



CHOICE Broadband Performance Measuring Program FAQs

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1. What is the CHOICE Broadband Performance Measuring Program?

CHOICE has partnered with Honesty Box and Enex TestLab for a 3 year Program that involves the collection and publication of monthly broadband performance results using the Honesty Box. The Honesty Box is connected to your home router / modem for internet performance measurement.

2. What exactly will be measured?

The following data will be measured by the Honesty Box and reported on every month throughout the life of the Program:

- Average download speed (peak/off-peak).
- Average upload speed (peak/off-peak).
- Average ping (connection) times (peak/off-peak).

Other data may also be shared in the future, including:

- YouTube.
- Five popular public websites.
- HTTP (single and multi-thread).
- FTP.
- UDP.

3. Why is 'ping' time recorded?

The ping helps to record the service availability. It is a very low bandwidth test which is essentially a "wave" hello from the internet to your router / modem (and the Honesty Box) to ensure that your service is active. The 'ping' measures the responsiveness of the connection. A faster response time is critical for real-time applications such as internet voice calls (VoIP) and online gaming.

4. Is the CHOICE program the same as the ACCC program?

No, it is completely separate. The ACCC (Australian Competition and Consumer Commission) has funding for its own broadband performance measurement program.

5. Where can I find out more?

Go to www.choice.com.au/broadband to find out more about the Program. If you would like to participate (or know someone else who does), follow the link on that page to register your interest.

Once you've registered your interest, we then go through a process of assessing applications for best fit. We are adding participants around the country based on the following parameters:

- Suburb,
- Post code,
- ISP,
- NBN connection type,
- Speed tier.
- Monthly data allowance.

When we've completed the assessment process, we will confirm with you via email if you qualify to participate in the Program or not. If not, we'll let you know how you can stay informed of the results as they come out.

6. How long does the Program run for?

The CHOICE Broadband Performance Measuring Program will run for a total of 3 years. Every month for 36 months, the Honesty Box team will gather data about your broadband performance and that data will then be aggregated to create monthly results.

7. Who do I contact?

Honesty Box are responsible for the distribution of the Honesty Box device to you, as well as managing queries, maintenance and technical issues for the life of the Program.

If you need help with registering for the Program, you can email Honesty Box on helpdesk@honestybox.com.au or you can [register to participate here](#).



All communications related to the Program itself should be directed to the Honesty Box Team as follows:

K.S. Vijay
Customer Engagement Team
Email: helpdesk@honestybox.com.au
Phone: 1300 012 472

8. Who are Honesty Box and Enex TestLab?

eMetric Pty Ltd trading as © Honesty Box™ was founded from within the RMIT University. Created from scratch with rigour applied from university professors and scientific methods meant eMetric was never created as a brand or even a profit making venture but to accurately provide a solution to societal problem. Subsequently eMetric began picking up contracts from the likes of NBN and the brand grew beyond university boundaries. Today we have relationships directly with consumers and make data available to them and to RSPs, the NBN and infrastructure decision makers. Enex TestLab was founded and is headquartered in Australia and has a 28-year history and a university heritage. Enex is ISO 9001 quality certified and has an ISO 17025 accredited test facility. The majority of Enex clients are Government Departments and Agencies.

9. What is the Honesty Box?

Since 2004, Enex has been utilising the Honesty Box to independently test, measure and report privately on national broadband performance across the majority of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to various stakeholder programs, primarily Government. Enex initially developed the Honesty Box (formerly eMetric Smart Meter) product set in response to Government demand to provide a measurement and compliance service for Government infrastructure funding to ISPs.

Enex clients in Australia have included:

- The Department of Communications,
- ZDNet/CBSi,
- Australian Communications and Media Authority,
- Australian Government Solicitor,
- Australian Competition & Consumer Commission,
- The Department of Health and Ageing.

10. What hardware do I need to participate, and how do I set the Honesty Box up?

You need a router / modem and the Honesty Box to participate.

To operate, the Honesty Box also requires one spare network port on your router / modem and a spare power point nearby (that can take the Honesty Box plug pack).

