



Administrative Officer
House Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications
House of Representatives
PO Box 6021,
Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600.

To the **Australian Parliament House Standing Committee on
Infrastructure and Communications**

Submission to the **Inquiry into the role and potential of the *National Broadband Network***

Summary

This submission addresses two terms of reference: (a) the delivery of government services and programs and (c) improving the educational resources and training available to teachers and parents. One major NBN deliverable can be the creation of a high performance/high speed national education network by government services. The education sector can build capacity for e-learning and e-earning far beyond just a training strategy for teachers and parents.

The delivery of government services and programs

New media literacy, everyday ICT competency and the capacity for e-learning are critical skill sets for family well-being in Australian society. Therefore, the role that the national government plays in delivering a national digital strategy for services and programs is critical for e-education – online teaching and lifelong e-learning. High speed bandwidth services bringing with it the wireless saturation, cloud computing and social media and networking through roaming and mobile devices is as important to domestic/residential use, community education and health as it is to small-medium business enterprises and high performance organizations.

The NBN must address more explicitly the benefits of the creation of a high performance/high speed national education network by government. It is imperative to address the needs of schools to meet the Digital Education Revolution (DER) national push to 1:1 computing environments, secondary education and digital citizenship, and a global standard of national curriculum for economic prosperity and productivity.

A national network linking schools, TAFE and universities was a national strategy since the mid 90's concern for "education and technology convergence."* A truly National Research



and Education Network (NREN) across all education systems and sectors deserves both federal and state support to be the enabler of an innovative digital economy. The "on-net network" and the best of the Australian Academic and Research Network (AARNet3's) unmetered partners linking schools TAFE, universities and cultural institutions to other schools and cultural or scientific centres internationally is an example. The affordances of the high performance network and ISP services have been utilized by The Hutchins School for approximately 22 months. The AARNet model of membership subscriptions with infrastructure providers producing a national research and education network infrastructure across Australia is a model capable of replication by the NBN.

Improving the educational resources and training available to teachers and parents

Innovation funding is required to demonstrate proof of high-value educational and networked learning that uses high bandwidth, such as the use of virtual worlds, e-folios and the potential of the virtual campus, in post compulsory, polytechnic and community education levels.

1. Building capacity of schools to take advantage of high speed broadband can include:

- Briefings and workshops for Principals and IT Network Managers on infrastructure readiness, such as capacity of routers, effectiveness of internet filtering solutions. Seminars for ICT Facilitators and Managers on adding value and potential for improving teacher professional learning and student achievement– for example, collaboration networks for desktop and video conferencing opportunities for teachers and students.
- Derek Wenmouth from NZ Dept of Education is the author of <http://karen.net.nz/assets/Uploads/Publications/NENLearning-Challenge-Report.pdf> and has a very readable blog at <http://blog.core-ed.org/derek/>
- Provide a national collaborative schools network – NCSN eg <http://karen.net.nz/news/showtag/Schools>
- Fund a Co-ordinator for government and non-government schools to collaborate across sectors and systems and to work with the network solution providers eg. NZ Schools Liaison Specialist

2. Using the education sector as a vehicle to improve take-up and build the awareness in the home of the potential of broadband as well as help build the digital literacies needed to take advantage of it.

- Digital literacy courses in infrastructure options and emerging technologies
- New courses in post compulsory, adult and community education developed which cover converging technologies and areas such as creative business opportunities, consumer management and intellectual property.



- an e-learning and e-earning set of strategies delivered via television

*In 1996 the Tinkler Consultancy addressed 'access and equity' and the disadvantaged 'information poor' group in society with the rapid take-up of the information superhighway.

Tinkler, Don E. & Mitchell, John. & Lepani, Barbara. & Employment and Skills Formation Council (Australia) & Australia. National Board of Employment, Education and Training. 1996, *Education and technology convergence : a survey of technological infrastructure in education and the professional development and support of educators and trainers in information and communication technologies / Don Tinkler, Barbara Lepani, John Mitchell* Australian Govt. Pub. Service, Canberra :

Additional resource: Stack, S., Stack, R & Abell, J (2010) *Wicked NBN* Available at <http://www.authorstream.com/Presentation/regor2012-646409-wicked-nbn-services-in-education/>

Yours faithfully

Dr Jill Abell
BA, GradDipLib, TTC, MEdStuds, EdD, AALIA, MACE, MACEL
Director of Information Services (IT, Libraries & Archives)
The Hutchins School, 71 Nelson Rd., Sandy Bay
HOBART, TAS 7005
Ph