



THE GOVERNMENT OF NORFOLK ISLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

Norfolk to lead the way on high speed broadband

All homes and businesses in Norfolk Island will have access to high speed broadband long before most in Australia under a contract signed today between the Norfolk Island Government and the South Pacific Islands Network (SPIN SA). Minister for Finance Neville Christian said that the contract provided for SPIN to connect Norfolk Island to its fibre optic cable network, commencing late in 2010.

The initial international connection will be at a capacity of 155 megabits per second. This will allow delivery of high speed broadband equivalent to or better than the Australian broadband rollout announced last week by Prime Minister Rudd. The high speed fibre optic service will also be available to all private and business premises in Norfolk Island, whereas in Australia it is expected that up to 10% of users will remain reliant on the lower speed wireless broadband service.

“Norfolk Island has entered into a long-term capacity sale agreement with SPIN to assure our future telecommunications and broadband services”, Mr Christian said. “Under the arrangements, SPIN will meet all the capital costs of the cable network and the equipment required at the land station in Norfolk Island. We will pay an annual fee for provision of access at a capacity level at least forty times greater than currently available to us. It is interesting to note that the SPIN project will be able to provide high speed broadband to Norfolk Islanders at about half the capital cost per capita of the Australian Government proposal about six years ahead of the completion date of the mainland scheme”.

Mr Christian said that the implementation of high speed broadband under the SPIN contract would create a range of new high-tech business opportunities in Norfolk Island and would ensure that commitments to increase internet bandwidth at the Norfolk Island Central School will be met, in line with standards set by NSW education authorities. He added that it was essential that Norfolk Island gained access to this technology to ensure that it did not fall behind telecommunication and broadband standards in surrounding competitor states.

The SPIN fibre optic cable will come ashore at Anson Bay, and all Norfolk Telecom subscribers will be able to access high speed broadband services through the land station now owned by Telecom at the site of the old cable station.

Neville Christian
Minister for Finance

17th April 2009