To set your Honesty Box up, follow these steps:

1. Unpack your Honesty Box from the box and make sure that you have:
 - a. 1 x Honesty Box.
 - b. 1 x Power pack.
 - c. 1 x Ethernet Cable.
2. Plug one end of the power pack into a power point and the other end into your Honesty Box.
3. Plug one end of the Ethernet Cable into the back of your Honesty Box and the other end into a spare network port on the back of the router / modem (usually provided by your broadband service provider) that provides the internet connectivity to your premises.
4. Turn your Honesty Box on at the power point.
5. Turn your router / modem on at the power point.
6. Email helpdesk@honestybox.com.au quoting your Honesty Box ID number to confirm that your setup is complete.

11. How big is the Program?

Data will be gathered from Honesty Boxes placed in consumer premises across Australia, comprising an initial 1,500 participants in 1,500 different premises. This first phase of 1,500 participants will be selected from those connected to the internet across nominated technologies and nominated ISPs.

A second phase that adds an additional 1,500 participants in premises connected to a mixture of technologies will be added at a later stage. In the first phase, the Program will collect data on a mix of fixed line, wireless and satellite NBN connections. The second phase may include existing internet technologies such as ADSL and cable for a comparison with higher speed technologies.

12. What will CHOICE do with the data?

CHOICE will publish a monthly table of results with the intention being to distribute these results to participants and the public for the duration of the 36-month testing phase of the Program. CHOICE will also publish articles related to the data. The data will be provided and published in aggregate (meaning that an individual participant's results WILL NOT be identified in any published data) to show average performance for a range of ISPs.

13. When will you be publishing the results?

The first set of results were published in February 2018 and then updated monthly. You can access the monthly results [leaderboard here](#).

14. Why can't I see my ISP / speed tier on the published results?

Regarding the monthly results leaderboard - there is an explanation as to why some providers / connection technologies etc don't show up in the results, and that information can be [found here](#).

Essentially, we do need a minimum number of participants for each provider / service technology type in order to be able to provide statistically accurate (and thus fair) results. If your provider / service type doesn't show up, it is because we haven't hit that minimum number in one or both instances.

We're encouraging participants to get friends, neighbours and family on board in an effort to meet these minimums. Here's a link to the form where people can register to participate. We need you and your community to get on board and stay on board so that we can make more information about more providers, technologies and speed tiers available in future. Please share it widely :)

<https://www.honestybox.com.au/getfree>

15. Can I see the results of my own broadband service?

Not at this time. The results of the service testing for all contributing participants are aggregated and published monthly providing you with an indication of the average internet service performance for your provider on that speed tier. If your individual results differ significantly from the average, then one of the Honesty Box Team may contact you to work with you to determine the reason for the variation.

A number of participants have asked about access to individual results. We're working towards seeing if we can make this possible, so if this interests you, [sign up here](#). We may contact you to get feedback about what you're after and how we can best present results in a way that has value to you.

16. Can you spy on my internet use?

No, the Honesty Boxes are specifically designed to simulate a computer connected to the internet, but they have no actual network traffic pass through or bridging network traffic ports. Nor do they have any local network traffic measurement capability. That means that your privacy is maintained throughout the life of the Program.

17. How will my personal details be protected?

The information entered into your Voice Your Choice registration is protected by the platform's security system. Any personal details provided to Honesty Box are encrypted with strict access controls for authorised staff, and are stored offline in a secure location, which is subject to regular security auditing.

18. Is the Honesty Box reliable?

Honesty Boxes rarely fail. Each meter is thoroughly tested before deployment, and these Honesty Boxes have been utilised across Australia since 2011. However, if one does go offline, a member of the Honesty Box Team will contact you and work with you to get it back online. Should it be faulty, they will arrange for a replacement to be sent to you and the faulty unit to be returned postage paid.

The Honesty Boxes and power supplies pass, and are certified to all applicable standards required for use in Australia. If lost or stolen, please contact Honesty and a replacement will be provided.

19. How much electricity will it use?

The Honesty Boxes are very low voltage, using a plug-pack power supply. The majority of the time they are idle, and they are solid state electronics with no mechanical components such as fans or hard drives.

This means that the Honesty Boxes use minimal electricity.

20. Will it slow down my internet or will it affect my Internet responsiveness?

Each test is scheduled to run periodically, for a very short time. Depending on the speed of your internet connection, this is typically less than two minutes. During that time, when the test is being executed, it will only affect the internet at your home in the same way any another user performing a download/upload task would. It will not pause your internet, or slow it down in general.

