National Broadband Network

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Abstract

The National Broadband Network is a focus of the June 2016 issue with four papers providing an insight into the nation?s largest infrastructure project. A historical paper on vibration measurement highlights how times have changed as the telecommunications networks evolve The Government?s review of the Universal Service Obligation has commenced with the Productivity Commission being tasked to inquire into how the universal service obligation might be updated to meet current and future needs.

In This Issue

In this issue the *Journal* focus on the National Broadband Network (NBN) and four papers provide an interesting range of perspectives on how the NBN is progressing and how it affects retail service providers. Now that the Federal Election is over there is time for considered thought on the future of the NBN and whether or not the Government is prepared to alter course away from the more contentious aspects of the rollout.

The NBN from 2009 to 2016 and Beyond - A Commentary on Mike Quigley?s June 2016 Address to the Telecommunications Association [5] provides a review of the former NBN Co CEO Mike Quigley?s presentation on the state of the NBN. The presentation was hosted by the Melbourne Networked Society Institute and the Telecommunications Association and held at Melbourne University.

Some Thoughts about Australian Telecommunications highlights how Australian telecommunications could do with a dose of lateral thinking and more competition, especially in bringing better connectivity to regional communities.

The National Broadband Network Brownfields Debate - Valuing FTTN and FTTP provides a financial comparison of FTTN and FTTP for brownfields utilising data in the public domain. Much of the NBN debate has centred on the selection of FTTN as a technology to be used in the NBN rollout, at a time when FTTP has become the globally preferred access network technology.

A Next Generation Wholesaler's View of the NBN - How Retail Service Providers can succeed in an NBN world provides an insight into the relationships between wholesalers and retailers seeking to gain a foothold in the transitioning telecommunications market and why more needs to be done to provide an open and fair level playing field for companies seeking to offer wholesale and retail products and services in competition with the four largest telecommunications companies.

Vibration Measurement provides two historic papers from 1969 that provide unique examples of vibration measurements carried out in the field, verify reality and discredit some conventional wisdoms in the field of cable installation.

Universal Service Obligation Inquiry

The Government has tasked the Productivity Commission with a 12-month inquiry into the future direction of the Universal Service Obligation (USO). The Productivity Commission Inquiry is expected to end in April 2017 when it hands the final report to the Government.

The USO is a fundamental and vital ingredient in the Australian telecommunications market that needs to be revitalised to ensure that it remains relevant in coming decades and to take into account changes to infrastructure provision as the transition to the NBN occurs around the nation. The USO should be expanded to incorporate universal access to data as well as telephony and other digital services. It is also time for the Government to consider a universal access regime that ensures that Australians can remain ?always connected?. Funding for a universal access regime should be provided by a broader telecommunications and Internet industry levy than that currently used to partially fund the USO.

A key aspect of the USO inquiry will be defining and measuring productivity outcomes associated with the USO. As with many issues surrounding telecommunications service provision today, the USO facilitates productivity outcomes that may be difficult to measure, and in particular access to telecommunications increases a nation?s wellbeing and happiness. How is this measured? Telecommunications is an essential service and it is about time the Australian Government formally recognised this.

For the Productivity Commission to complete this review it will need to grapple with the value of customer information to Government and business gained through telecommunications and broadband usage. Big Data has become a key to monetising customer information and the amount of data available is constantly growing.

Looking Forward

A student paper prize is available and students are encouraged to submit papers to be in the running for the opportunity to join with Telsoc members and key telecommunication industry executives at the Charles Todd Oration held in Sydney annually.

The key theme for the December 2016 issue will be *International Telecommunications Legislation and Regulations*. As the global digital economy evolves it is timely to consider the different telecommunications markets and how each is coping with the transition to next generation networks ? the ?gigabit race? ? and how competition is being fostered with the market.

Papers are invited for upcoming issues and with your contributions the Journal will continue to provide the readership with exciting and informative papers covering a range of local and international topics. The Editorial Board values input from our readership so please let us know what themes you would like to see in the coming year.

All papers related to telecommunications and the digital economy are welcome and will be considered for publication after a peer-review process.

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