



**Michael Aird, MLC**  
Treasurer

Friday, 9 May 2008

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## McKim Wrong On Basslink

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The Treasurer, Michael Aird, says Greens Deputy leader Nick McKim is wrong on several of his claims relating to the Basslink optic fibre.

Mr Aird said the public document\* Mr McKim referred to was not part of the Government's submission but was information to assist the Australian Government with the design of the National Broadband Network (NBN) Request for Proposals (RFP).

"It was to ensure that modular proposals from individual states would be accepted, as opposed to an exclusive focus on a nationwide network," Mr Aird said.

"This was very important to Tasmania given the unique broadband challenges we face and made no reference to the Cityspring commercialisation as this was not directly relevant to the RFP design process.

"The Government's submission obviously was considered by the Expert Panel, as state-specific proposals are acceptable under the National Broadband Network RFP process.

"The NBN RFP was only launched last month and the Tasmanian Government will be making a formal submission.

"While I am sure Mr McKim has good intentions in trying to raise the broadband issues in Tasmania, he is not aware of the complexity of the commercial negotiations underway.

"I am concerned he is receiving incomplete information and does not realise that some proposals being promoted would result in an uncompetitive broadband outcome for Tasmania.

"It is not as straightforward as simply lighting the Basslink fibre - this will not improve the competitive market in Tasmania, given the commercial intent of the current owners of Basslink.

"The Government understands the frustration of all stakeholders.

"We too are frustrated but negotiations have been complicated and the Government will not accept a second-rate broadband solution for Tasmania.

"I will ensure Mr McKim is briefed next week so he can make informed comments on the issue."

\*[http://www.dbcde.gov.au/communications\\_for\\_business/funding\\_programs\\_\\_and\\_\\_support/national\\_broadband\\_network/submissions](http://www.dbcde.gov.au/communications_for_business/funding_programs__and__support/national_broadband_network/submissions)

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