21. Do I need to keep my router / modem turned on?

Yes. Your router / modem needs to be active (turned on) and the Honesty Box plugged into it and powered on to enable the measurement to take place. If either Honesty Box is switched off, then the testing cannot be conducted. If you switch the internet off frequently, such as every night, or when not in use, then this would not be suitable for the Program. If it is switched off for holidays then this is okay, as long as you notify Honesty Box about the internet being switched off.

To notify the Honesty Box Team about a holiday absence, please contact:

K.S. Vijay
Customer Engagement Team
Email: helpdesk@honestybox.com.au
Phone: 1300 012 472

If a number of tests are missed, the Honesty Box Team will contact you directly to determine if there is a problem with the internet service or if the Honesty Box has been disconnected or powered-off for some reason.

22. How much of my data allowance will it use?

Each test is scheduled to run using the smallest amount of data required to receive an accurate measurement of your internet performance – this averages approximately 10% of your monthly data allowance. We are aware of Internet service technologies with restricted data limits and we ensure that tests scheduled at such premises are optimised with this in mind to use the smallest amount of data possible.

23. What information do you need?

As part of your registration for the CHOICE Broadband Performance Measuring Program Registration process, you will be asked to provide the following information:

- Name,
- Address,
- Phone number,
- Email address,
- ISP eg: Telstra,
- Connection technology eg: NBN (FttP), NBN (FttN), NBN (FttB), NBN (HFC), NBN (Fixed Wireless), NBN (Satellite),
- Speed tier (eg: 12/1, 25/5, 50/20, 100/40),
- Monthly data allowance (note: you must have more than 100GB to participate).

24. Common questions about setting up the Honesty Box

Q. How do I know if my Honesty Box is working when I've set it up?

A. If you have set your Honesty Box up following the steps outlined under point number 10, and your Smart Meter is turned on and plugged into your router / modem (which is also turned on), you can assume that your Honesty Box is working.

When we run tests on your broadband performance, we can tell if your Honesty Box is working or not. If it is NOT working, we will contact you to let you know.

Don't forget that both your Smart Meter AND your router / modem need to be plugged in and turned on at ALL TIMES.

Q: Why do I have to email helpdesk@honestybox.com.au when I've finished setting up my Honesty Box?

A: Your email to us lets us know that you have gone through the process of setting up your Honesty Box according to the instructions. We know that your Honesty Box is meant to be live and able to send data about your broadband performance. This enables us to test your Honesty Box and make sure that it is working properly. If there are any issues, we will contact you and let you know.

Q: Why do I need to keep my router / modem and my Honesty Box turned on at all times?

A: We will be collecting data at all different times of day and we need both your Honesty Boxes to be on in order to measure your internet performance in this manner. If either of your Honesty Boxes are switched off, we won't be able to gather data and measure your broadband performance accurately and easily.

Q: What if a change happens in the account information I provided at time of registration?

A: The account information you provided information will be used in classification of tests and report generation. Therefore, to keep the test results consistent, it is necessary to inform the Honesty Box Team in case of a change in any of the information below:

- Address,
- Phone number,
- Email address,
- ISP eg: Telstra,
- Connection technology eg: NBN (FttP), NBN (FttN), NBN (FttB), NBN (HFC), NBN (Fixed Wireless), NBN (Satellite),
- Speed tier (eg: 12/1, 25/5, 50/20, 100/40),
- Monthly data allowance (note: you must have more than 100GB to participate).

Q: What happens if my Honesty Box isn't working (not powering on)?

A: We recommend these troubleshooting steps:

1. Unplug all the cables from your Honesty Box.
2. Re-plug the power adapter, the Honesty Box should be powered on and the Honesty Box lights should now appear red.
3. Restart the modem/router by unplugging the power cable from the modem/router, wait 10 seconds and plug the power cable back in.
4. Re-plug the blue cable (ethernet/data cable) into both the Honesty Box and to the modem/router's free LAN port. You should hear a click sound once you connect each end of the cable.



5. Ensure that the LAN port being used with the Honesty Box (the one that you have the blue ethernet cable plugged into) works with a different Honesty Box (for example, a desktop computer or laptop).
6. Try a different ethernet/data cable and see if this makes a difference.