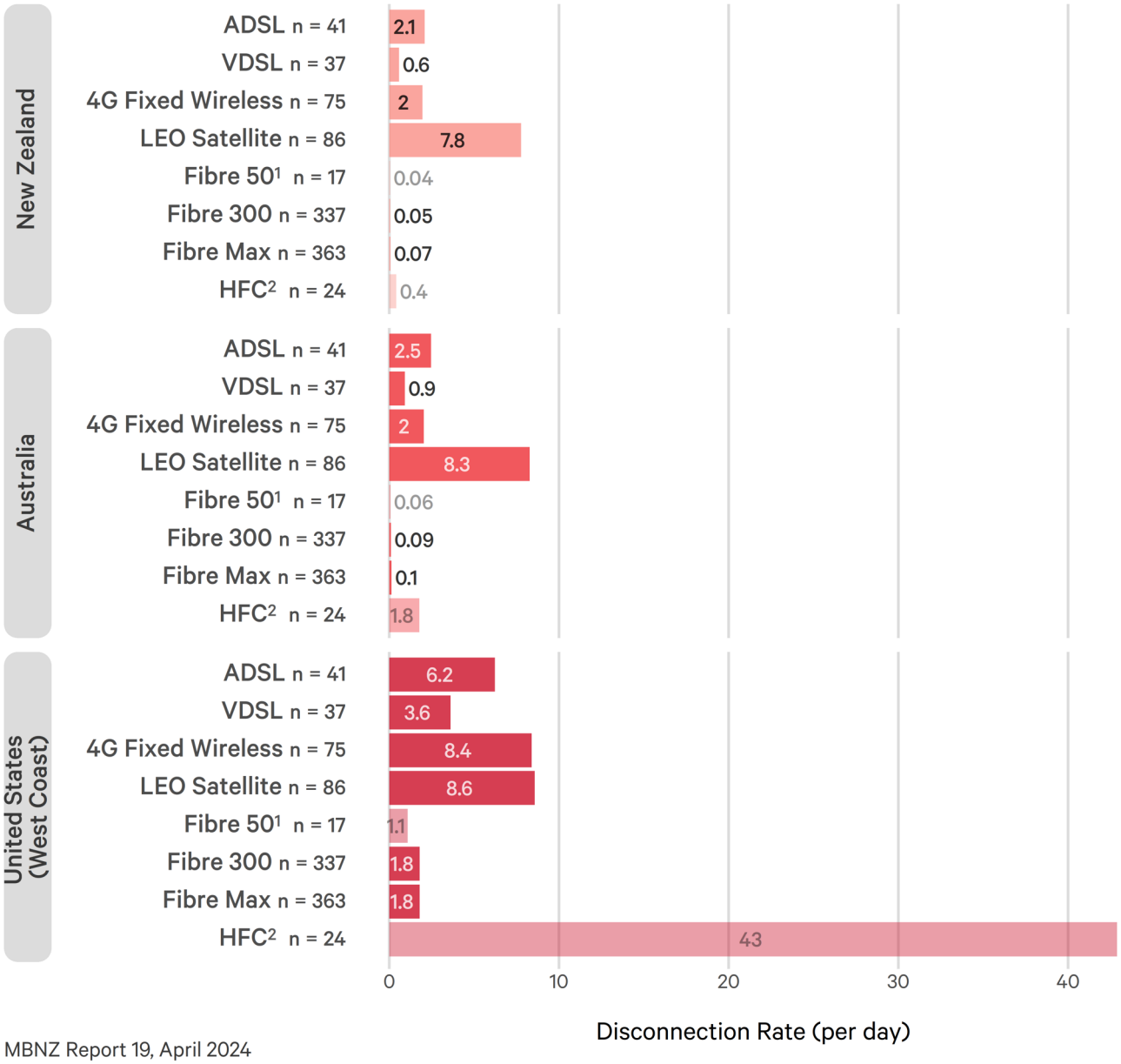
Disconnections

Realtime applications like video calls rely on a consistent connection between the home router and the target server. If the connection drops, even for a few seconds, the application will exhibit some form of stuttering. In the worst instance, a user might be disconnected and have to reconnect or wait for their broadband connection to come back online.

A brief disconnection very rarely means that, for example, a physical cable has been cut. Instead, the main reasons for network dropouts relate to congestion and the configuration of network equipment. The following graph compares daily disconnection rates across plans.

Figure 9: Median Daily Disconnection Rates. Lower is Better.

Medians of household daily rates. A disconnection means that two or more packets in a row don't complete a full round trip. Testing only covers periods where the line is idle.



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This graph shows medians across households. Taking Fixed Wireless as an example 50% of households will experience no more than 2 disconnections per day for traffic remaining within New Zealand. This obscures the extremes of performance for each plan. While the median ADSL and Fixed Wireless results are comparable, ADSL connections are more likely than others to have disconnection rates far above the median, whereas Fixed Wireless plans are more likely to have results close to the median.

Many common applications, such as video conferencing applications or online gaming used by New Zealanders are served from overseas, mainly Australia, East Asia, and the USA. All New Zealand RSPs share capacity through four undersea cable networks which carry traffic to and from New Zealand across the Tasman Sea and the Pacific.

Key Observations

- Most households see a very low rate of disconnections, at least while the line is idle.
- The results for disconnections remain broadly consistent when compared to the previous report for New Zealand and Australia, and the level of disconnections is at a level whereby user experience will not be unduly affected.
- Several RSPs using Telstra showed a large increase in disconnections to our USA target in January compared to the previous reporting period. For example, One New Zealand saw an increase in median disconnections for their HFC plan from 2.4 to 43 during January 2024 as a result.[1]
- Satellite experiences a considerably higher rate of disconnections than most VDSL, Fixed Wireless, Fibre, and Cable connections. Satellite customers will often see a small increase in packet loss when connecting to moving satellites however this is not at a level that would unduly affect user experience for LEO Satellite customers. Disconnections for Fibre plans remain low.
- Traffic going overseas is more likely to be lost than traffic remaining within New Zealand.

[1] Upon investigation, all affected RSPs use Telstra as transit when routing to the server provider in the US, and all affected RSPs reported spikes in packet loss at the same time to the US server. This indicates that Telstra were the cause of the packet loss and disconnections. The provider is Linode, a major hosting company, and their services are hosted on the Akamai network, a very large CDN and network operator. Both Linode and Akamai host a large amount of content and services. Further investigation reveals that some RSPs use Telstra widely for access to the US while others (including One New Zealand) use a variety of other transit providers depending on the target network.

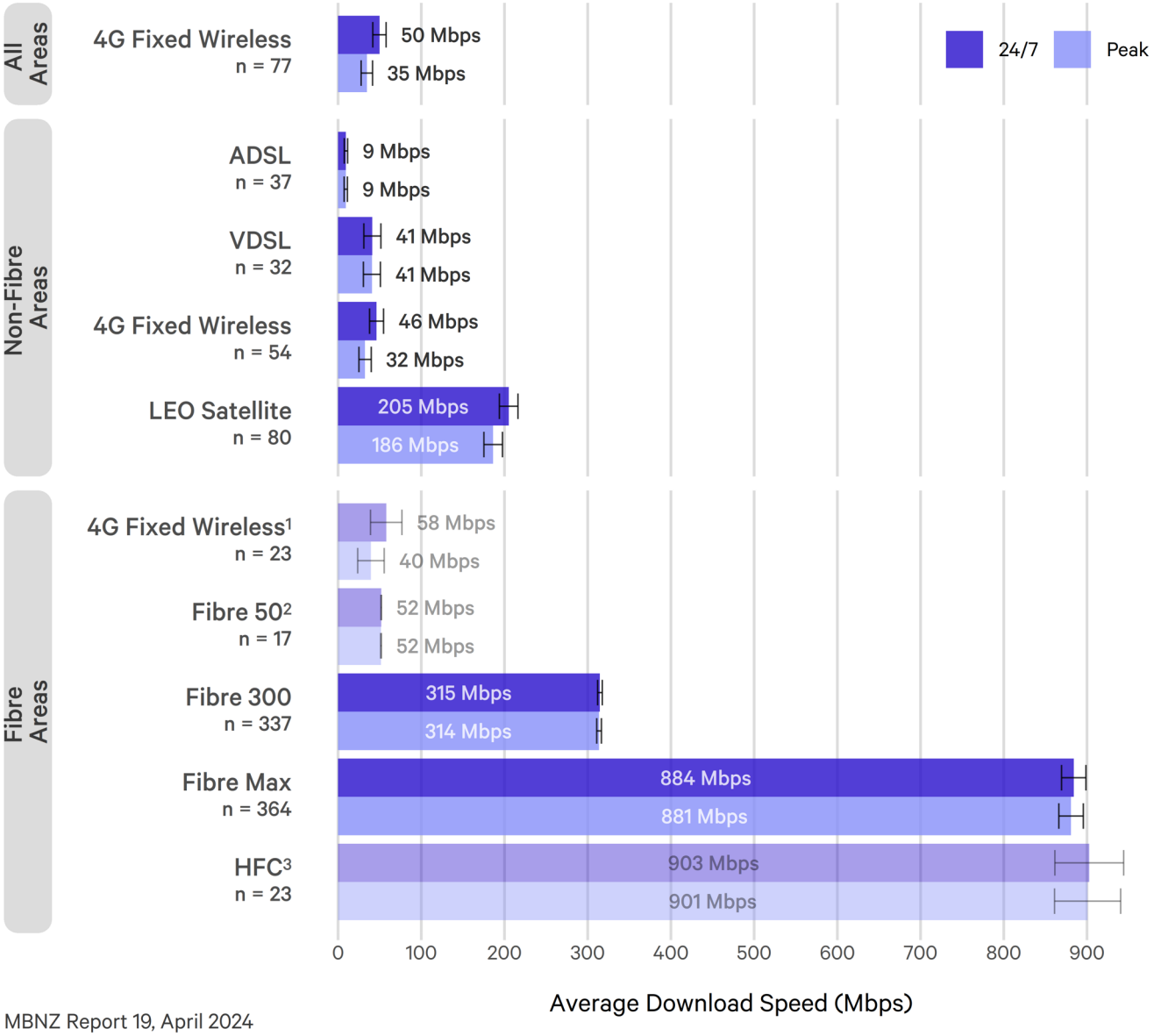
Speed Tests - Download

Figures 10 and 14 give an overview of download and upload speed across the country. These are included in every report to provide a benchmark that can be tracked over time. These results are split across Fibre areas, where Fibre is available to consumers and non-Fibre areas where Fibre is not available. There were not enough Whiteboxes to report ADSL and VDSL results in Fibre areas.

Peak hours are the times when people typically use the internet; in New Zealand this is 7pm to 11pm on Monday-Friday.

Figure 10: Average Download Speeds by Plan

Average of monthly household weighted averages. Peak hours are Monday - Friday, 7pm - 11pm. The number of Whiteboxes contributing to each result is shown under each plan name (eg n = 77). Error bars show 95% confidence intervals of the mean.



