

# CommsWire

Essential daily reading for the communications industry executive

An iTWire publication    [www.itwire.com](http://www.itwire.com)    Editor: Stan Beer    Friday 29 November 2019

## ANTI-COMPETITION NBN TAX RAISES ALP HACKLES



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**CommsWire** (ISSN 2202-4549) is published by iTWire Pty Ltd. 18 Lansdown St, Hampton, Vic, 3188  
CommsWire/Telecommunications Editor: Stan Beer

Staff writers: Peter Dinham, Alex Zaharov-Reutt, Sam Varghese. Columnist: John de Ridder  
Advertising: CEO and Editor in Chief, Andrew Matler: [andrew.matler@itwire.com](mailto:andrew.matler@itwire.com) • Tel: 0412 390 000

## LABOR CLAIMS GOVT GOING AGAINST STATED POLICY WITH NBN TAX

**Labor shadow communications minister Michelle Rowland claims the Government's move to put in place a cost-recovery tax on networks competing with the NBN directly contradicts Minister Fletcher's statement that he favours competition in this field.**

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The communications Minister Paul Fletcher introduced the legislation in Parliament on Thursday.

It proposes a levy of \$7 per month on every service connected to a non-NBN network, such as TPG's fibre to the basement network.



In a statement, Rowland referred to a statement made by Fletcher (left) in a speech to CEDA.

In response to a query about the NBN, Fletcher said: "We are going to need to rely on and boost competition to make sure that our fixed networks continue to upgrade and stay in tune with world developments."

The NBN Co, the company building Australia's national broadband network, is struggling to balance its books.

It is trying every tactic it can to take the average revenue per user to \$52 in order to break even.

The company **lost** \$1.1 billion in the first quarter of financial year 2020, while the ARPU stayed at \$45.

Total losses exceed \$20 billion, with the network rollout to be completed in 2020.

Said Rowland: "The Bill... is a direct contradiction of that statement – it is a levy whose primary purpose is to reduce competition.

"No wonder the telecommunications industry is perplexed by the minister's confused rhetoric on issues such as the role of NBN in enterprise and investment in competing networks.

"At a time of uncertainty, the last thing the industry needs is a minister who says one thing and then does another."

**Sam Varghese**

# NEW CALEDONIA FIRM TO CONNECT TO HAWAIKI CABLE SYSTEM

**The Pacific island nation of New Caledonia will connect to the Hawaiki submarine cable system, with carrier SCCI having signed a deal with Hawaiki Submarine Cable.**

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The multi-million dollar deal will also include a subsea branch to the capital Noumea and connect the island to the US, Australia and New Zealand.

A statement from the recently incorporated SCCI — the Société Calédonienne de Connectivité Internationale — said the new cable had a customised design and connected both New Caledonia's Main Island and the Isle of Pines.



The signing ceremony was attended by the custom chiefs of Isle of Pines' eight tribes, government and business officials.

The new cable has been named "Tomoo", the local nââ kwênjii word for the "tricot rayé" indigenous sea snake, a source of protection according to tribal legends.

"This project is critical not only for the development of the Isle of Pines, but for the whole territory of New Caledonia," said Isle of Pines' High Chief Hilarion Vendégou.

"All the tribes of the island have come together to support the Tomoo cable, which will bring broadband connectivity to our population."

At the moment, New Caledonia has only one submarine cable connection which is operated by the incumbent government-owned carrier.

SCCI managing director Steffen Holzt said: "We have received very supportive comments from the government and the business community, and look forward to helping accelerate the digital development of New Caledonia."

Hawaiki chief sales officer Virginie Frouin said: "Thanks to SCCI and the Tomoo cable, New Caledonia will be able to enjoy the multiple benefits of Hawaiki's international connectivity and boost the development of its digital economy, both locally and in the Pacific region."

Tomoo is scheduled for completion by 2021.

**Sam Varghese**

# JAPAN-GUAM-AUSTRALIA SOUTH CABLE LANDS AT SYDNEY BEACH

**The Japan-Guam-Australia South subsea cable system (JGA South) has been landed at Sydney's Narrabeen Beach in Sydney.**

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Now that the JGA South shore end work has been completed by AARNet, Alcatel Submarine Cable Networks' (ASN's) cable ship *Ile de Brehat* will lay the cable north towards Guam.

JGA South is expected to be ready for service by March 2020.



It will complement the [recently completed Indigo cable system](#), forming a ring between Australia and North and South East Asia.

Current coherent optical technology gives JGA South's two-fibre pairs a capacity of 36Tbps.

ASN's spectrum sharing technology allows each consortium member to independently take advantage of technology advancements for future upgrades.

"Indigo was the first in a number of significant investments for research and education in Australia," said AARNet CEO Chris Hancock.

"JGA South is our second, and equally important, investment to meet the future growth in collaborative research and transnational education between Australia and our important partners in Asia.

"As the Sydney landing party, AARNet sincerely thanks its build partners and especially Northern Beaches Council for its far-sighted and active support in the on-time delivery of this new and critical infrastructure for Australia."

Alphabet subsidiary Google and undersea cable owner RTI are also involved in the project.

**Stephen Withers**



## ERICSSON INKS 5G AGREEMENT WITH SOUTH KOREA'S SK TELECOM

**Swedish telecoms equipment provider Ericsson has signed a commercial agreement with SK Telecom, to help the South Korean telco migrate to 5G Core stand-alone architecture.**

The deal with the Swedish telecommunications equipment maker sees Ericsson selected to deliver a Cloud Packet Core, expands on an existing 5G core network transformation project and will help SK Telecom improve network performance and user experience.

SK Telecom switched on its commercial 5G network in December 2018 after selecting Ericsson as one of its primary 5G vendors, and previously, Ericsson provided radio access network (RAN) products, including mid-band Massive MIMO.



Jung Chang-kwan, Vice President and Head of Infra Engineering Group, SK Telecom, says: “By utilising Ericsson’s Cloud Packet Core network solution, which realises simplified network operations, we will unleash the full potential of new 5G-enabled use cases with greater efficiency.”

Ericsson Senior Vice President and Head of Digital Services, Jan Karlsson, says: “This deal, and the opportunity to work with SK Telecom’s Network Functions Virtualization Infrastructure (NFVI), has put us in the ideal position to further strengthen their 5G network.

“Delivering our Cloud Packet Core solution will positively impact SK Telecom’s network operations and will reinforce Ericsson’s position as a leader in 5G core.”

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**Sam Varghese**

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To subscribe or advertise contact Andrew Matler CEO : 0412 390 000 - [andrew.matler@itwire.com](mailto:andrew.matler@itwire.com)