



## Senator the Hon Stephen Conroy

**MINISTER FOR BROADBAND, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY**  
**DEPUTY LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SENATE**

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### National approach to broadband development

At the 15th meeting of the Online and Communications Council, held in Canberra today, Commonwealth, state, territory and local governments agreed to create a national framework advancing the development and use of broadband.

The meeting was chaired by the Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Senator Stephen Conroy, and attended by state and territory government ministers and the Australian Local Government Association.

"This meeting has laid the foundation to a more forward-looking and progressive approach to broadband policy in Australia. For the first time, all three levels of government have agreed to work together to develop a unified vision for broadband in Australia," Senator Conroy said.

"We all recognise the importance of broadband for economic growth, promoting regional development and improving the way government services are delivered. It is important we collaborate to ensure the greatest benefits for all Australians."

Online and Communications Council delegates agreed to pursue a framework including:

- developing the capability of the National Broadband Network;
- providing digital content in priority areas, such as health and education;
- transforming the nature and delivery of key government applications and services;
- using the National Broadband Network to deliver certain Australian, State, Territory and local government services to Indigenous Australians; and
- streamlining planning process for broadband deployment into greenfield and other developments.

In addition, state and territory Ministers resolved to work together to examine options to leverage their future telecommunications procurements to ensure an appropriate competitive structure and to deliver enhanced value for money and expanded and better quality of services.

The state and territory Ministers expressed their strong preference for a solution to be operated by a genuine wholesale provider that is separate from any retail service provider.

"The Rudd Government has committed invest up to \$4.7 billion in a National Broadband Network reaching 98% of Australian homes and businesses. A cooperative approach between governments will assist in the effective use and evolution of the network," Senator Conroy said.

"This framework will help position Australia as a competitive and innovative knowledge-based digital economy, and will focus on practical and achievable strategies to further develop and facilitate the use of broadband."

Further information on the meeting's outcomes and resolutions are outlined in the communiqué available online at [www.occ.gov.au](http://www.occ.gov.au)

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