

Devonport, Tuesday 7 April 2009

The Australian Greens today welcomed Tasmania's prime position in the national broadband roll-out, calling for it to signal the first step in a clean, green and clever jobs boom in Tasmania.

"The roll-out of the new broadband network could be our ticket to a clean, green and clever jobs boom in Tasmania, if we seize the opportunity to shift our economic focus," said Australian Greens Deputy Leader, Senator Christine Milne.

"Tasmania has so much to gain from getting connected to high speed broadband! The enormous jobs potential could reinvigorate Tasmanian communities devastated by years of the short-sighted resource obsession which is now coming crashing down with the global financial meltdown.

"High speed broadband can give Tasmanians, even in remote regional communities, access to high quality employment and education opportunities that are simply out of reach now.

"We recognise that broadband alone will not bring prosperity. It must be accompanied by similar investments in zero carbon energy, public transport and the restoration of the Tasmanian environment.

"If Tasmania seizes the opportunity to roll-out an intelligent electricity grid with the broadband network, we could really see our State in prime position for becoming the carbon neutral powerhouse it could so easily be."

Senator Milne recalled that the last push for an IT economy in Tasmania - when the Greens were in balance of power with the Rundle Government in 1996 - fell foul of the election of the majority Bacon Government in 1998, which returned Tasmania to the resource based economy.

"In 1998, Tony Rundle, in balance of power with the Greens, was the first Tasmanian Premier ever to admit that Tasmania's future did not lie in resource extraction.

"The tragedy is that the Bacon Government chose to return Tasmania to its jobs-poor, resource-extracting history, and actively delayed the blossoming of a clean green future based on protecting the environment, developing high-quality niche markets for food and beverages, and unleashing the creative potential inherent in a knowledge-based economy.

"While we strongly support a broadband roll-out as a vital plank in a green economy, the Greens will nevertheless scrutinise this project thoroughly in the Senate to ensure that it is environmentally, socially and economically sensitive."

Senator Milne is in Devonport today for hearings of the Resource Planning and Development Commission at the Devonport Council Chambers

Tim Hollo

Media Adviser

Senator Christine Milne | Australian Greens Deputy Leader and Climate Change

Spokesperson Suite SG-112 Parliament House, Canberra ACT | P: 02 6277 3588 | M: 0437 587 562

<http://www.christinemilne.org.au/> | www.GreensMPs.org.au <<http://www.greensmps.org.au/>>

<<Picture (Device Independent Bitmap)>> Sign-up to GreensMPs
<<http://greensmps.org.au/stay-informed>> to receive updates and alerts enabling you to
take action on important issues <<Picture (Device Independent Bitmap)>> Come and join
the conversation at GreensBlog <<http://greensblog.org/>>

Unless otherwise indicated in this document, it is Copyright of the Commonwealth of Australia and the following applies:

Copyright Commonwealth of Australia. This material has been reproduced by permission but does not purport to be the official or authorised version.

You should make independent inquiries and obtain appropriate advice before relying on the information in any important matter.

This document has been distributed by Capital Monitor. All queries regarding the content should be directed to the author of this document.

Capital Monitor is a division of LexisNexis Australia, and can be contacted on 02 6273 4899.