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Key Observations

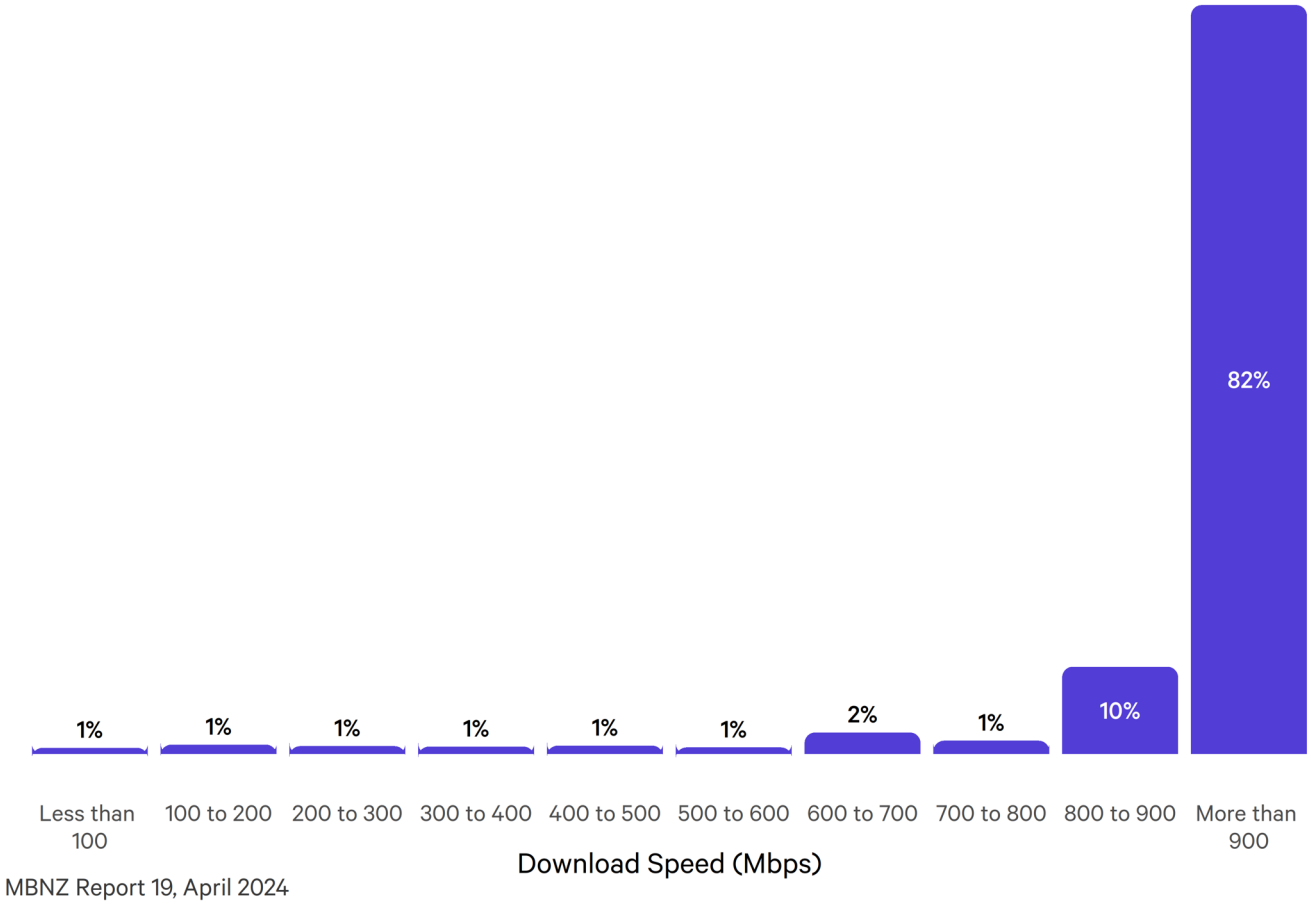
- ADSL and VDSL results are consistent with those seen in the previous report, showing similar results during peak hours.
- LEO Satellite and 4G Fixed Wireless show a larger variation between peak hour download speeds and all hour download speeds compared to fixed line plans. This could be due to these technologies being more sensitive to congestion during peak hours. 4G Fixed Wireless results in Fibre areas[1]
- Fibre 50[2] results are included for the first time in this report, averaging 52 Mbps with no change during peak hours.
- Fibre 300 and Fibre Max results are also broadly similar to the previous report, with Fibre 300 seeing average speeds above 300 Mbps, including during peak hours. Fibre Max average download speeds are consistent with previous results. RSP specific results for Fibre Max and Fibre 300 can be found in Figures 17 and 19.
- Results for HFC[3] are broadly consistent with the previous report.

[1] Results for 4G Fixed Wireless are based on a sample size of 23 Whiteboxes in Fibre areas. The lower sample size can be attributed to Fixed Wireless being a new area of focus for the MBNZ programme and we hope to increase this number for subsequent reports.
[2] Results for Fibre 50 are based on a sample size of 17 Whiteboxes in Fibre areas.
[3] Results for HFC are based on a sample size of 23 Whiteboxes. The low sample size can be attributed to the relatively small coverage area of One New Zealand's Cable network and the competing influence of Copper, Fibre and Fixed Wireless in those areas.

Distribution of Fibre Max Results

Figure 11: Download Speeds on Fibre Max Plans.

Distribution of test results across 364 Fibre Max units.
Average (24/7) download speeds for Fibre Max plans is 884 Mbps; this varies by RSP and over time.



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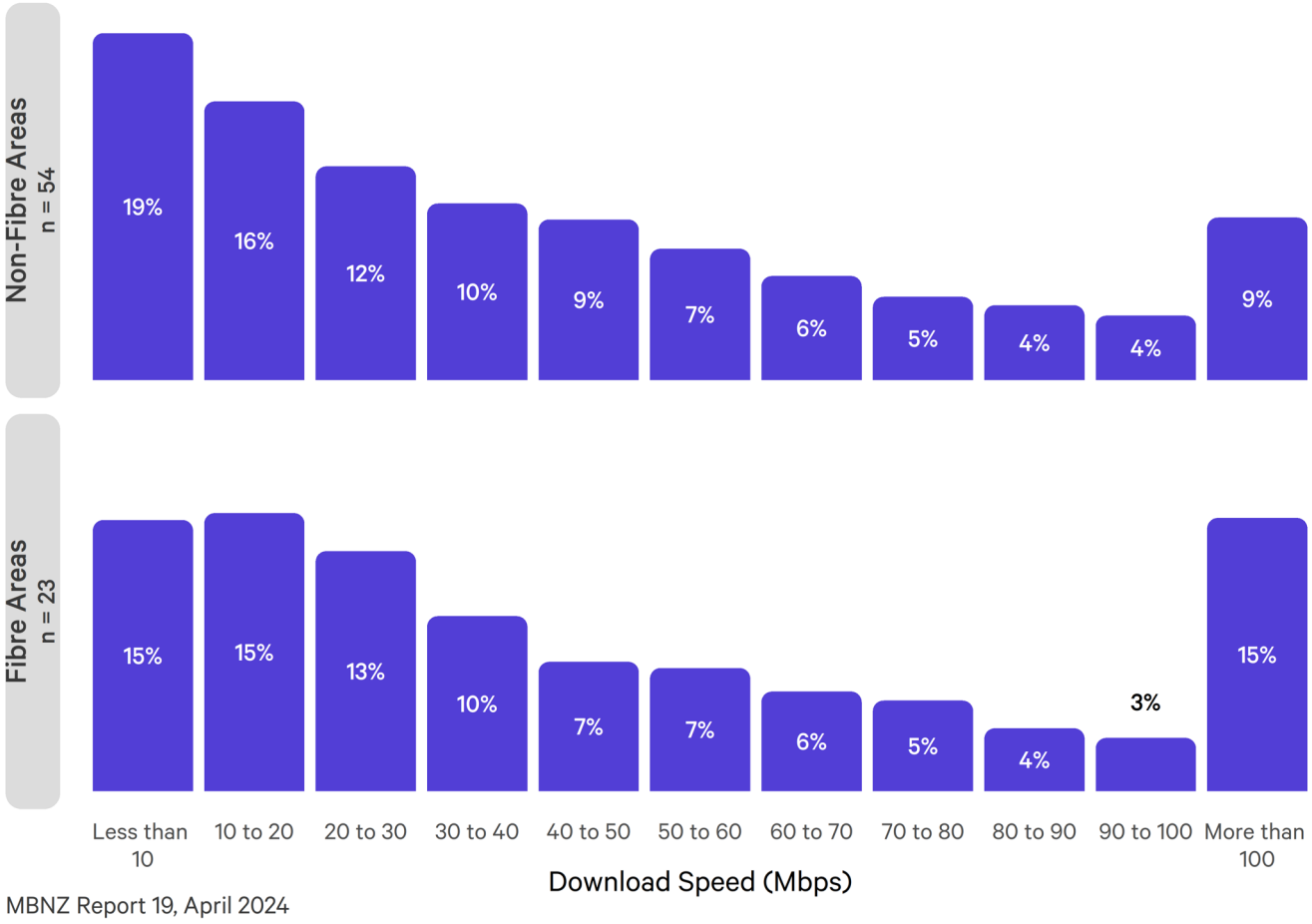
Key Observations

- 82% of speed tests run over Fibre Max lines achieved download speeds above 900 Mbps, a small increase compared to the previous report.

Distribution of 4G Fixed Wireless Results

Figure 12: Download Speeds on 4G Fixed Wireless Plans.

Distribution of test results. Average (24/7) download speeds for 4G Fixed Wireless plans is 46 Mbps in non-Fibre areas and 58 Mbps in Fibre areas; this varies by RSP and over time.



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Key Observations

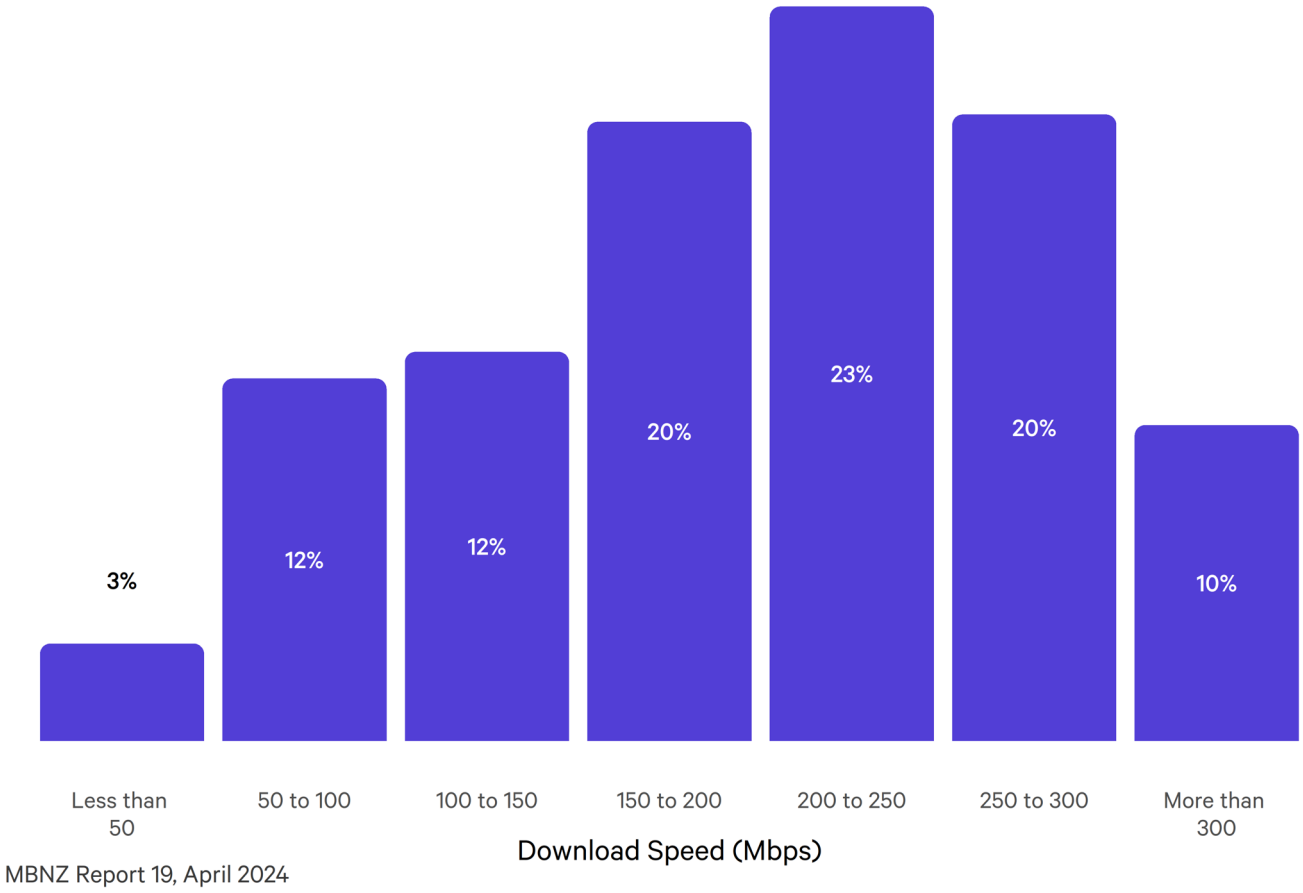
- 35% of speed tests run over Fixed Wireless lines achieve download speeds of less than 20 Mbps in non-Fibre areas, compared to 31% in Fibre areas.
- 15% of download speed tests in Fibre areas achieved speeds of 100 Mbps or higher.

