

Message from the Minister, Senator the Hon Stephen Conroy

I know that Edgar Adams and his editorial team have long understood how important reliable, high speed broadband is to help businesses in your region grow and prosper. Edgar and local Broadband Champion Dave Abrahams have been advancing the compelling case for broadband for many years now, and I acknowledge their significant contribution.

With the rollout on the Central Coast about to begin, evidence of the immense benefits of the NBN, both to our national economy and to your local communities, continues to grow.

Cloud computing, for example, allows businesses to increase their IT capacity and capabilities 'on the go', without the need to invest time and resources in new software, infrastructure or staff training. Coupled with the NBN, cloud computing means all businesses – particularly SMEs – will have access to the same technology and services previously only within reach of large corporations. This means lower costs and improved efficiency – and that's good news for businesses and employees alike.

I am sure the Central Coast's sizeable commuter population will also welcome the flexibility that comes with greater opportunities to 'telework'. Work is something we do, not something we travel to. The NBN is the game changer that will make teleworking a real option for employees, no matter where they live. Regional



*Federal Members
Craig
Thompson,
Deborah
O'Neill and
Jill Hall (far
right) with
Senator
Conroy
and David
Abrahams*

Australia in particular stands to benefit from teleworking, cutting down on time spent travelling to work, and opening up job opportunities previously only available to people in capital cities.

In healthcare, international studies are showing that broadband enabled telehealth can dramatically reduce hospitalisation and re-admission rates. Our own Telehealth Pilot Program will soon be delivering services to patients in NBN rollout areas with a view to refining and expanding these services nationwide.

In education, the NBN is already helping teachers provide a richer, more engaging learning experience for students, supplementing lessons with high-definition videos or live simulations.

I know the business community on the Central Coast remains a strong advocate for the benefits of fast, affordable and ubiquitous broadband, and I very much look forward to seeing the innovation and creativity of the region unlocked as the NBN rolls out over the coming years.



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What broadband means for the Central Coast



By Paul Budde, Special Advisor to the ITU/UNESCO Broadband Commission for Digital Development

It is now universally accepted (UN Broadband Commission) that broadband is essential infrastructure – as important as electricity, gas, water, roads and so on.

In North America and Europe local councils are actively involved in broadbanding their communities and it is good to see that Gosford and Wyong Councils are playing an active role in ensuring that the social and economic benefits of broadband are being made available to the Central Coast community. Broadband is also vital for economic development, healthcare, education and the monitoring of the environment, energy, etc. Without broadband it will be very difficult for local councils to implement any effective policies in this area.

The success of broadband will depend on the region's ability to differentiate, as that will facilitate maximisation of the

economic benefits that the NBN will bring with it. So it will be important to determine the elements that make the region unique and focus on how to leverage off that.

In particular the region will profit significantly from early participation as it has a large commuting population, and having access to high-speed broadband infrastructure will be an enormous boost to e-commerce and teleworking applications.

It will be around the NBN that new companies – and indeed new industries – will be born and the Central Coast is now well-positioned to take a leadership role in this development.

The F3 has attracted a large volume of industry in Somersby and West Gosford and Tuggerah and also at North Wyong and the same will happen with the NBN – companies will congregate in a similar way along this digital infrastructure.

The region already has a range of specialised ICT companies supplying national and global markets and the NBN will increase its opportunity to establish itself as a key ICT hub, with extremely positive economic implications for the entire region. Emerging data centre facilities in the region are a further indication of the confidence and support of private industry, which is squarely behind this exciting new opportunity.

It will also be a great opportunity for a generation of young people to obtain skills that will last them a lifetime.

The role of the local councils of Gosford and Wyong should also be mentioned, and in particular their support in facilities and services that will allow NBN Co to work smoothly through the region with the councils assisting in the various pre- and post-rollout processes.

Everybody will be connected in the end, but those who are connected first, like the Central Coast, will be able to reap the economic benefits of this new infrastructure by attracting good quality business and improve the lifestyle of the people that live here.

Being well-connected will begin to make the difference between thriving communities and struggling ones.

Paul Budde is Special Advisor to the ITU/UNESCO Broadband Commission for Digital Development, and a Board member at Global Smart Grid Federation and Executive Director at Smart Grid Australia. He lives at Bucketty on the Central Coast.



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April start for Coast broadband rollout

The NBN will begin to be rolled out on the Central Coast in April 2012. The NBN will be an enabler for the development of Australia's innovation, information and technology economy.

With the right policy focus, entrepreneurial initiative, education and investment Australia can assume a leadership role in the global knowledge and innovation sector. This will create valuable skills and resources that can be exported to the rest of the world long after the mining boom is gone.

Precincts such as the one envisioned for North Wyong will be the catalyst for the development of such knowledge and innovation based industries.

The roll out of the NBN on the Central Coast will also be a catalyst for the technology precinct in North Wyong to accelerate. It will be through this acceleration of innovation in Australia's economy that the real ROI on the NBN can be realised.

The companies that evolved in Silicon Valley California are household names today. But Apple, Oracle and Google began as start-up companies and achieved massive profits and market share within an astonishing time frame.

That is the way of technology companies and the technology industry.

Australia is actually in what is known as the Super 12. These are the 12 leading digital economies in the world with the greatest innovation and technological maturity.

The technology precinct at Wyong has the potential to be a place where local Australian start-up technology companies can flourish.

