

M



Regional Development Australia – Tasmania

RESPONSE TO

Inquiry into the Role & Potential of the National Broadband Network

Authors:
Level of Which Submission
Has Been Authorised:

Craig Perkins and Brigid Rawlings

Chief Executive Officer

Contact:
Position:
Return Address:
Phone Number:

Craig Perkins
Chief Executive Officer
Level 1, 29 Paterson Street, Launceston TAS 7250
03 6334 9822



CONTENTS

1.	THE DELIVERY OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS	3
2.	ACHIEVING HEALTH OUTCOMES	3
3.	IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND TRAINING AVAILABLE FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS	4
4.	THE MANAGEMENT OF AUSTRALIA'S BUILT AND NATURAL RESOURCES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	4
5.	IMPACTING ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	4
6.	IMPACTING ON BUSINESS EFFICIENCIES AND REVENUES, PARTICULARLY FOR SMEs, AND AUSTRALIA'S EXPORT	5
7.	INTERACTION WITH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED INNOVATION INDUSTRIES	5
8.	FACILITATING COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL BENEFITS	6
9.	THE OPTIMAL CAPACITY AND TECHNOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS OF A NETWORK TO DELIVERY THESE OUTCOMES	6

1. THE DELIVERY OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

RDA Tasmania has identified the following:

- Ability for government agencies and local councils to outsource elements of some of their programs and services. Examples as to how this may happen are providing services in administration, planning or engineering, to enable increased efficiency and streamlining systems and processes;
- Possible opportunities around establishing sub-regional service delivery e.g. removing planning from councils and deliver it at a sub-regional level, which enables efficiency in programs and consistency in processes;
- Ability for tiers of government to transfer large and complex data sets to enable informed decision making, which also leads to opportunities to transfer/implement IT systems to other regions;
- Video conferencing facilities to deliver services remotely without the need to travel;
- Opportunities for major/regional councils to deliver some services that smaller, neighbouring councils cannot undertake cost effectively;
- Online processes for councils and clients e.g. online submissions, feedback and payments for services (e.g. planning applications, development applications, grant submissions). This also enables automated processes and delivers a more cost effective service delivery; and
- The challenge for governments is to effectively manage how varying tiers and agencies of governments work collaboratively and with a coordinate approach. This approach also requires business collaboration that is demand-based, not imposed onto them by government.

2. ACHIEVING HEALTH OUTCOMES

RDA Tasmania has identified the following:

- Opportunities around repositories of patient-centred data that is accessible by multiple users (e.g. patients, Medicare, insurance companies, clinicians, GPs, pathologists), with varying levels/information needs;
- Video conferencing facilities to remote monitoring capabilities, including concurrent communication with multiple parties e.g. patients, GPs, specialists;
- In-home monitoring, information sharing electronically amongst multiple service deliverers (e.g. pharmacist, GP, specialist) and communication with health care professionals (e.g. appointments with nurses, follow-up appointments with specialists and GPs, pill dispensing and consumption, blood pressure);
- Data transfer from remote to metropolitan (e.g. pathology, XRay results), rehabilitation;
- At present the communication and promotion to the end user (i.e. older patients) is focused heavily on the gadgets themselves, rather than promoting the positive health and lifestyle outcomes (e.g. preventative approach, which enables patients to live at home for longer; and
- Potential reduction in costs relating to access health services through the use of IT systems, and possible reduction on insurance policies.

3. IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND TRAINING AVAILABLE FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

RDA Tasmania has identified the following:

- Provides educational institutions with equitable access to resources and training as metropolitan areas, which is also more cost effective and efficient in the delivery of programs;
- Opportunities around up-skilling teachers and trainers (or LINC staff) in regional and remote areas with skills required to co-manage/assist in the delivery of courses/programs;
- Requirement in investment in technology at a town/community level to facilitate this delivery e.g. electronic whiteboards that can capture and disperse information, video conferencing facilities;
- Enables students with a broader range of educational opportunities, which can be implemented through a complementary (online, such as web portals, video conferencing, virtual worlds and offline) course delivery;
- Linking students in remote regions with those in metropolitan areas, particularly with the delivery of a national curriculum; and
- Opens up new market opportunities for educational institutions to deliver courses at a local, national and international level (e.g. enrolling students in remote areas of Tasmania that may not necessarily undertake post year 10 education, such as Queenstown, Strahan, St Helens).