Distribution of LEO Satellite Results

Figure 13: Download Speeds on LEO Satellite Plans.

Distribution of test results across 80 Satellite units.

Average (24/7) download speeds for LEO Satellite plans is 205 Mbps in non-Fibre areas; this varies over time



MBNZ Report 19, April 2024

Key Observations

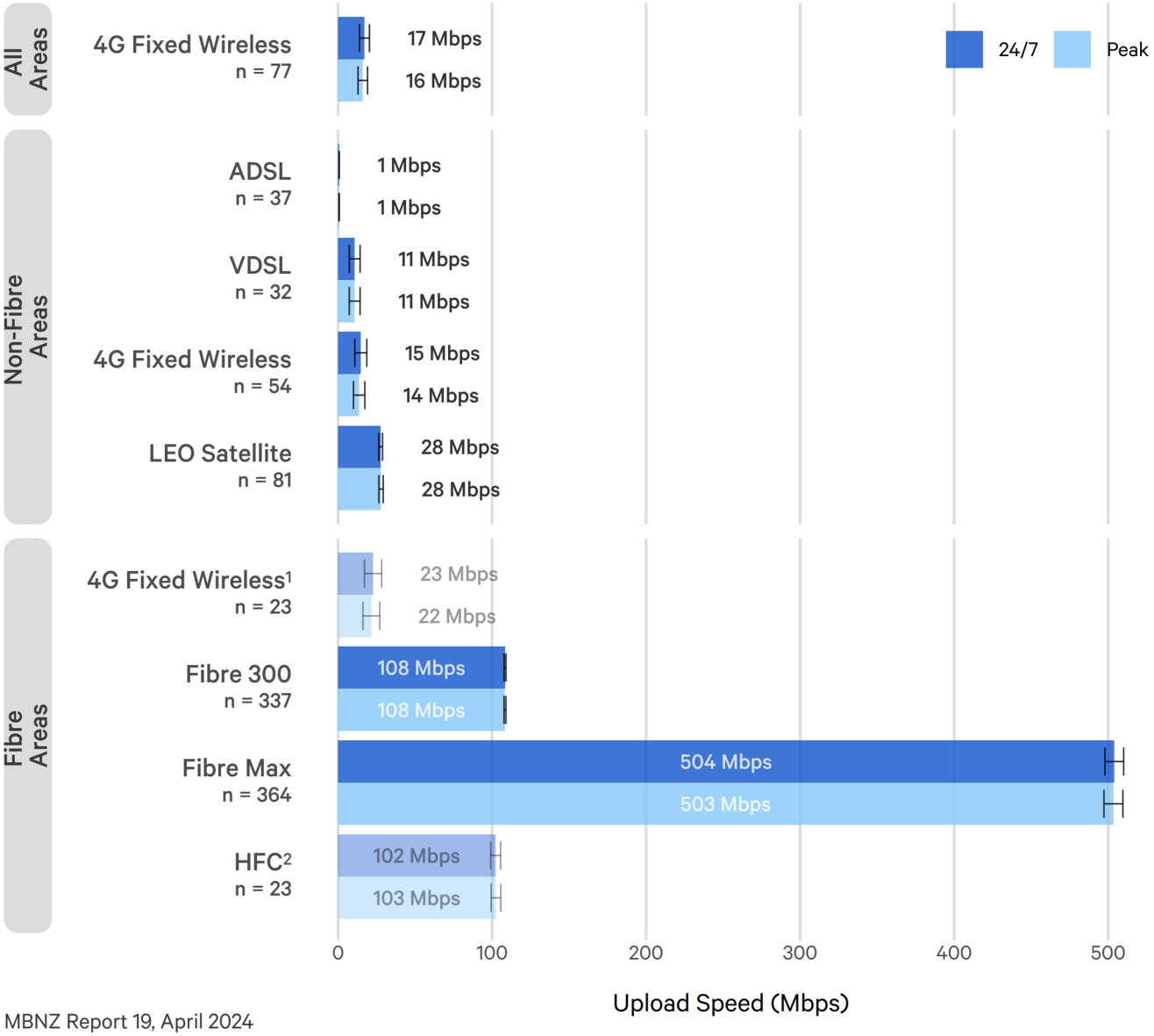
- Only 3% of speed tests run over LEO Satellite achieve download speeds of less than 50 Mbps in non-Fibre areas.
- Over 80% of download tests in non-Fibre areas achieved speeds of 100 Mbps or higher.
- 10% of download speed tests in non-Fibre areas achieved speeds of 300 Mbps or higher, a small improvement on 8% previously.

Speed Tests - Upload

Upload speeds should be considered alongside download speeds. The main applications where the impact of upload speed is apparent are file transfers and video conferencing. For example, a lower upload speed will mean that it takes longer for files to sync or email attachments to be applied.

Figure 14: Average Upload Speeds by Plan

Average (24/7) of monthly household weighted averages. Peak hours are Monday - Friday, 7pm - 11pm. The number of Whiteboxes contributing to each result is shown under each plan name (eg n = 77). Error bars show 95% confidence intervals of the mean.



MBNZ Report 19, April 2024

Key Observations

- The average upload speeds are consistent with those seen in the previous report.
- Average upload speeds for Fibre 50 are not included in this report due to different upload allocations across local fibre companies. There were not enough Whiteboxes on Fibre 50 to split upload results by local fibre company.
- 4G Fixed Wireless results in Fibre areas[1] and HFC[2] results are based on a smaller sample size than we would typically include within reporting, but are sufficient to indicate performance while we add more Whiteboxes to enable more definite reporting. This accounts for the larger confidence intervals for these plans. Consumers should be careful about directly comparing these plans with others, as there is more uncertainty around the average speeds for these plans, and they should factor in the error bars into their comparison.

[1] Results for 4G Fixed Wireless are based on a sample size of 23 Whiteboxes in Fibre areas. The lower sample size can be attributed to Fixed Wireless being a new area of focus for the MBNZ programme and we hope to increase this number for the Summer Report
[2] Results for HFC are based on a sample size of 23 Whiteboxes. The low sample size can be attributed to the relatively small coverage area of One New Zealand's Cable network and the competing influence of Copper, Fibre and Fixed Wireless in those areas.

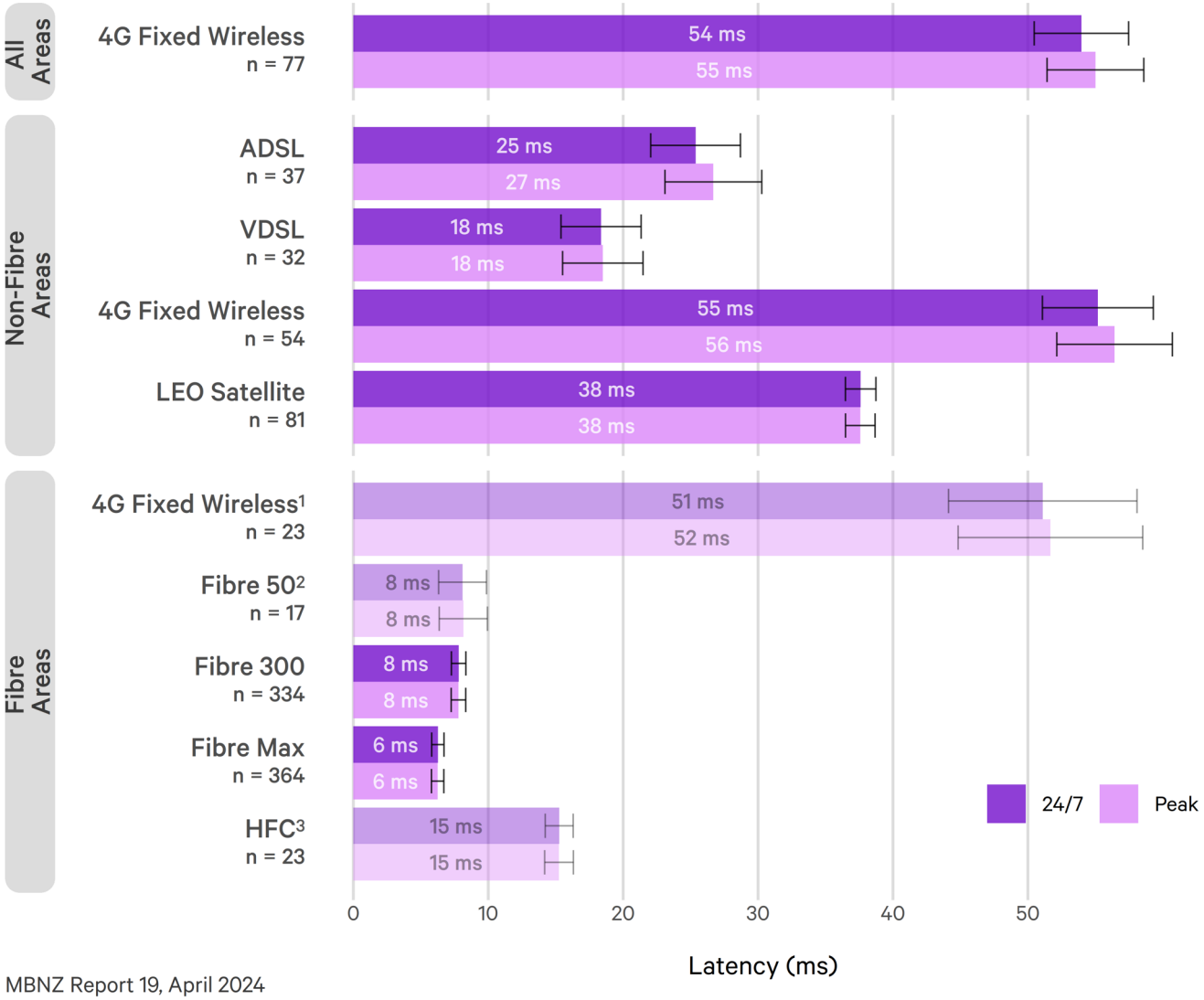
Latency

Latency is another key factor that should be considered when assessing broadband performance. The time it takes to transmit and receive messages between households and servers limits the responsiveness of realtime applications such as interactive webpages or video calls. Higher baseline latency makes realtime applications more vulnerable to jitter (also known as packet delay variation) and dropouts. Figure 15 only includes results relating to servers hosted in New Zealand.

