



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Telstra-NBN Co deal will benefit regional Australians

The deal between the Federal Government and Telstra enabling the use of Telstra's existing infrastructure in the rollout of the National Broadband Network will benefit regional Australians greatly according to the Independent Member for New England Tony Windsor.

Mr Windsor has supported the structural separation of the telco's wholesale and retail businesses so that Australia could maximize the spread of the new NBN Co project and in doing so provide regional Australians with much needed better telecommunication services.

"Regional Australia needs the NBN network to be able to compete with the rest of Australia and more broadly to be able to access world markets more competitively.

"If the Government and Telstra had not been able to reach agreement to join together to give Australia the best broadband service then we would have seen two networks running in parallel and not getting out to where it is needed as the commercial requirement to get a return to shareholders would overtake the service requirement to the end user.

"This would have put the focus of both operators on the more densely populated markets with regional Australians becoming the poor country cousins again.

"Now, with a deal being struck to incorporate the existing Telstra infrastructure in with the expanding NBN Co infrastructure, the 'railway of the 21st Century' – high speed broadband – can really get a move on with retail service providers not having to outlay vast amounts of capital to establish the infrastructure.

"They only need to get their products together to give users what they need and want and get onto the common high speed track.

"It's a good outcome and with Armidale West being one of the five 'First Release Sites' the New England area will get a good insight into the benefits the new NBN network will bring," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor congratulated Minister Stephen Conroy, the Government and Telstra.

"I'm sure it hasn't been an easy negotiation for either Telstra or the Government.

"Since its sale by the previous Government, Telstra has understandably had a primary responsibility to its shareholders whilst the current Government has had to look at how best to deliver telecommunications services to Australians wherever they live.

"I therefore congratulate both Telstra and the Government on their coming together on this deal and look forward to seeing the benefits come to fruition as quickly as possible," Mr Windsor said.

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