4. THE MANAGEMENT OF AUSTRALIA'S BUILT AND NATURAL RESOURCES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

RDA Tasmania has identified the following:

- Enable better land use/environmental planning and access to such mapping and data e.g. local government spatial data systems to be accessible by more users; and
- Enable data to be fed into repositories e.g. land users to provide real-time data; access to climate data, such as climate data, with the ability to layer multiple data sets e.g. rainfall, soil, temperature.

5. IMPACTING ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

RDA Tasmania has identified the following:

- Access to high-speed broadband adds to the liveability of a region, such as access to services in remote areas;
- Enables employers the opportunity to disperse workers and branches to regional areas, particularly enabling lower overheads;
- Enables employees to work remotely, addressing the issue of youth and workforce forced to leave a community;
- Enables business owners/employees to maintain productivity levels e.g. not having to travel for appointments and be removed from workplace for considerable periods of time;
- Increases market opportunities, providing businesses to develop partnerships in supply chain and exposure of product or service to local, national and global markets;
- Business process and systems efficiency increases, therefore minimises per unit costs;

- Enables emergence of industries that leverage from IT and exposure to global markets e.g. animation/education, software development; and
- Facilitates development of knowledge based economies, rather than reliance on low-skilled, primary industry based economies e.g. skilled personnel in forestry industry can package and deliver courses relating to their expertise and skills to comparable regions internationally; and
- Industry development and employment opportunities, such as in the areas of eHealth (software development, call centres).

6. IMPACTING ON BUSINESS EFFICIENCIES AND REVENUES, PARTICULARLY FOR SMEs, AND AUSTRALIA'S EXPORT

RDA Tasmania has identified the following:

- Opportunities for government agencies and local government to deliver services (e.g. local government-based software) to other regions, internationally e.g. Brighton Council provides software and server services to Suva City Council in Fiji and are intending to expand these services to other councils in Fiji and Pacific Islands;
- Reduction in time required for information processing and data transfer;
- access to low cost online business systems (e.g. HR, email, finance, inventory management, CRM) and reduction in processing time;
- Reduction in production costs, through the use of automated processes enabled through IT systems, providing efficiencies and reduction in per unit costs;
- Remote accessing and remote data transfer (e.g. logistical information through RFIDs, product information e.g. crops, produce accessed and transferred from rural to metropolitan suppliers);
- Opportunities in the agricultural industry (e.g. automated processing, automated gate opening, milking cows, reticulation systems);
- Opportunities to manage electricity consumption and reselling e.g. giving back electricity and sell back to grid; and
- Remote monitoring and managing domestic equipment (e.g. temperature on heating/cooling systems, refrigerators, purchasing of goods through inventory management system attached to refrigerator).

7. INTERACTION WITH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED INNOVATION INDUSTRIES

RDA Tasmania has identified the following:

- R&D opportunities through development of new technology and evolving of products and services that are supported through high-speed broadband infrastructure;
- Enable transfer and sharing of knowledge and research and enhanced opportunities for global collaboration, thereby increasing the opportunities around joint research projects;
- Enable research to be undertaken and data to be collected from remote areas through equipment, which is then collated at a regional/metropolitan location e.g. microclimatic data, temperature, rainfall levels etc; and
- Opportunities around development and delivery of government programs to support R&D around innovation and incentives for SMEs to engage in the digital economy.

8. FACILITATING COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL BENEFITS

RDA Tasmania has identified the following:

- Opportunities for communities and residents to engage by participating in services and programs delivered through online community centres/LINCs;
- Enables delivery of programs and services to all areas, regardless of population;
- Enables exposure to different cultures and societies;
- Minimises issues around public transport due to online and electronic service delivery, which addresses the issue of youth/work force required to leave their communities; and
- Addresses issues around social inclusion e.g. providing contact and interaction of elderly/people living in remote areas and unable to drive or access transport with people within their community and across communities e.g. elderly engaging with youth in schools, residents and staff in aged care and nursing homes, physical activities that are facilitated through centres.

9. THE OPTIMAL CAPACITY AND TECHNOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS OF A NETWORK TO DELIVERY THESE OUTCOMES

RDA Tasmania has identified the following:

- Opportunities and requirements around the development and delivery of cost effective, online-based systems that are accessible by clients, such as SMEs, students, educational institutions, government agencies, local government; and
- Repositories of data and development of systems that aggregate and layer data from multiple sources (which have automated functionalities attached to these systems), which facilitate informed decision making to a multitude of users (e.g. government agencies, private sector, educational institutions).