Some plans show a wider variation of latency than others: latency across a Fixed Wireless connection will generally be more variable than over a Fibre line. The impact of latency on user experience relating to specific applications is discussed earlier in the report (Social Media, Online Gaming, Video Conferencing).

Figure 15: Average Latency to Test Servers by Plan. Lower is Better.

Average of monthly household weighted averages. Peak hours are Monday - Friday, 7pm - 11pm. The number of Whiteboxes contributing to each result is shown under each plan name (eg n = 77). Error bars show 95% confidence intervals of the mean.



MBNZ Report 19, April 2024

Latency Under Load

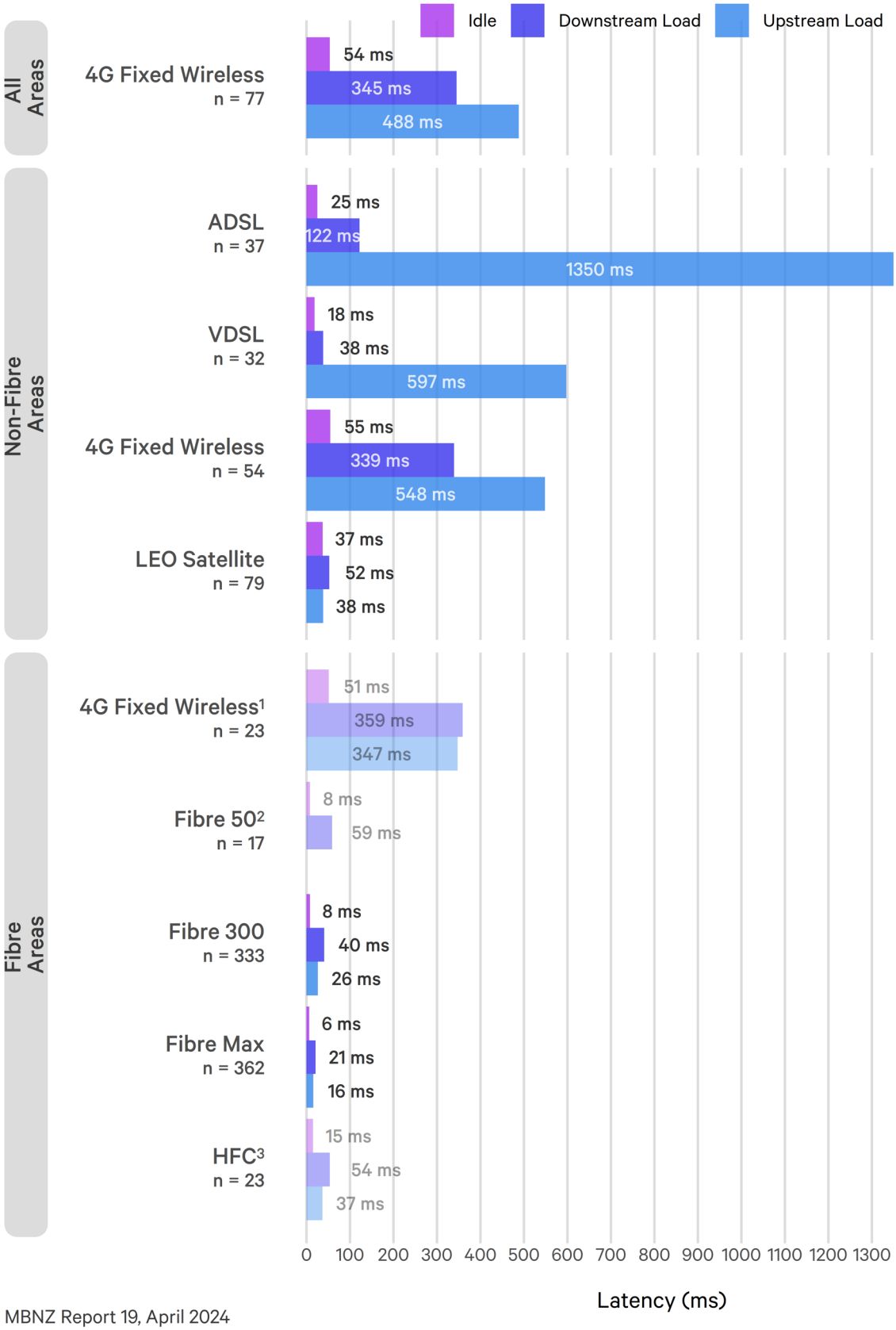
The latency under load test measures the latency when the broadband connection is heavily utilised (by the way of a speed test run in parallel). This is more representative of user experience than idle latency as it shows the impact of downloading or uploading data to the internet (e.g. watching Netflix or uploading a file) on latency (e.g. how long a webpage takes to load). The results are particularly illustrative of real-world experience for people who are using latency-sensitive applications like video conferencing or some video games.

The graph shows latency values while the connection is idle, compared with latency values while the connection under either downstream or upstream load. The latency under load test is performed while the download (or upload) speed tests are running, and this is compared to the idle latency measurement which is calculated when the line is idle. Differences in access technology and router models will result in different results for the user.

It is expected that the router model will be a factor in any latency rise, as the test is measuring what is known as bufferbloat, which is where the router or other network devices on the path are buffering large amounts of data. As such, differences in technology and router models will result in different results for the user.

Figure 16: Average Latency Under Load to Test Servers by Plan. Lower is Better.

Averages of monthly household averages.The number of Whiteboxes contributing to each result is shown under each plan name (eg n = 17).



MBNZ Report 19, April 2024

Key Observations

- Idle latency over Fixed Wireless is higher than over Copper (ADSL, VDSL), Cable (HFC), or Fibre (Fibre 50, Fibre 300, Fibre Max). Fibre is faster due to both the lower latency over Fibre optics and the more recent infrastructure that underpins the Fibre network.

- All plans see latency increase when the line is running upload or download tests compared to when the line is idle. ADSL and 4G Fixed Wireless[1] plans see a large increase in latency under load while both download and upload tests are running. VDSL shows a high latency when upload tests are running. These latency values are high enough to be noticeable to the user if multiple devices are used simultaneously, with one device heavily using the connection.

- Average latency under upload results for Fibre 50 are not included in this report due to different upload allocations across local fibre companies. There were not enough Whiteboxes on Fibre 50 to split upload results by local fibre company.

- Latency under downstream and upstream load is higher for the Fibre 300 plan compared to Fibre Max results. Both Fibre plans have lower latency results for idle latency and latency under downstream and upstream load than HFC[2].

- LEO Satellite plans see a small increase in latency under load when download tests are running. Latency under upload shows a smaller increase on idle latency for satellite plans. While idle latency for satellite is higher than Copper (ADSL and VDSL), latency under downstream load is lower for LEO Satellite than ADSL, and latency under upstream load is lower for LEO Satellite than both ADSL and VDSL.

[1] Results for 4G Fixed Wireless are based on a sample size of 23 Whiteboxes in Fibre areas. The lower sample size can be attributed to Fixed Wireless being a new area of focus for the MBNZ programme and we hope to increase this number for the Summer Report

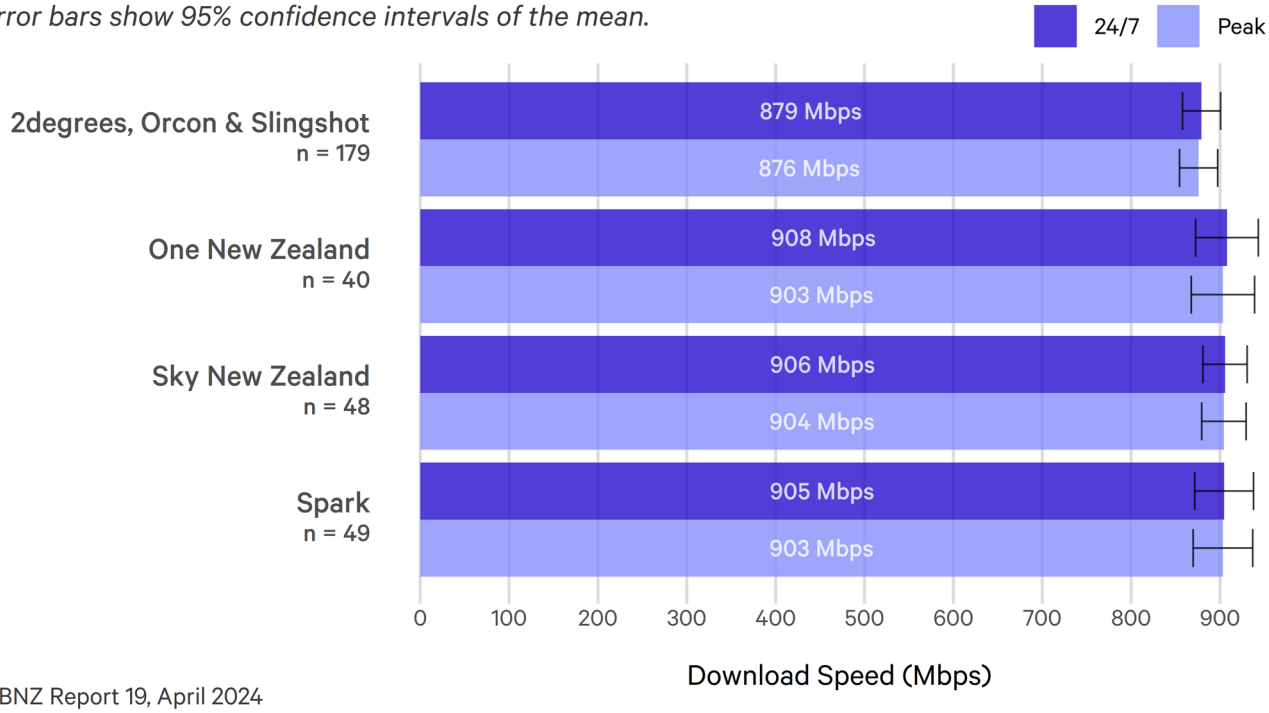
[2] Results for HFC are based on a sample size of 23 Whiteboxes. The low sample size can be attributed to the relatively small coverage area of One New Zealand's Cable network and the competing influence of Copper, Fibre and Fixed Wireless in those areas.

Fibre Max Breakdown by RSP

Fibre Max plans are derived from 'gigabit' wholesale products but, since around 6% of the data in HTTP traffic is given over to protocol overhead (IP packet headers etc), the highest speed test result that can theoretically be achieved by a Fibre Max line is around 940 Mbps.

Figure 17: Average Fibre Max Download Speed by RSP

Average of monthly household averages. Peak hours are Monday - Friday, 7pm - 11pm.
The number of Whiteboxes contributing to each result is shown under each plan name (eg n = 179).
Error bars show 95% confidence intervals of the mean.



