



David Bartlett, MP
Premier

Monday, 10 November 2008

Tasmania – Connected !

Today's signing of an agreement by Aurora and Basslink to bring nationally-competitive broadband prices to Tasmania was a massive step forward for the state's future economic growth opportunities, Premier David Bartlett said.

Mr Bartlett said the introduction of real competition into the Tasmanian market was a moment in history and the modern equivalent of the commencement of hydro-industrialisation almost a century ago in terms of its ability to drive new investment and development.

He said the agreement to 'light-up' the Basslink optic fibre cable was evidence of the State Government delivering on its plan to improve broadband competition in order to unlock a new wave of economic growth.

"I have consistently said as Premier bringing competitive broadband to Tasmania is of the highest priority. I am very pleased to be able to tick that box and say we have delivered, but this is only the beginning."

"This agreement will begin the process of establishing Tasmania as a place at the cutting edge of telecommunications," Mr Bartlett said.

"High speed telecommunications infrastructure will be the dams, poles and wires of the 21st Century.

"This infrastructure will underpin our economic strength and jobs growth for decades to come.

"The signing of this agreement means we can now take full advantage of the Government-owned \$30 million fibre backbone that we have strategically installed with the gas pipeline."

"Smart industries can have confidence when they set up in Tasmania that their needs can be met by more competitive broadband prices and improved services."

Until now, the Premier said the cost of moving data from Hobart to Melbourne was up to 10 times higher than the cost of moving the same data from Melbourne to Adelaide and was even dearer than some international routes.

"This agreement not only places Tasmania in a good position to aggressively attract interstate and global businesses, it is also very exciting news for existing Tasmanian small businesses and mum and dad broadband users alike."

"The lighting up of the cable will provide competition in a market that has until now been dominated by Telstra," he said.

“Today’s announcement will, I am sure, result in Telstra rising to the challenge of competition – and that has to be good for Tasmanian consumers.

“It will open opportunities for more internet service providers to enter the Tasmanian market, giving more choice and cheaper prices to Tasmanian businesses and Tasmanian consumers.

“It means that information-intensive businesses like Betfair, like call centres, data centres, financial processing centres, multimedia content suppliers and so on – can make Tasmania their first-choice location.

“And all of that adds up to more clever jobs for Tasmanians.”

FAST FACTS

The Government is today delivering on its commitment for more competitive broadband with an agreement reached to commercialise the Basslink fibre optic cable.

This agreement will result in increased competition and significantly lower broadband prices.

This is a critical initiative for Tasmania’s economic future and consistent with the Government’s clever, kind and connected vision.

High speed broadband infrastructure will be the dams, poles and wires of the future and will underpin our economic strength and jobs growth for decades to come.

Further information: Tasmanian Government Communications Unit
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