



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TONY WINDSOR MP
INDEPENDENT
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

Shop 5
259 Peel Street
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

All Mail: PO Box 963
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Ph: (02) 6761 3080
Toll Free: 1300 301 839
Fax: (02) 6761 3380
e-mail: Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au
Web Page: www.tonywindsor.com.au

MEDIA RELEASE

3 April 2008

Minister right to stop “second best” broadband Opel deal

The decision not to proceed with the Opel broadband deal by the Minister for Broadband, Communication and the Digital Economy, Senator the Hon Stephen Conroy is the correct one according to the Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor.

Mr Windsor believes that the original decision by the former Government had been cobbled together and was a lesser quality option than fibre-to-the-node.

“Senator Conroy has made the right decision in not proceeding with the previous Government’s broadband program.

Fibre-to-the-node infrastructure is the best option and country people were being told they had to accept the WiMax system, a system that has been seriously questioned.

I was informed at the time of the Opel decision being made that ‘inherent latency’, the audio and video delay caused by long range satellite transmissions, coupled with wireless loop (last mile) latency, had not been solved and that topography and geography will impact on wireless Broadband, particularly in the New England electorate.

This ‘inherent latency’ could impact on consumers attempting to access value added services such as the ability to make cheap phone calls via VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) and video conferencing affecting businesses, health organisations and many more,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor said that according to the Minister, ‘the Department of Broadband Communication and the Digital Economy performed an analysis of the detailed testing and mapping undertaken by OPEL, and determined that the OPEL network would cover only 72% of identified under-served premises’

“72% coverage is clearly not acceptable as the remaining 28% is virtually all located in country Australia.

“All I want for country Australians is to receive what has been previously promised to them that being equity of access and parity of pricing in relation to broadband and telephone services.

“The previous Government, to enable the full sale of Telstra, gave guarantees that supposedly enshrined that in legislation.

However since then, country Australians have been told that they will have to accept a lesser quality service for their broadband and telephone. ..2

For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02) 6761 3080 or 0427 66 8868

Fibre-to-the-node will deliver equity of access to broadband services comparable to city people to 98% of the population and the other 2% will have access to the Australian Broadband Guarantee program to assist in improving their access to broadband.

As I have said previously, country people should be alert AND alarmed about their treatment as second class citizens when it comes to telecommunication services and hold their representatives to their guarantees,” Mr Windsor said.