MBNZ Report 19, April 2024

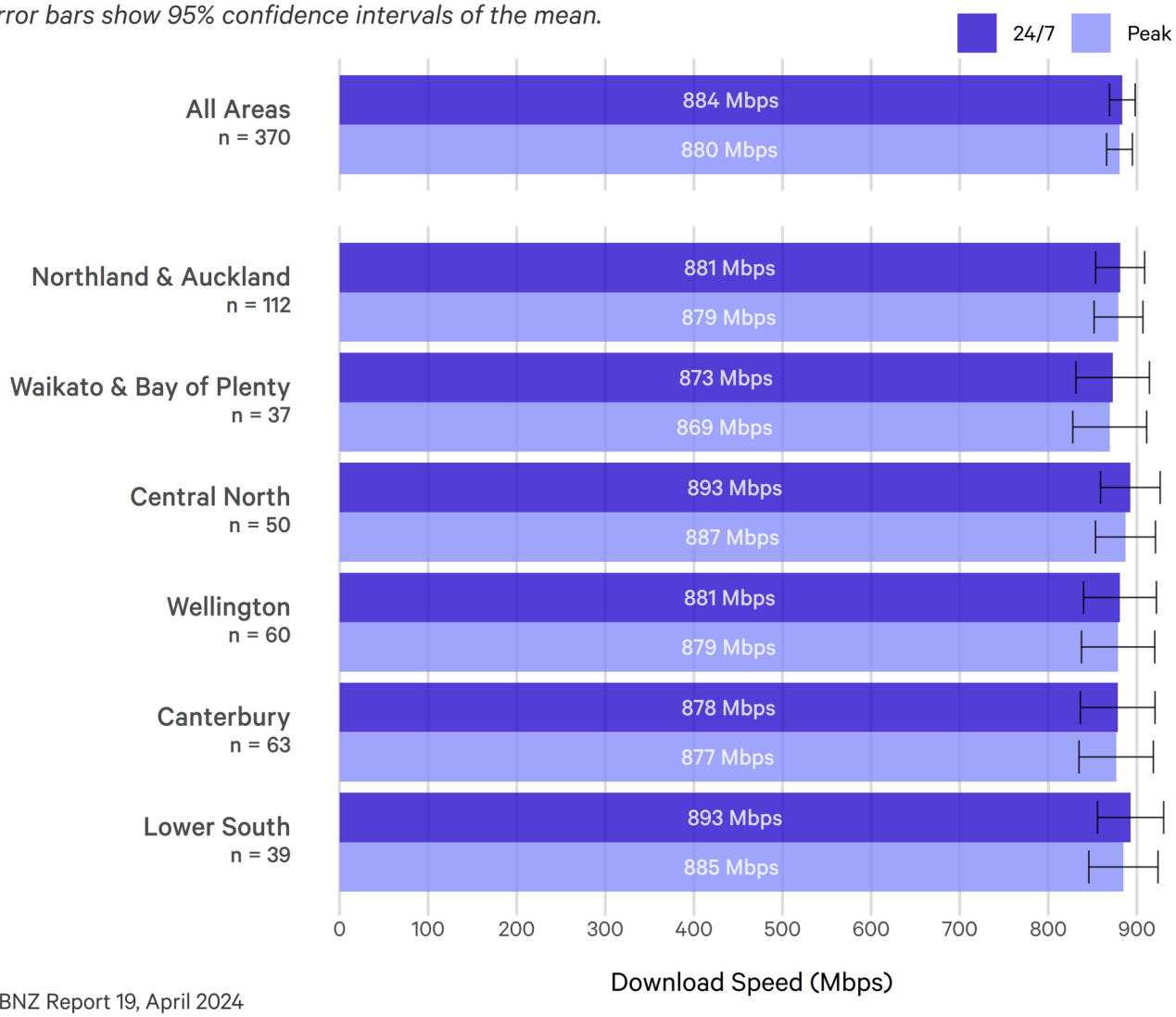
Key Observations

- Spark saw average download speeds increase slightly compared to the previous report for both Peak and 24/7 results, now averaging above 900 Mbps for both 24/7 and peak results. For all other RSPs, the results are broadly in line with those seen in the previous report, showing similar average download speeds across all hours and peak hours.
- There were not enough Fibre Max volunteers on Contact Energy, Voyager, or Mercury during the measurement period to report results for these RSP. All tested RSPs are included in the overall Fibre Max results shown in Figure 10.

Fibre Max Breakdown by Region

Figure 18: Average Fibre Max Download Speeds by Region

Average of monthly household averages. Peak hours are Monday - Friday, 7pm - 11pm.
The number of Whiteboxes contributing to each result is shown under each geographical area (eg n = 370)
Error bars show 95% confidence intervals of the mean.



MBNZ Report 19, April 2024

Key Observations

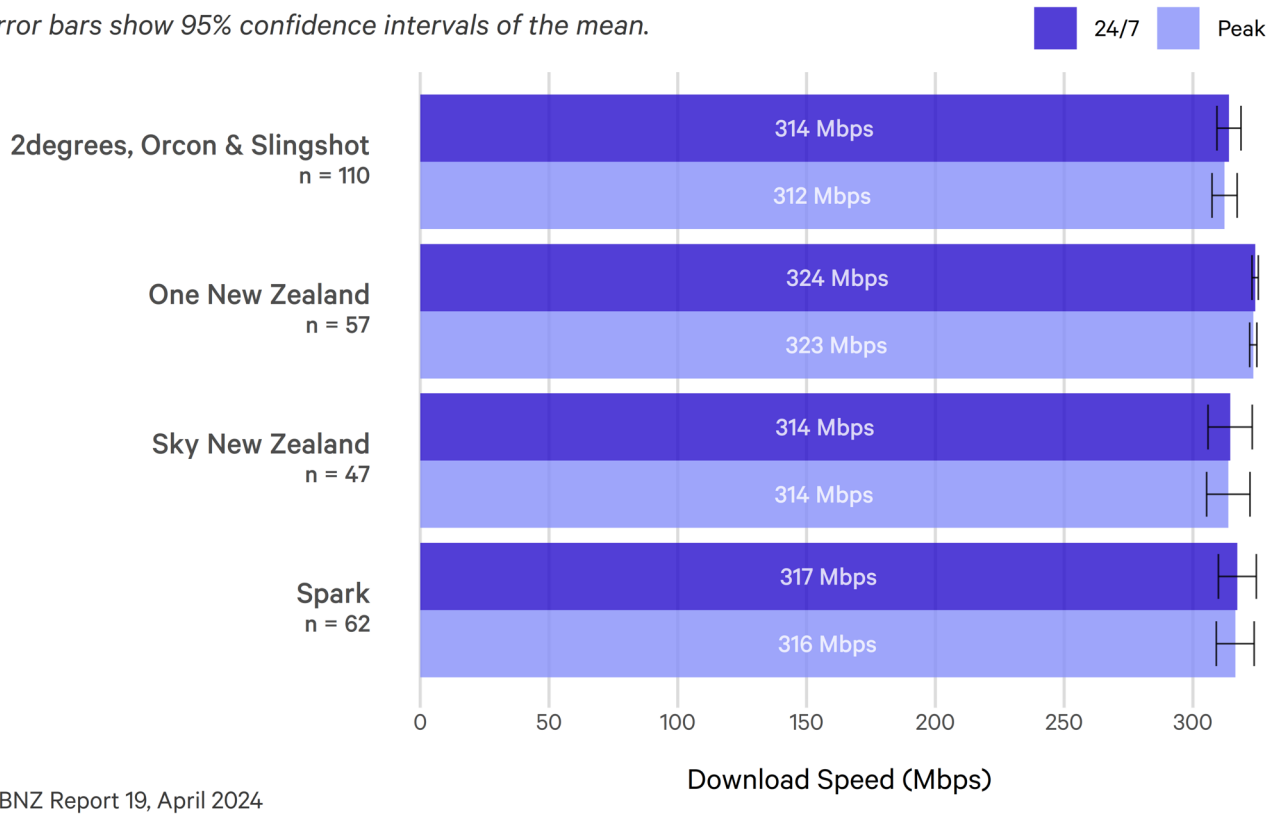
- This report features more granular region splits for Fibre Max performance for the first time.
- Across all areas of New Zealand, there is very little difference between average Fibre Max performance.
- Results for the Upper South (Tasman, Nelson & Marlborough) are unable to be reported due to a low sample size.

Fibre 300 Breakdown by RSP

The speeds Fibre 300 is typically advertised to consumers are 300 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload. In practice, since the provisioned speed is set slightly higher to allow for extra bandwidth used up by the network protocol overhead, it is quite common to see measured download speeds close to or slightly above 300 Mbps.

Figure 19: Comparison of Average Fibre 300 Download Speeds across RSPs.

Average of monthly household averages. Peak hours are Monday - Friday, 7pm - 11pm.
The number of Whiteboxes contributing to each result is shown under each plan name (eg n = 110)
Error bars show 95% confidence intervals of the mean.



MBNZ Report 19, April 2024

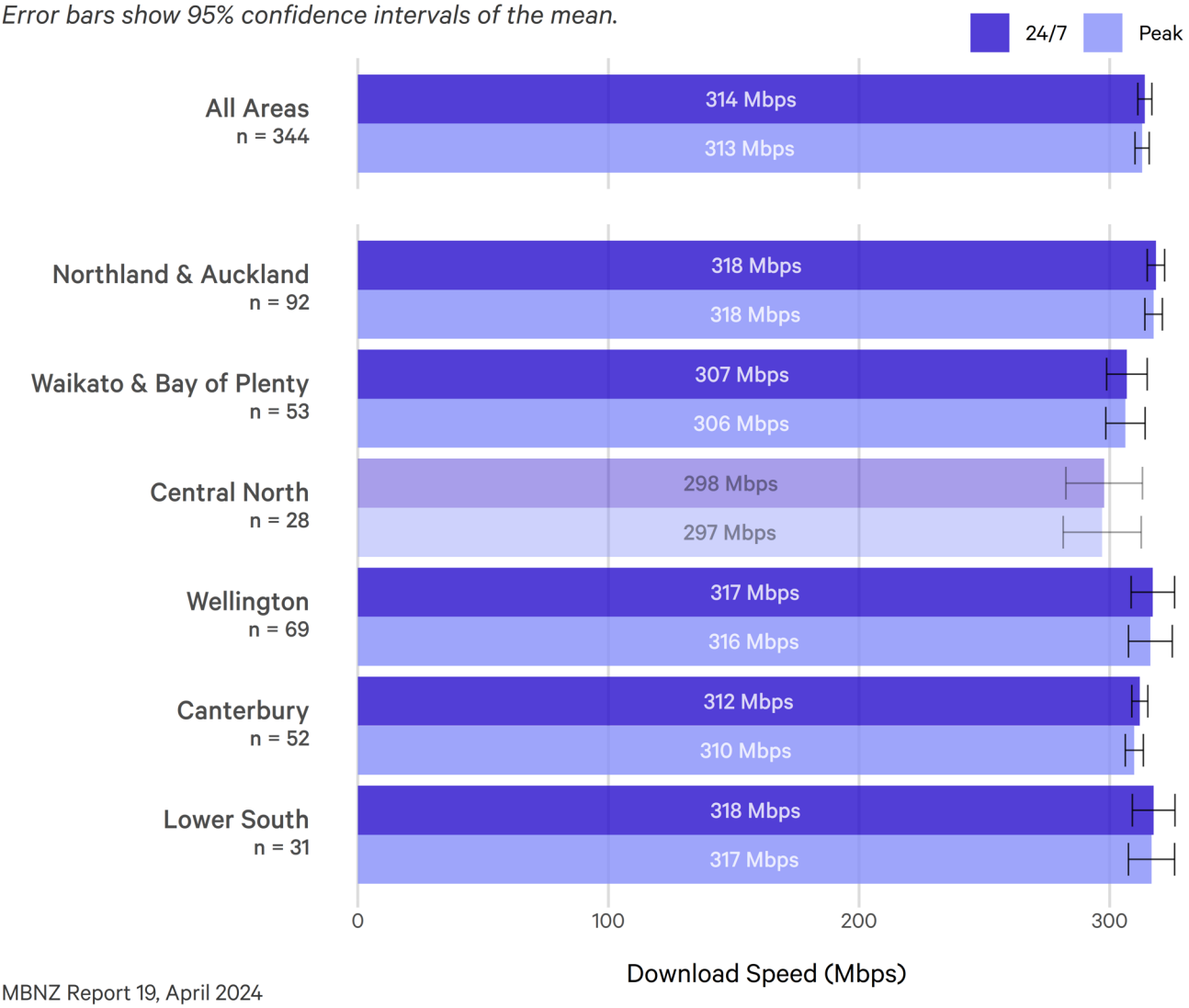
Key Observations

- All RSPs tested previously continued to perform consistently in January, with all RSPs shown in the chart achieving average download speeds above 300 Mbps, including during peak hours.
- There were not enough volunteers on Contact Energy, Mercury, Unifone, Voyager or Inspire to report results. All tested RSPs are included in the overall Fibre 300 results shown in Figure 10.