NBN Co doubles up on rollout

Central Coast's Federal MPs, Deborah O'Neill and Jill Hall, in late February, announced that the NBN Co had added a further 16,800 premises to the 22,000 that were announced in late 2010 that would be connected in the first broadband rollout on the Central Coast.

The NBN will provide access to high-speed broadband to 100% of Central Coast premises. Every home, school, hospital and business will have access to high-speed broadband via the NBN—no one will miss out!

Suburbs that will initially be connected include:

Gosford area – East Gosford, Gosford, Karingong, Mount Elliot, Narara, North Gosford, Point Clare, Point Frederick, Somersby, Springfield, Tascott, West Gosford, Wyoming.

Long Jetty area – Bateau Bay, Berkeley Vale, Blue Bay, Chittaway Bay, Chittaway Point, Fountaindale, Glenning Valley, Killarney Vale, Long Jetty, Magenta, Shelly Beach, The Entrance, The Entrance North, Toowoan Bay, Tumbi Umbi.

Further information on the NBN rollout, including commencement date(s) for construction in the Central Coast region, is available on the NBN Co website at: <http://www.nbnco.com.au/our-network/maps.html>

CCTS connects world's largest telescope

Based at Lisarow and with offices in Melbourne and Brisbane, CCTS is a locally owned company specialising in construction and maintenance of telecommunications infrastructure and networks across Australia.

Their capabilities cover a broad range of works that include optic fibre networks design and construct, aerial construction, civil construction and large cable hauling.

CCTS also delivers a wide technical capability in the installation and maintenance of telecommunications electronics, including exchange equipment builds, multiplexing electronics, telepower and remote telecommunication cabinet and housing installations.

One of CCTS's most recent contracts was their involvement in the construction of the world's largest and most powerful telescope with over 400km of fibre optic cable.

The Australian Square Kilometre Array Pathfinder (ASKAP) CSIRO Radio Telescope in Western Australia is a next generation radio telescope being developed by CSIRO. It will be made up of 36 identical antennas each 12 metres in diameter, working together as a single instrument.

When complete, ASKAP will be one of the world's premier radio telescopes and will help to answer fundamental questions about our universe.

This is just one example of the capabilities of this Central Coast company.



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Plans for North Wyong to be Digital Hub

The Henry Kendall Group which owns a 25-hectare site with an abundance of available power and excellent fibre connectivity, has plans to develop the area as The North Wyong Technology Precinct & Infraserve Data Centre.

The Precinct is within the North Wyong Industrial Estate, an under-utilised industrial area that owing to macro-economic trends, has underperformed as an industrial precinct for over twenty years.

Leveraging these assets the HKG has deployed a state-of-the-art energy efficient high density data centre. Known as Infraserve Data Centre this facility has customers from Australia and overseas including Microsoft. The HKG vision is to create a technology precinct/enterprise corridor with data centres at its hub. The availability of power, skilled workforce, affordable land and fibre connectivity means that it is an obvious and attractive location for other data centres.

With the right zoning a technology focused business precinct would naturally develop around the data centre leveraging off the existing infrastructure. It has the potential to become much like the famous technology precinct at Silicon Valley or closer to home in North Ryde or Norwest Business Park.

Such a precinct would deepen and broaden the economic profile of this region. The focus of the precinct would shift away from the declining manufacturing sector and towards the growth areas of the knowledge, innovation, and the digital economy.

Regional Development and Employment Opportunity

The Central Coast region's economy and infrastructure is struggling to meet existing demands and has a narrow jobs base. Close to 40% of the workforce need to travel outside the region to work.



Damien Wilde, CEO, Henry Kendall Group

The planned technology precinct represents a significant regional development opportunity for Wyong and the Central Coast. Situated 80km to the north of Sydney, the Central Coast with its affordable cost of living and proximity to Sydney is a significant growth area. It has a population base and a high proportion of which are highly skilled. However there are limited local employment opportunities that are commensurate with many people's qualifications. As a result, many residents are forced to commute to Sydney for work, often spending 4 hours a day travelling in traffic. Unemployment, mainly among young people within the Central Coast is higher than the national average. Developing skilled base industries and dovetailing appropriate local tertiary education represents an opportunity for Central Coast youth.

A unique opportunity to increase employment in Wyong Shire

An Enterprise Corridor Zone at North Wyong would be a unique opportunity not only to really increase employment in Wyong Shire, but also to revitalise the Wyong Town Centre.

Commenting on their plans for a Digital Hub at North Wyong, Henry Kendall Group CEO, Damien Wilde, said, "North Wyong is uniquely placed to make a real difference to employment in the area as well as to revitalise the Wyong Town Centre. And it can be done simply by making the most of infrastructure that it just happens to have."

"The infrastructure that will provide jobs is power, fibre, and a world class data centre.

"This is the infrastructure that will enable the Henry Kendall Group to develop jobs based on the new IT driven service businesses that will locate at North Wyong," said Mr Wilde.

"The infrastructure that will help revitalise the Wyong Town Centre is the bus service to and from Wyong Station, the Golf Club and the sporting fields because they combine to make apartment living there really attractive. So mixed use development allowable in an Enterprise Corridor will provide jobs and apartments at North Wyong. People will live and work there or use public transport to get to other work places. Wyong Town Centre will be the closest shopping centre for this area."

At one stroke, establishing an Enterprise Corridor at North Wyong will make a significant difference to two of Wyong's major problems, namely the lack of employment and the stagnation of the Wyong Town Centre.

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