

PRIME MINISTER
PREMIER OF TASMANIA
MINISTER FOR BROADBAND

TASMANIA FIRST TO RECEIVE SUPERFAST BROADBAND

The Australian Government and the Tasmanian Government today announced that Tasmania will be the launch state for the Commonwealth's new super fast National Broadband Network.

This new National Broadband Network will begin rolling out in Tasmania as early as July 2009, before a full national roll-out in early 2010.

The Tasmanian Government, in conjunction with Aurora Energy, will construct a fibre to the premise network which will deliver speeds of 100 Megabits per second, connecting over 200,000 Tasmanian households and businesses.

The FTTP network will also extend to all hospitals and almost 90 per cent of schools.

The Tasmanian Government will construct a wireless network and the Australian Government's National Broadband Network satellite solution will service the remainder of the state with speeds of 12 Mbps or more.

This announcement means Tasmanians will begin benefiting from broadband speeds up to 100 times faster than currently available within a matter of months.

Tasmania currently has the lowest proportion of households with broadband of any state or territory – 39 per cent compared with the Australian average of 52 per cent.

Tasmanians will also be the first beneficiaries of hundreds of local jobs that will be created during the 5-year life of the project.

This nation building network will be the most significant infrastructure project in Tasmania's history.

It is another example of the Rudd Government investing in nation building infrastructure in order to support local jobs in communities across Tasmania.

The decision to launch the National Broadband Network in Tasmania was based on the advice of the Government's independent Expert Panel.

Given the long standing disadvantages faced by Tasmanians in accessing high speed broadband, the Australian Government happily accepted this advice.

Last year, the Tasmanian Government submitted a proposal under the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to roll out a National Broadband Network. The Tasmanian proposal combined use of fibre to the home and workplace and high speed wireless services.

Although the RFP process has been terminated, the Panel of Experts encouraged further negotiation with the Tasmanian Government.

The Australian Consumer and Competition Commission also noted that the Tasmanian proposal raised no issues from a competition perspective.

As a result of this advice, the Australian and Tasmanian Governments have entered into negotiations with the Tasmanian Government to progress the roll-out of fast broadband as part of the enhanced National Broadband Network.

The Australian Government's commitment to Tasmania is an early demonstration of its plan to support the deployment of new high speed broadband infrastructure nationally.

The rollout of superfast broadband in Tasmania will revolutionise its economy and dramatically improve the lives of all Tasmanians.

DEVONPORT
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