Fibre 300 Breakdown by Region

Figure 20: Average Fibre 300 Download Speeds by Region

Average of monthly household averages. Peak hours are Monday - Friday, 7pm - 11pm.
The number of Whiteboxes contributing to each result is shown under each geographical area (eg n = 344)
Error bars show 95% confidence intervals of the mean.



MBNZ Report 19, April 2024

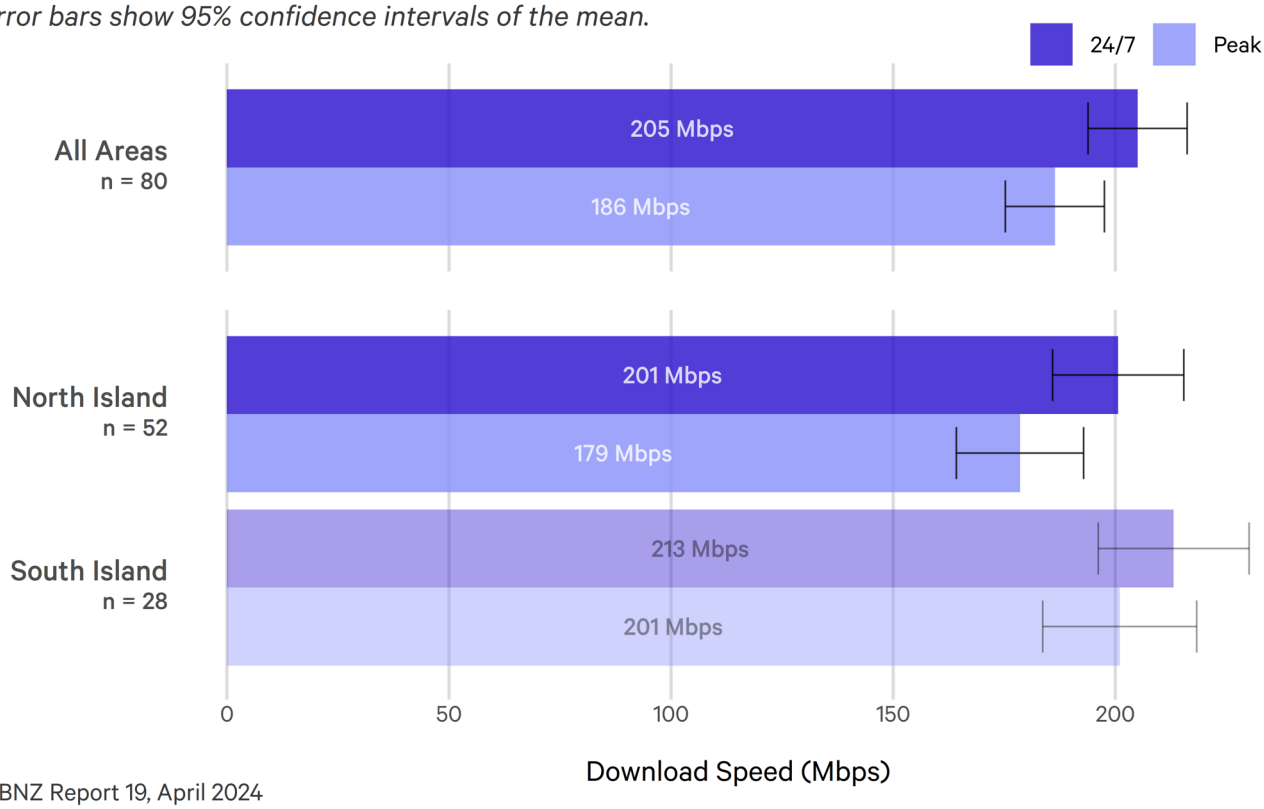
Key Observations

- This report features more granular region splits for Fibre 300 performance for the first time.
- Across all areas of New Zealand, there is very little difference between average Fibre 300 performance. All regions shown achieve average download speeds around 300 Mbps or higher.
- Results for the Upper South (Tasman, Nelson & Marlborough) are unable to be reported due to a low sample size.

LEO Satellite Breakdown by Island

Figure 21: Average LEO Satellite Download Speeds by Island

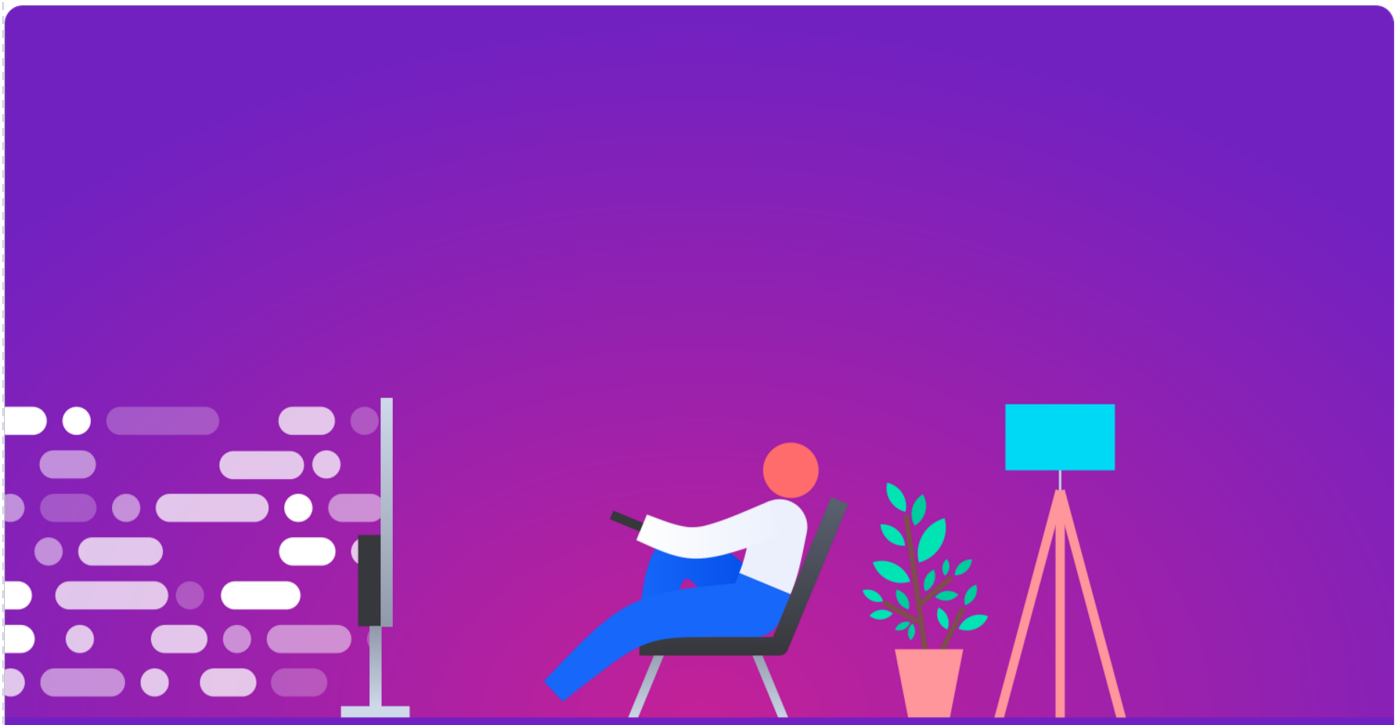
Average of monthly household averages. Peak hours are Monday - Friday, 7pm - 11pm.
The number of Whiteboxes contributing to each result is shown under each geographical area (eg n = 80)
Error bars show 95% confidence intervals of the mean.



MBNZ Report 19, April 2024

Key Observations

- This report features an island split for LEO Satellite performance for the first time.
- There is very little difference between North and South Island results for LEO Satellite, with the South Island island achieving slightly higher average speeds compared to the North Island, especially during peak hours.



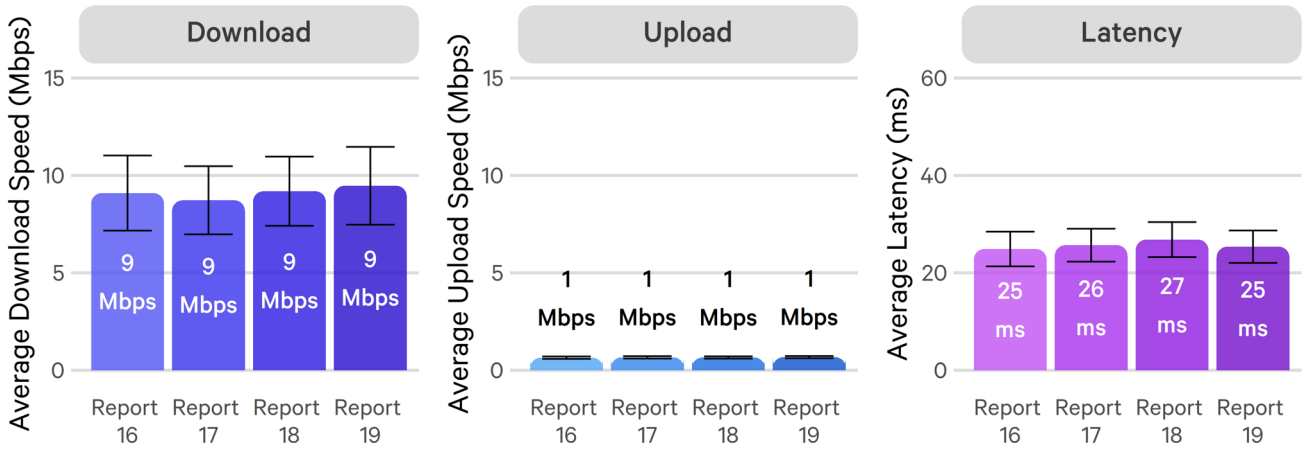
Previous Report Comparison

The following charts compare results from previous MBNZ reports across the past year for popular plans in New Zealand for quality of service metrics (download, upload and latency). ADSL, VDSL, Fibre 300 and Fibre Max plans have all seen consistent performance across reports. 4G Fixed Wireless and LEO Satellite plans have seen increases in average download speeds across the past year, with consistent upload and latency performance.

