

TELSOC – NBN FUTURES FORUM

I would like to thank TelSoc for extending an invitation to provide a short statement to this gathering.

This report by the NBN Futures Group within TelSoc, *Towards a National Broadband Strategy for 2020 to 2030*, is a wide-ranging contribution to policy discourse about the future of the NBN and I want to acknowledge the efforts of the group in bringing it together.

It is notable that several of the enduring issues and questions remain as relevant today as they did a decade ago.

The report outlines the importance of having policy and investment certainty between election cycles, and argues the necessity of having a strategic approach to address supply side and demand side policy objectives. This dual-focus is necessary in order to truly progress digital inclusion and leverage the network to the full advantage of all Australians.

Indeed, as I have argued previously, the NBN has never been an end in and of itself. It was always a means to an end.

That end being the consumer, the student, the entrepreneur, the regional business owner, parents and professionals working from home, and a more vibrant and digitally interconnected nation.

As we move into the next phase of NBN policy, it's important that independent experts make contributions to policy thinking so we can ensure good ideas receive the attention they deserve.

I congratulate TelSoc for its professional and pragmatic approach in seeking to facilitate these conversations and adding value to them, and look forward to ongoing engagement on these important questions.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Rowland
Shadow Minister for Communications