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Our ref XXXXX
Your ref DEFuture Directions

The Director
Digital Economy
Department of Broadband, Communications and Digital Economy
CANBERRA

Dear Director

Thank you for the opportunity to comment the *Digital Economy, Future Directions Consultation Paper*.

As the lead agency in the Northern Territory Government (NTG) on communications I wish to provide the following comments. I have not provided them in any particular order of importance, as success in each area is required for the further development of the digital economy.

Your first question 'what does success look like' is probably the key question to define the priorities and performance of the Digital Economy Group to be formed. We believe the most appropriate approach is to define the key market segments or end benefactors of the governments Digital Economy interventions.

Much of the digital economy will flourish without government needing to intervene and this can be left to other parties to pursue. We suspect key segments needing government action are the 25-30% of Australians without PC/Internet access, small Australian businesses that are part of larger value chains, and end users needing government held information and also protection from on-line criminals. Expansion of these key areas is summarised below

In essence the five key elements that need to be addressed are:-

- The capability to fully engage the public sector, small and medium business and the general public through a range of on line business practices and protocols aiming to provide the full gambit of services in a competitive environment as well as providing the opportunity to establish and grow new and existing businesses.
- Providing easy access to all appropriate Public Sector Information for both commercial and personal purposes.

- The encouragement of participation by individuals and business in the digital economy by building trust, value for money and quality of service.
- Overarching legislation and governance of transactions on the internet encompassing (but not confined to) Privacy, Security of Information, Electronic signatures and the prevention of identity theft and fraud;
- Establishing suitable infrastructure to facilitate participation by all Australians with price parity between all urban, regional and remote centres.

We have refrained from commenting upon individual questions posed throughout the paper but hope these comments provide input to your paper and the priority initiatives for governments to pursue.

Yours sincerely



LES HODGSON
Executive Director ICT
Department of Business and Employment

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