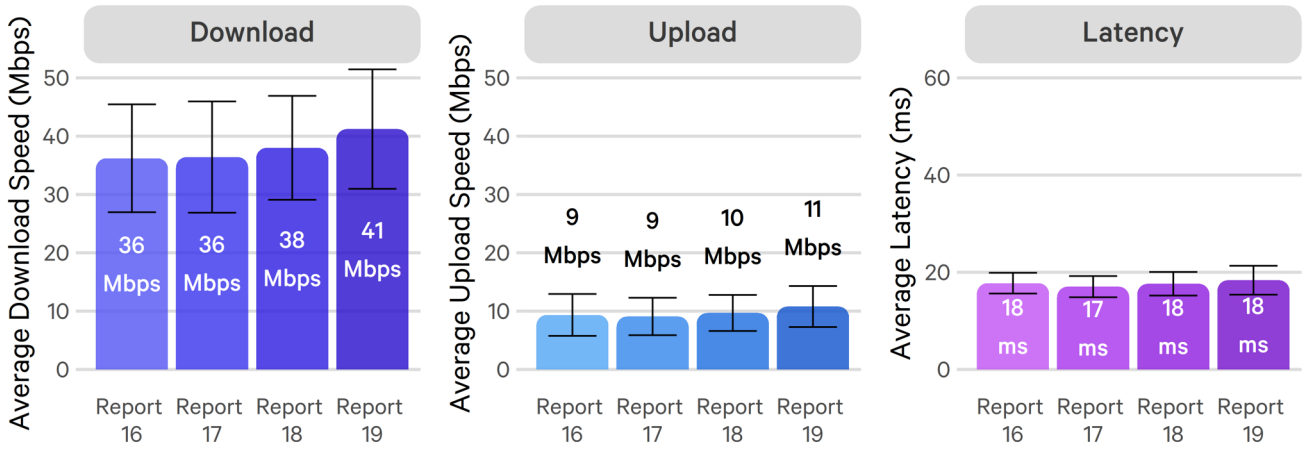
Table 1: Previous MBNZ Reports

MBNZ Report	Measurement Month	Publication Month
Report 16	April 2023	June 2023
Report 17	July 2023	September 2023
Report 18	October 2023	January 2024
Report 19	January 2024	April 2024

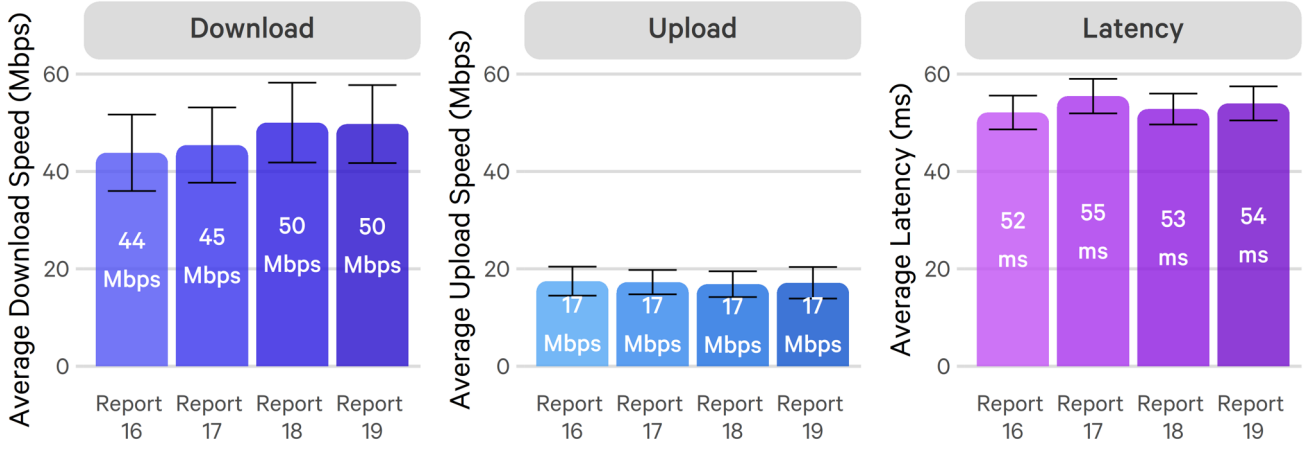
ADSL Performance across Reports



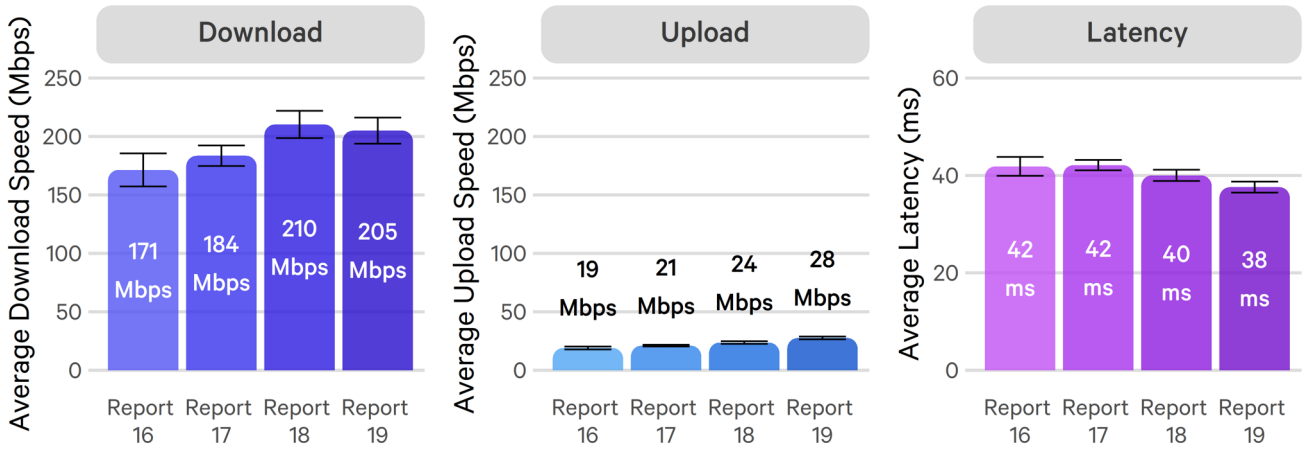
VDSL Performance across Reports



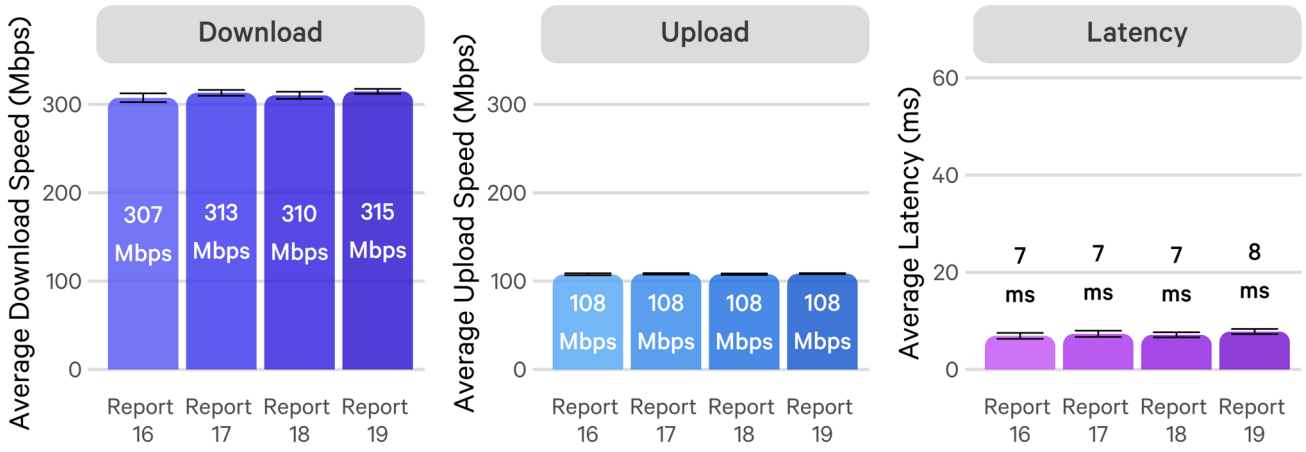
4G Fixed Wireless Performance across Reports



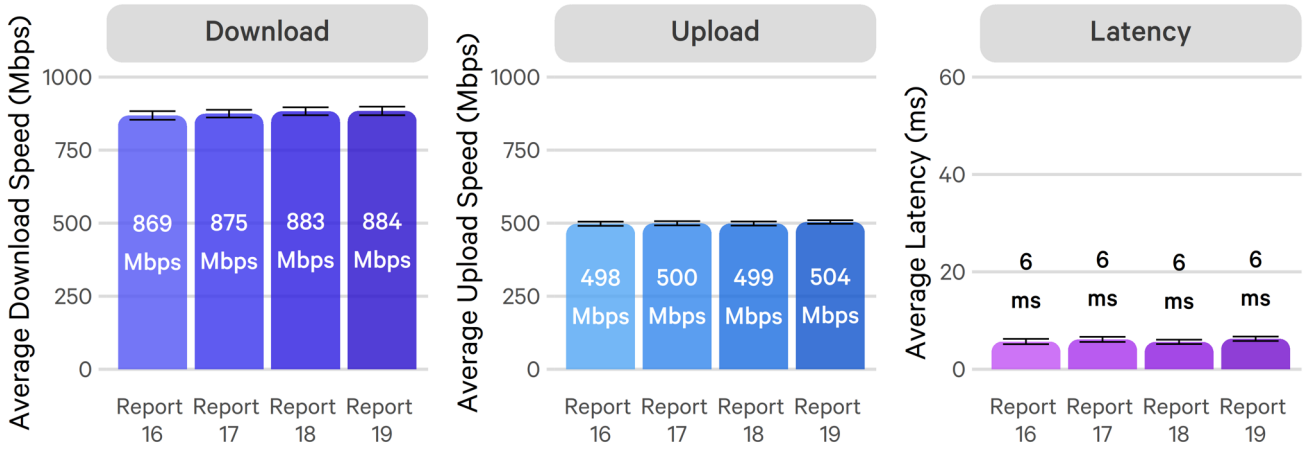
LEO Satellite Performance across Reports



Fibre 300 Performance across Reports



Fibre Max Performance across Reports



How we test

Measuring home broadband across New Zealand

- The SamKnows Whitebox is a purpose-built testing agent that connects to your router.
- It runs regular, automated performance tests to record the quality and performance of your internet connection without interfering with your network.
- The Whitebox does not record any personal information or browsing history.

Join the MBNZ Programme!

We are always on the hunt for more volunteers to help us expand on the technologies reported on in the MBNZ programme. Joining our awesome volunteer network enables us to gather even more data so we can continue shining a light on different technologies, RSPs and regions in New Zealand! Sign up at the following link[1], and if you're already a volunteer, encourage your friends and family to join too!

- Have 24/7 access to your own data.
- View all your data in one place via the SamKnows One platform.
- Create customised charts and save the results that mean the most to you.
- Track changes in your connection over time.

[1] https://www.measuringbroadbandnewzealand.com/sign-up

Our tests

	Test	Definition
	Download	The speed at which data can be transferred from the SamKnows test server to your device, measured in megabits per second (Mbps).
	Upload	The speed at which information is transferred from your device to the SamKnows test server, measured in megabits per second (Mbps).
	Latency	How long it takes a data packet to go from your device to our test server and back to your device, measured in milliseconds (ms). The shorter the latency, the better.
	Latency Under Load	How long it takes a data packet to go from your device to our test server and back to your device while a download/upload test is running, measured in milliseconds (ms). The shorter the latency, the better.
	Jitter	The variation in the delay of received packets, measured in milliseconds (ms). Essentially it is a measure of the stability of latency.
	Packet Loss	Packet loss counts packets that are sent over a network and do not make it to their destination, measured as a percentage of packets lost out of all packets sent.
	Disconnection	A disconnection means that two or more latency measurement packets in a row were lost. Measured as the median of household hourly rates.
	Video Conferencing	Measures round-trip latency and reachability of a selection of video conferencing services.
	Social Media	Measures round-trip latency and reachability of a selection of major social media services.
	Online Gaming	Measures performance for a number of major games and supporting services, such as game distribution platforms.
	Video Streaming	Measures the highest bitrate, and therefore quality level, you can reliably stream from real content servers.
	Webpage Loading Time	The time it takes for a specific webpage to fully load. This is a combination test that includes download, latency and DNS in one test that accurately mimics real-world usage.
	CDN Measurements	Measures download performance for the same (or very similar) object from a variety of popular Content Delivery Networks over HTTP.
	Voice over IP	Measures the suitability of a broadband connection for VoIP calls.

