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Australian
Telecommunications
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Media Release

Broadband for All Australians

ATUG's Regional Communications Roadshow events held in Orange NSW this week explained how Australians who don't have access to a broadband service can register for the Australian Broadband Guarantee.

The Mayor of Orange, Cr John Davis, who opened the Roadshow said regional areas needed better broadband to keep pace – with the same services, prices and speed as city users enjoyed.

Representatives from the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy were available at the events in Orange to talk about the new Australian Broadband Guarantee program that starts on Monday 4 August.

Any Australian who is unable to access a broadband service, which reasonably compares to services in metropolitan areas (metro-comparable), at their principal place of residence or small business is eligible to receive a subsidised service under the Australian Broadband Guarantee.

Under the new program, a metro-comparable service is considered to be a minimum 512-128kbps data speed, 3GB per month data usage and a maximum of 5c per Megabyte for excess use.

Roadshow presenters talked about wireless broadband services and Optus 3G mobile broadband rollout to regional areas to be completed by December.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority's (ACMA) work on Digital Television, Spam and e-security, Online Content and the Do Not Call Register was outlined.

CSIRO talked about their work developing broadband applications such as remote sensor networks for soil moisture content, animal tracking, remote health and virtual classrooms.

AARNet described the ultra high speed broadband services they provide for universities enabling researchers at Charles Sturt in Orange to partner in worldwide research projects.

The NSW Government's People First Strategy aims to deliver many more government services over broadband in coming years. One broadband project linking schools has allowed 500 HSC students in the region access to 36 more subjects than they could before.

Rosemary Sinclair, Managing Director of ATUG, said there was an important role for Local Governments and communities such as Orange in being pro-active in getting the most advanced communications for their region, "Broadband isn't about technology. It's about jobs, education, health and regional growth. Everyone needs to be connected."

ATUG will continue to work with Government and Industry to achieve the aim of 100% of Australians connected to fast broadband services.