



## Opportunities of the National Broadband Network

### Opportunities for business

By using services and applications that operate on the NBN, Australian businesses—regardless of their size or location—have the opportunity to reduce costs, increase efficiency and grow by:

- > possibly reducing the need for a physical presence
- > accessing sophisticated applications such as real-time online tools through cloud computing
- > allowing businesses to expand their markets and customer base and to compete in a national or global marketplace by transacting online through data-rich websites, showing video and high-resolution images of products and services
- > offering more flexible work practices through greater scope for teleworking
- > allowing businesses more choice in their location, including in rural and regional Australia.

Access Economics estimates that if 10 per cent of Australian employees were to telework 50 per cent of the time, the total annual gains would be \$1.4–1.9 billion per year.

### Opportunities for better healthcare and quality of life for the elderly

The NBN will provide the connectivity to:

- > allow people to stay in their homes for longer by facilitating home-based monitoring by healthcare professionals—this will reduce hospitalisation rates and delay the need for people to go into residential aged care

- > allow telehealth services, which require reliable, high-speed broadband, to become part of the primary healthcare system between a patient at home and their GP—allowing patients to avoid travelling
- > provide access to specialist healthcare through telehealth consultations to patients in rural and regional Australia who would otherwise not have ready access to such services
- > allow remote training of health professionals and specialists to ensure they continue to be upskilled
- > allow specialists to assist local health professionals in emergency situations through high-definition videoconferencing.

Access Economics has found that the ongoing benefits to Australia from wide-scale adoption of telehealth are between \$2 billion and \$4 billion per year.

### Opportunities to enrich education

Having the NBN available to all education institutions and the homes of students will change the way students and teachers access information, collaborate and communicate with each other:

- > distance and isolation will no longer be a barrier to getting access to the best specialist teachers in Australia—students will be able to join virtual classrooms and learn with other students located across the country
- > collaborative learning between education institutions, both domestically and internationally, will be possible



- > schools in rural and regional Australia with small numbers will be able to join with other schools to ensure students are exposed to differing views, cultures and experience
- > university students will be able to access courses from universities located anywhere in Australia or even overseas—participating in face-to-face lectures and tutorials in real-time.

The high-speed broadband services offered by the NBN across Australia will enrich the classroom experience by allowing greater use of online educational resources, including video, and increased collaboration beyond the classroom.

## Opportunities for new forms of government service delivery

The NBN will facilitate new service delivery models that can reduce costs and increase consumer satisfaction:

- > the government's Interacting with Government Report 2009 demonstrates that, given a choice, most people would prefer to use an e-government channel to access a government service
- > ubiquitous, reliable broadband will allow many government services to be accessed online in a way people prefer
- > clients in regional Australia will be able to obtain face-to-face assistance online rather than having to travel to a shopfront
- > service delivery agencies will be able to provide clients with access to experts irrespective of their location.

## Opportunities for environmental benefits

The NBN will change the way people conduct their business, and assist the way the environment is managed—both natural resources and the built environment including:

- > access to digital tools to demand manage household consumption of resources
- > high-quality, high-definition videoconferencing that will reduce the need for long distance travel as collaboration can occur online, rather than in person
- > homes will interact with smart-grid energy systems to manage overall energy consumption and demand—this will reduce peak energy consumption and generation requirements
- > sensor networks and applications to allow farming and agriculture better access to information such as soil moisture and weather conditions.