Committee Presents its First NBN Rollout Report

The Joint Committee on the National Broadband Network today presented its First Report on the Six Monthly Review of the Rollout of the National Broadband Network (NBN).

The committee considered various issues arising from the rollout of the NBN broadly including the Definitive Binding Agreement between NBN Co and Telstra and competition issues arising from the establishment, operation and pricing of the NBN. The committee's First Report highlights issues pertaining to how the rollout may impact in terms of access, service delivery, and economic development on regional and remote Australians with a focus on Broken Hill and the surrounding region.

The committee made five recommendations which include that:

- The Government and the NBN Co provide the committee with NBN rollout progress reports every six months, no later than three months before the committee is due to report to the Parliament.

- Government agencies take preparatory measures for receiving and working with the NBN so that there is a streamlined transition for Government service delivery with the introduction of the NBN.

- The NBN Co publish the impact on costs and timing of the rollout of the National Broadband Network, taking into consideration any time delays from reaching a Binding Definitive Agreement between NBN Co and Telstra and NBN Co and Optus including the time taken for the decision to increase the Points of Interconnect (POIs) from 14 to 121.

- The Government publish a detailed statement outlining the productivity, jobs and competitive benefits of impact of the rollout of the NBN on competition at the wholesale and retail levels including the impact of the Australian Competition and Consumer ruling to increase the number of POIs.

- The Government publish the timeframes for the rollout of the NBN for regional and remote areas and investigate the impact of the transition from current technology to the NBN for satellite technology, with the aim of negating any potential reduction in service if applicable.

Committee Chair, Rob Oakeshott said: "Government can do a lot of work on getting itself NBN ready in a number of policy areas such as content and copyright, privacy and national security, tax administration and collection, Government 2.0 strategy, and the opportunity for timely and relevant data collection recommended repeatedly by the COAG reform council"

"We are also looking for increased evidence of the 7 per cent regional and rural communities being better engaged on this project. This is an inclusive not exclusive exercise, and no one should be left behind."

"Australia's need for speed in this wholesale platform is a big part of the new economy Australia is building, and a big part of the answer to the productivity challenges before us. As a consequence, before we report again in November, the committee expects this project to be well advanced," Mr Oakeshott said.

Copies of the report are available at:
www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jcnbn/report.htm

For media comment: contact the Chair's Office on 0429 787 320.

Further information is available: by contacting the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 2322 via email jcnbn@aph.gov.au or by visiting the committee's webpage at: www.aph.gov.au/jcnbn