Glossary

Term	Definition
ADSL	Asymmetric digital subscriber line. A broadband connection that uses existing telephone lines to send data.
Advertised speed	The speed at which broadband services are typically advertised or marketed, usually described in Mbps (megabits per second). On some networks like ADSL or Fixed Wireless, these are not given as a general maximum but vary from line to line as they do not transmit data without depreciation across distance.
Broadband	A network service or connection which is defined as “always on”, as opposed to historical dial-up internet.
Broadband speed	The speed at which data is transmitted over a broadband connection, usually measured in megabits per second (Mbps).
Disconnection	A disconnection means that two or more latency measurement packets in a row were lost, resulting in stuttering broadband performance.
Download speed	The speed that data travels from our test server to your router. Measured in megabits per second (Mbps); higher is better.
HFC	Hybrid Fibre-Coaxial. A broadband connection that uses coaxial cables to send data.
Fibre	A broadband connection that uses Fibre-Optic cables to send data to and from a property directly. Sometimes referred to as FTTH (Fibre-to-the-home) or FTTP (Fibre-to-the-premises).
Fixed Wireless	A broadband connection that uses radio waves to provide internet access to a premises.
Latency	The time it takes for a data packet to travel from your router to our test server and back. Measured in milliseconds (ms); lower is better.
Latency under load	The time it takes for a data packet to travel from your router to our test server and back while a download/upload speed test is running. Measured in milliseconds (ms); lower is better.
LEO Satellite	Low Earth Orbit Satellite. A broadband connection that is transmitted wirelessly using a satellite and ground based satellite dish.
Mbps	Megabits per second. A unit measuring broadband speed. Mbps is the equivalent of 1,000 kilobits per second.
Packet loss	The percentage of packets that were lost somewhere between your router and our test server. Measured as a percentage of all packets sent; lower is better.
Peak hours	The time of day when people are typically using their internet connection, defined in New Zealand as between 7pm and 11pm.
RSP	Retail Service Provider. A company that provides consumers with access to the internet.
Upload speed	The speed that data travels from your router to our test server. Measured in Mbps (megabits per second); higher is better.
VDSL	Very high speed digital subscriber line. A broadband connection that allows higher speeds than ADSL technologies.

Summary Tables

Table 2: All RSPs Included in MBNZ

All RSPs Included in MBNZ
2degrees, Stuff Fibre, Orcon & Slingshot
Spark (Including Skinny & Bigpipe)
One New Zealand (Including Farmside)
Sky New Zealand
Starlink
Mercury
Voyager
Contact Energy
Netspeed
Inspire Net
WIZwireless
Lightwire
UniFone

Table 3: Download, Upload and Latency Performance by Plan

Plan	SFA Area	Peak or Off-Peak	Number of Units	Average Download (Mbps)	Average Upload (Mbps)	Average Latency (ms)
ADSL	All Areas	24/7	41	10 Mbps	1 Mbps	25 ms
		Peak	41	10 Mbps	1 Mbps	26 ms
	Non-Fibre Areas	24/7	37	9 Mbps	1 Mbps	25 ms
		Peak	37	9 Mbps	1 Mbps	27 ms
VDSL	All Areas	24/7	38	42 Mbps	11 Mbps	18 ms
		Peak	38	42 Mbps	11 Mbps	18 ms
	Non-Fibre Areas	*24/7*	*32*	*41 Mbps*	*11 Mbps*	*18 ms*
		Peak	*32*	*41 Mbps*	*11 Mbps*	*18 ms*
LEO Satellite	All Areas	24/7	85	205 Mbps	28 Mbps	37 ms
		Peak	84	186 Mbps	28 Mbps	37 ms

Plan	SFA Area	Peak or Off-Peak	Number of Units	Average Download (Mbps)	Average Upload (Mbps)	Average Latency (ms)
	Non-Fibre Areas	24/7	80	205 Mbps	28 Mbps	38 ms
		Peak	80	186 Mbps	28 Mbps	38 ms
4G Fixed Wireless	All Areas	24/7	77	50 Mbps	17 Mbps	54 ms
		Peak	77	35 Mbps	16 Mbps	55 ms
	Fibre Areas	*24/7*	*23*	*58 Mbps*	*23 Mbps*	*51 ms*
		Peak	*23*	*40 Mbps*	*22 Mbps*	*52 ms*
	Non-Fibre Areas	24/7	54	46 Mbps	15 Mbps	55 ms
		Peak	54	32 Mbps	14 Mbps	56 ms
Fibre 300	Fibre Areas	24/7	334	315 Mbps	108 Mbps	8 ms
		Peak	334	314 Mbps	108 Mbps	8 ms
Fibre Max		24/7	364	884 Mbps	504 Mbps	6 ms
		Peak	364	881 Mbps	503 Mbps	6 ms
HFC		*24/7*	*23*	*903 Mbps*	*102 Mbps*	*15 ms*
		Peak	*23*	*901 Mbps*	*103 Mbps*	*15 ms*
Fibre 50		*24/7*	*17*	*52 Mbps*		*8 ms*
		Peak	*17*	*52 Mbps*		*8 ms*
5G Fixed Wireless	All Areas		*12*			
WISP Fixed Wireless			*5*			

Table 4: Fibre 300 and Fibre Max Download, Upload and Latency Summary by RSP

Plan	RSP	Peak or Off-Peak	Number of Units	Average Download (Mbps)	Average Upload (Mbps)	Average Latency (ms)
Fibre 300	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	24/7	110	314 Mbps	107 Mbps	9 ms
		Peak	110	312 Mbps	107 Mbps	9 ms
	One New Zealand	24/7	57	324 Mbps	112 Mbps	7 ms
		Peak	57	323 Mbps	112 Mbps	7 ms
	Sky New Zealand	24/7	47	314 Mbps	108 Mbps	7 ms
		Peak	47	314 Mbps	108 Mbps	7 ms
	Spark	24/7	62	317 Mbps	109 Mbps	8 ms
		Peak	62	316 Mbps	109 Mbps	8 ms
Fibre Max	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	24/7	179	879 Mbps	507 Mbps	6 ms
		Peak	179	876 Mbps	507 Mbps	6 ms
	One New Zealand	24/7	40	908 Mbps	477 Mbps	6 ms
		Peak	40	903 Mbps	477 Mbps	6 ms
	Sky New Zealand	24/7	48	906 Mbps	520 Mbps	7 ms
		Peak	48	904 Mbps	520 Mbps	7 ms
	Spark	24/7	49	905 Mbps	516 Mbps	5 ms
		Peak	49	903 Mbps	517 Mbps	5 ms

Table 5: Downlink Latency to Popular Social Media Platforms by RSP, Fibre Plans Only

Social Media Platform	Media Type	RSP	Number of Units	Average Latency
Instagram App	Image	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	8 ms
		Spark	124	5 ms
		One New Zealand	113	6 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	8 ms
Instagram Messenger	Text	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	22 ms
		Spark	124	80 ms
		One New Zealand	113	12 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	14 ms
	Image	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	8 ms
		Spark	124	5 ms
		One New Zealand	113	6 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	8 ms
Facebook App	Text	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	24 ms
		Spark	124	81 ms
		One New Zealand	113	13 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	14 ms
	Image	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	8 ms
		Spark	124	5 ms
		One New Zealand	113	6 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	8 ms
Facebook Messenger	Text	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	21 ms
		Spark	124	78 ms
		One New Zealand	113	12 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	14 ms
	Image	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	8 ms
		Spark	124	5 ms
		One New Zealand	113	6 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	8 ms

Social Media Platform	Media Type	RSP	Number of Units	Average Latency
Snapchat	Text	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	304	131 ms
		Spark	124	132 ms
		One New Zealand	113	132 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	133 ms
	Image	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	304	531 ms
		Spark	124	545 ms
		One New Zealand	113	521 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	534 ms
Whatsapp	Text	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	24 ms
		Spark	124	81 ms
		One New Zealand	113	12 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	14 ms
	Image	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	24 ms
		Spark	124	82 ms
		One New Zealand	113	13 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	14 ms
X (formally Twitter)	Text	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	35 ms
		Spark	124	35 ms
		One New Zealand	113	35 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	38 ms
	Image	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	13 ms
		Spark	124	30 ms
		One New Zealand	113	11 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	14 ms

Table 6: Latency to Various Online Gaming Servers by RSP, Fibre plans only

Game	RSP	Number of Units	Average Latency
Among Us	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	305	160 ms
	Spark	124	156 ms
	One New Zealand	112	160 ms
	Sky New Zealand	95	161 ms
Apex Legends	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	274	36 ms
	Spark	113	36 ms
	Sky New Zealand	94	37 ms
	One New Zealand	82	35 ms
Diablo III	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	294	35 ms
	Spark	118	40 ms
	One New Zealand	94	36 ms
	Sky New Zealand	94	37 ms
Dota 2	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	280	36 ms
	Spark	115	36 ms
	One New Zealand	99	35 ms
	Sky New Zealand	95	37 ms
FIFA	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	285	38 ms
	Spark	120	40 ms
	One New Zealand	104	36 ms
	Sky New Zealand	94	39 ms
Fortnite	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	289	45 ms
	Spark	123	48 ms
	One New Zealand	104	42 ms
	Sky New Zealand	94	45 ms
Hearthstone	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	305	148 ms
	Spark	123	145 ms
	One New Zealand	110	164 ms
	Sky New Zealand	94	150 ms
Heroes of the Storm	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	148 ms

Game	RSP	Number of Units	Average Latency
	Spark	124	145 ms
	One New Zealand	112	164 ms
	Sky New Zealand	95	150 ms
Overwatch	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	35 ms
	Spark	124	36 ms
	One New Zealand	112	36 ms
	Sky New Zealand	95	37 ms
PUBG	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	297	38 ms
	Spark	123	41 ms
	One New Zealand	96	37 ms
	Sky New Zealand	94	40 ms
Rainbow Six Siege	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	303	38 ms
	Spark	124	40 ms
	One New Zealand	112	36 ms
	Sky New Zealand	95	39 ms
Rocket League	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	35 ms
	Spark	124	35 ms
	One New Zealand	112	34 ms
	Sky New Zealand	95	36 ms
Valorant	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	38 ms
	Spark	124	40 ms
	One New Zealand	112	36 ms
	Sky New Zealand	95	39 ms
World of Warcraft	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	306	35 ms
	Spark	124	39 ms
	One New Zealand	112	36 ms
	Sky New Zealand	95	37 ms

Table 7: Latency to Various Video Conferencing Services by RSP, Fibre Plans Only

Video Conferencing Service	Free or Paid	RSP	Number of Units	Average Latency
GoToMeeting	Free	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	304	163 ms
		Spark	124	166 ms
		One New Zealand	113	172 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	165 ms
	Paid	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	302	183 ms
		Spark	124	193 ms
		One New Zealand	113	198 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	185 ms
Google Meet	Free	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	305	36 ms
		Spark	124	36 ms
		One New Zealand	113	44 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	37 ms
	Paid	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	305	36 ms
		Spark	124	36 ms
		One New Zealand	113	44 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	37 ms
Microsoft Teams	Free	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	305	45 ms
		Spark	124	45 ms
		One New Zealand	113	42 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	46 ms
	Paid	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	305	45 ms
		Spark	124	45 ms
		One New Zealand	113	42 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	46 ms
Skype	Free	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	305	50 ms
		Spark	124	50 ms
		One New Zealand	113	47 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	50 ms

Video Conferencing Service	Free or Paid	RSP	Number of Units	Average Latency
Zoom		2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	298	197 ms
		Spark	124	201 ms
		One New Zealand	113	197 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	199 ms
	Paid	2degrees, Orcon & Slingshot	297	56 ms
		Spark	124	53 ms
		One New Zealand	113	51 ms
		Sky New Zealand	95	58 ms