

SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE NATIONAL BROADBAND NETWORK

Questions on Notice

Further hearings into the National Broadband Network

Melbourne, 14 April 2010

Armidale Dumaresq Council (NSW)

Mr Stephen Gow, Director Planning and Environment Services (Teleconference))

Mr David Steller, Director, Engineering and Works (Teleconference)

Municipality of Kiama (NSW)

Mr Bryan Whittaker, Engineering Director (Teleconference)

Townsville Council (QLD)

*Mr David Lynch, Executive Manager, Economic Development and Strategic Projects
(Teleconference)*

City of Onkaparinga (SA)

Mr Brian Hales, Group Manager Economic Development (Teleconference)

QoN No.	Hansard Page Reference	Senator	Question	Status
1	Additional Question	Fisher	<u>Selection of sites</u> (a) Did your council apply to have a 'first release' site? <i>Townsville City Council did not “apply” to have a first release site. Our understanding is there was no process for applying. However, when opportunities arose for discussions with relevant and appropriate government representatives, the case for considering Townsville as a first release site was made.</i>	

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2	Additional Question	Fisher	(b) How did you know that an application was appropriate? <i>See (a) above – no application made.</i> (c) In respect of which areas/sites did you apply? <i>See (a) above – no application made</i> (d) When did you apply? <i>See (a) above – no application made</i> (e) How did you learn of your "success"; when? <i>We learnt of our success through the media on the day of the official announcement of first release sites.</i> <u>Logistical arrangements</u> a. How is the NBN being rolled out in your area; over what timeframe? <i>The initial first-release roll-out is anticipated to be undertaken in the period April-December 2010. This will incorporate design, consultation and build elements. Consultation and discussion is occurring between Council and NBN Co designers to ensure Council interests are accounted for.</i> i. Has there been sufficient consultation/collaboration with the local council over the project? <i>Council has received briefings from NBN Co since the announcement of first release sites. No discussion occurred prior to the announcement. NBN Co design teams are discussing options and details for the roll-out with Council staff on a regular basis and are seeking feedback on proposals. At this stage Council has been satisfied with the consultation process, but it is only early in the process and possibly premature to make a definitive assessment.</i>	

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3	Additional Question	Fisher	ii. Who is co-ordinating the roll-out on the ground and co-ordination of services? <i>NBN Co.</i> iii. Is the roll-out via aerial or underground cabling; how is this being decided? <i>It is currently unclear as to whether an aerial or underground solution will be adopted. Given some of the climatic conditions in Townsville, Councils preference would be for an underground approach. As far as it is understood, NBN Co will be making the decision as to the preferred option and this may vary dependant on existing infrastructure availability.</i> iv. Is new fibre being installed or is existing infrastructure being used? <i>Was there existing infrastructure available?</i> <i>It is understood that new fibre will be utilised. Council is not aware of the level of existing fibre within the site.</i> v. Is current regional backhaul sufficient to meet the network's needs? <i>It is unclear whether current regional backhaul is sufficient to meet the networks needs. This determination would require a degree more information and interest than Council currently has, but as a part of the development of the Townsville City Economic Development Strategy, an assessment of demand for telecommunications (including broadband) is envisaged to be undertaken. This is anticipated to be completed by late 2010. It would also seem intuitive that NBN Co would not have selected a first-release site without a consideration of current regional backhaul capacity. Some of the institutions and organisations (such as James Cook University, Australian Institute for Marine Science, Defence Forces, Hospital) within the city have a high demand for backhaul capacity and as such, it is expected this would have been factored in to the decision to have Townsville as an early release location.</i> vi. To what extent are local planning policies affected by the NBN roll-out and what measures have you taken to identify and address these? <i>Local planning policies are not expected to be significantly affected by the NBN roll-out. Ongoing liaison will continue with NBN Co to monitor impact.</i> vii. Is the speed of the roll-out appropriate? viii. When is rollout scheduled to be complete; how do you know this; and is	

3	Additional Question	Fisher	ix. Is the speed of the roll-out appropriate? <i>It is unclear what processes NBN Co undertook to determine which areas should be first release sites and as such, we are unable to determine what planning had already been undertaken prior to Council becoming aware of the roll-out. The speed of the roll-out needs to be maintained in order for NBN to meet its objective of having the network completed in 8 years. However, the speed will have an impact on Council resources, specifically around the area of assessing proposals, liaising on design of the network and managing access to Council owned and/or managed assets. The faster the roll-out, the greater the level of this impact, with Council recovering direct costs.</i> x. When is rollout scheduled to be complete; how do you know this; and is there an agreed time plan for rollout? <i>It is understood the roll-out in the first release site will be completed by December 2010, with evaluation to occur after this. The roll-out plan was provided to Council by NBN Co, with little input from Council into its development.</i> <u>Publicity and information</u> b. To what extent is information about the NBN being communicated to future end-users; by whom, how and when? <i>NBN Co is looking to undertake an open day for residents of the first release site to provide information on the roll-out. Discussions with NBN Co have also suggested that a shop-front in one of the major shopping centres may be of benefit to residents and potential users. As a part of its economic development functions, Council has engaged with the Queensland Government and Townsville Enterprise to establish how businesses can benefit from the roll-out and how this can position Townsville in a broader economic development context.</i>	
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