

**Palmer, Tamara (REPS)**

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**From:** darko reljic  
**Sent:** Saturday, 26 February 2011 3:24 PM  
**To:** Committee, IC (REPS)

**From:** Darko Reljic  
**Sent:** Saturday, 26 February 2011 4:00 PM  
**To:** Committee, IC (REPS)  
**Subject:** NBN Submission

## **Inquiry into the role and potential of the National Broadband Network In Summary**

The Submission provides a concise discussion on the importance of moving beyond a sole focus on speed to consider quality as a major factor when seeking to optimise the *impact on regional economic growth and employment opportunities* derived from the investment in the national broadband network (NBN). The material is extracted from a monograph to be published by the DE Hub (Bowles 2011) and is, in part, based on international research for Innovation and Business Skills Australia that was completed as part of the University of Tasmania's *Digital Economy and Regional Futures* initiative (Bowles & Wilson 2010). While the submission in no way seeks to undermine the significance of the investment by the Australian Government in the NBN, further detail is added to remove the existing hyperbole to re-emphasise the importance of quality of the broadband connection as distinct from a too-narrow focus on high speed.

### **Introduction**

The current debate about the construction of a national broadband network (NBN) in Australia is characterised by more hyperbole than substance over the network's impact on Australia's competitiveness. Considerations have been confined to technical issues relating to ICT infrastructure as a means for Australia to "leap ahead" of other nations racing to seize competitive positions in the ever growing global Digital Economy. In addition, the discussion over construction of an NBN to provide an affordable, high-speed and universally accessible network has occurred in a vacuum that lacks the substance a consideration of quality and user needs would provide.

### **Comparative global quality of the broadband**

According to the *Global Broadband Quality Score Report* for 2009 and 2010, to be competitive with the top 10 ranked nations in the world, Australia would need to not only increase the penetration of broadband, but also have a significant improvement in performance against the three broadband quality score (BQS) benchmarks (averages):

- Downloading speeds over 4.75Mbps
- Uploading speed over 1.3Mbps
- Reduced latency below 170 milliseconds (Vicente et al. 2009: 1)

With nearly 60 per cent of all broadband connections based on Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL) services connecting at an average speed under 1.5Mbps (ABS 2010), Australia lags well behind the OECD average advertised broadband speed for ADLS (any form of Digital Subscriber Line) of over 14Mbps (OECD2009)<sup>1</sup>. With over 20 per cent of other connections being a dial-up or satellite connection at or below 1.2 Mbps (download speed) the high subscription levels in Australia have not achieved average connection speeds comparable with other OECD countries or those with a high BQS.

### **Rural**

Under the NBN everyone will get access to high-speed broadband, including people in regional and rural areas, either over optical fibre or next-generation wireless and satellite services.

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The NBN will give regional and remote Australians better access to the specialist services, information sources and tools typically found in major cities. Families separated by distance can already connect through online videoconferencing facilities and these applications will improve as Australians gain access to high speed broadband.

### **Business**

The increased speed and performance that the NBN offers will enable a new generation of richer, premium applications. Professional service businesses, such as architects, graphic designers and sound engineers, will be able to send larger image and audio files, such as 3D and geo-spatial models, and more people will be able to work remotely.

The NBN will also enable more widespread use of smart technologies in electricity, irrigation, health, transport and small business. As outlined in an Access Economics report in 2009, this could add more than 70 000 jobs to the economy in 2014 alone. The NBN will help increase productivity and enable Australian businesses to compete on a global scale.

my information source

<http://www.nbn.gov.au/content/who-does-nbn-benefit>

[http://www.dbcde.gov.au/broadband/national\\_broadband\\_network](http://www.dbcde.gov.au/broadband/national_broadband_network)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National\\_Broadcasting\\_Network](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Broadcasting_Network)

<http://www.iinet.net.au/nbn/>

<http://nationalbroadbandnetwork.net.au/>

<http://forums.whirlpool.net.au/archive/1629458>

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/02/10/3135037.htm>

[http://www.internode.on.net/residential/fibre\\_to\\_the\\_home/nbn\\_plans/](http://www.internode.on.net/residential/fibre_to_the_home/nbn_plans/)

Regards,

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