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04 January 2011

Mr Andrew McGowan
Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr McGowan

RE: SUBMISSION FOR THE NATIONAL BROADBAND NETWORK

The Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC) makes this submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications regarding the December inquiry into the role and potential of the National Broadband Network (NBN).

The EMRC is a regional local government constituted by the Western Australian government to work on behalf of Bassendean, Bayswater, Belmont, Kalamunda, Mundaring and Swan local governments. The EMRC and member Councils together service approximately 300,000 residents and administer one third of the Perth metropolitan area.

Perth's Eastern Region covers 2,100 square kilometres. The Region extends from the edge of the Perth CBD, along the Swan River through urban residential, commercial and industrial areas, into the scenic Swan Valley and up to the forest and prime agricultural land of the Darling Range.

The role of the EMRC is to partner with member Councils and other stakeholders to facilitate strategies and projects that achieve sustainable outcomes such as economic and employment growth for the Region. Difficulties accessing affordable high speed broadband has been identified as a significant barrier to expansion of existing businesses; attraction of new investment to the Region and social inclusion of residents.

The EMRC has submitted a Regional Business Case for Broadband Infrastructure Upgrades across Perth's Eastern Region. The EMRC lodged the regional business case with Senator Conroy in June 2010 at the Perth Community Cabinet Meeting and with Duncan Bremner, Stakeholder Relations Adviser at NBN Co on the 26 of July 2010. In addition, the EMRC met with Gareth Simmons, General Manager Commercial Networks at NBN Co, to present the Broadband Regional Business Case on the 9 August 2010.

Attached is the Executive Summary from this report that addresses all of the terms of reference tabled in your request for submission letter.

The Regional Business Case outlines the strategic significance of Perth's Eastern Region as a transport and industry hub for the State as well as the following significant government and private sector investments underway for which access to high speed broadband is critical:

- *Perth Airport* - \$2.4 billion is being invested in the airport site by Westralia Airports Corporation to construct the new consolidated terminals and associated facilities;

- *Tertiary Education Campus* – approximately \$200m is being invested by Raffles Education Corporation to establish a university campus to service a predicted 5,000 students in the next 10 years, commencing operation within the Midland Railway Workshops site by 2011;
- *Midland Health Campus* - \$846.1m has been committed by the federal and state governments to establish a state-of-the-art facility in Midland. Operational by 2015, the Campus will have over 300 beds offering a comprehensive range of clinical services;
- *Midland GP Super Clinic* - \$10m has been committed by the federal and state governments to establish the clinic within the Midland Railway Workshops site that will accommodate privately practicing GPs, practice nurses, nurse practitioners and a range of allied health professionals;
- *Midland Atelier* - \$10.5m is being sought to extend the Midland Atelier; a creative design facility located within the Midland Railway Workshops. Developed by FORM and the Midland Redevelopment Authority the Midland Atelier opened in January 2009 within the Pattern Shop and houses Australian and international designers working across creative mediums from photography to fashion, jewellery and furniture design. Expansion of the Atelier into the Foundry Building will accommodate a broader range of cross-disciplinary studios, and is due to open mid-2011;
- *Kewdale Intermodal Freight Terminal* – estimated \$15m is being invested by the state government and private sector for upgrades which are underway to the terminal infrastructure and facilities;
- *Resource Recovery Facility* – up to \$100m will be invested by the EMRC to develop a state of the art Resource Recovery Facility and a Resource Recovery Park in Perth's Eastern Region. These facilities will collect household waste and divert it from landfill using processes to turn waste into a valued commodity. Recyclables and other items that can be reused will be sent to the recovery park while general waste will be sent to an alternative waste treatment facility.

Furthermore the research undertaken and outlined in the EMRC's Regional Business Case report shows that the region contains significantly large numbers of broadband black spots as well as below Australian averages for upload and download speeds. These issues have direct consequences for the economic and social wellbeing of the 300,000 residents living and working in the region. It is also a major detractor for productivity given that Perth's Eastern Region is a major economic and employment generator for the State.

The EMRC over the past 2 years has invested significant resources into building a serious case for early roll out of high-speed broadband across this region and feels strongly that the Federal Government's approach through the National Broadband Network would be able to address the region's concerns as part of the national roll out program.

Should you require further information please do not hesitate to contact _____,
Regional Development on Tel: _____

Yours faithfully ,

RHONDA HARDY
A/Chief Executive Officer