

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Senator Stephen Conroy

Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy

### **Views sought on legislative framework for National Broadband Network**

The Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Senator Stephen Conroy, today sought views on the legislative framework for the National Broadband Network company.

“The National Broadband Network will be the single largest nation-building infrastructure project in Australian history,” Senator Conroy said.

“It is essential that the legislation governing the National Broadband Network company and its operations is thoroughly considered.”

“There is a wealth of experience and expertise in the community and the Government wants to ensure people have the best opportunity to comment on the proposed framework for the National Broadband Network company.”

The Government is currently considering submissions already received on its discussion paper, *Regulatory Reform for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Broadband*, including options for reforming the existing telecommunications competition and consumer framework while the National Broadband Network is rolled out.

*Regulatory Reform for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Broadband* also included a policy framework for the regulation of the National Broadband Network company and its access regime. The Government is now inviting all interested parties to put forward their views on the detailed implementation of that framework.

“The National Broadband Network company will operate on a wholesale-only, open access basis with oversight by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission,” Senator Conroy said.

“This framework will radically improve competition in the Australian telecoms sector by providing access to retailers on an open and equivalent basis.”

“I invite interested parties to provide their views on the legislation covering the access regime for the National Broadband Network and governing the operations, ownership and control of the National Broadband Network company,” Senator Conroy said.

Issues that interested parties may wish to address include:

- The optimal access regime for the National Broadband Network, including, for example:
  - the legislative obligations that should be required to ensure the National Broadband Network company operates on a wholesale-only, open access basis,
  - the process for identifying services to be offered,

- how the prices and non-price terms and conditions of those services should be set, and for how long, and
- the role of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.
- The appropriate equivalence obligation for the company and the services it offers, and how this would operate in practice.
- The nature of ownership restrictions applied to private sector investors to protect the Government's equivalence objective for the wholesale-only network.
- Arrangements for the Government to sell its stake in the network.
- Any other rights and obligations to be conferred on the company.

Interested parties are also welcome to provide their views on other aspects of the legislative framework for the company.

Submissions received will be provided to the Lead Advisor to the National Broadband Network Implementation Study.

Written submissions should be provided by 5:00 pm (AEST) Thursday 30 July 2009, and can be forwarded by email to [nbnlegislation@dbcde.gov.au](mailto:nbnlegislation@dbcde.gov.au). Submissions may be made publicly available online.

Further information on the National Broadband Network, and on making a submission, is available at [www.dbcde.gov.au/nationalbroadbandnetwork](http://www.dbcde.gov.au/nationalbroadbandnetwork).