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TRAINING AND YOUTH AFFAIRS**

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This is to advise that the transcript I received on 19 August 1999 is representative of the views I expressed at the briefing.

I also undertook to provide information to committee members about the Community Access Pilot Projects. A brief description is attached. Should committee members require further information, please contact Ms Jan Gough-Watson, Director Online Education and Training Section on 6240 9404.

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Community access pilot project

In December 1997, the Prime Minister announced in an industry policy statement *Investing for Growth*, new information technology initiatives. One of the measures included a community access pilot in rural and socio-economically disadvantaged areas to ensure that all members of the educational community had access to, and understanding of the uses of technology in education. The Education Network Australia (EdNA) Schools Advisory Group managed the initiative across Australia with the assistance of State and Territory Government and non-government committees. Each State and Territory committee selected a school or cluster of schools to provide information technology equipment and specialist assistance outside school hours.

The Commonwealth supported the community access initiative through DETYA's Framework for Open Learning Programme (FOLP). The initiative has been funded a total of \$640,000 over two financial years ending 1998/99, with a few individual projects continuing till the end of 1999. The initiative included an external evaluation which reported on a number of successful alternative models of delivery.

The objectives of the pilots are to:

- Make information technology equipment and specialist assistance available outside school hours, to ensure that groups who would otherwise be disadvantaged in their understanding of information technologies are given opportunities to familiarise themselves with them;
- Encourage the use of the internet, including EdNA Online, in the wider education community to support lifelong learning;
- Strengthen the role of schools as learning centres for their communities.

The target groups include parents, students and the community.

The projects in each State/Territory to date are as follows.

WA: The Esperance Cluster schools (5 schools), government and non-government schools, in a remote remote area

NT: 30 individual schools including Alice Springs School of the Air. A mixture of metropolitan, non metropolitan and remote schools

SA: 2 areas. Southern Yorke cluster run by the Catholic sector in a remote area Anangu schools in the Ernabella region, remote area

Qld: Charters Towers Cluster. 12 government and non-government schools 130kms south west of Townsville, remote area

NSW: At the last report the project was still being set up in the South Sydney area involving schools with a high aboriginal community. Project includes government and non-government schools

Vic: 7 government and non-government schools are participating

TAS: mobile bus going around the north west and west coast, area of high unemployment. Run by Catholic and independent sectors.

For government sector funds enhanced the Meander access Centre which is being conducted under the Tasmanian Community Online Program in a remote area

ACT 12 individual schools and 2 clusters - government and non-government schools included