



MEDIA STATEMENT

ACS welcomeops decision on NBN

Focus must now shift to building Australia's Digital Economy

7th April 2009: The ACS (Aupstralian Computer Society), Australia's peak body for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) professionals, today welcomed the Federal Government's announcement regarding the construction and operation of the National Broadband Network (NBN) and called for the development of a national digital economy strategy as matter of urgency.

ACS National Chairman Kumar Parakala said that whilst this is a crucial step towards improving Australia's ICT infrastructure and digital economy, it is important to keep in mind that the NBN is a facilitator of Australia's Digital Economy and not an end in itself.

"The NBN is a critical infrastructure investment which is long overdue. We welcome the Government's decision to implement fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) broadband network as it will enable delivery of more sustainable value added services. The decision to implement FTTH, rather than fibre-to-the-node (FTTN), will provide Australians with multiple sources and platforms for broadband and access to a greater range of services. However, there remains a missing link – a national strategy for the development of our digital economy.

"With the pipe in the ground, there will be opportunities for the development of value added services which propel our future economic growth, such as e-health, e-education and e-commerce. These e-services will ultimately provide Australia with a platform to increase its participation in the global market. The flow-on effects from access to high quality infrastructure are estimated to increase GDP by 1.4% after five to six years, which is \$15 billion in terms of GDP from 2007-2008 GDP figures, increasing our standard of living and stimulating economic prosperity.

“The ACS strongly believes in leveraging such a critical piece of infrastructure investment to bring Australia into line with our overseas competitors. Broadband is already the lifeblood of our business communications and there is an absolute social and economic imperative to getting this right. It is imperative that the telecommunications industry, the ICT industry and the Government now work together to not only ensure immediate construction of the NBN, but also to think ‘beyond the pipe’ as these plans are key to our nation’s competitive standing and our future economic prosperity” said Mr Parakala.

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About the ACS: The ACS (Australian Computer Society) is the recognised professional association for those working in Information and Communications Technology, seeking to raise the standing of ICT professionals and represent their views to government, industry and the community. A member of the Australian Council of Professions, the ACS is the guardian of professional ethics and standards in the ICT sector, committed to ensuring the beneficial use of ICT for all Australians. It provides both members and non-members with opportunities for professional education, networking and certification, as well as enabling them to contribute to the development of their profession. Visit www.acs.org.au for more information.

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