



**Sharon Grierson MP**  
Federal Member for Newcastle

**Media Release**

**19 June 2007**

**BROADBAND: HOWARD'S 18<sup>TH</sup> ATTEMPT STILL GIVES NEWCASTLE 2<sup>ND</sup> BEST**

Federal Member for Newcastle Sharon Grierson says the Howard Government's latest high-speed broadband proposal is its most disappointing yet, and will ensure Newcastle remains a broadband backwater under the Coalition.

"At the 18<sup>th</sup> attempt to fix his national broadband crisis, all Mr Howard has come up with for Newcastle - Australia's 6<sup>th</sup> largest city - is a 2<sup>nd</sup> rate wireless network," Ms Grierson said.

"It will leave students, families and small businesses in Newcastle with a 2<sup>nd</sup> rate wireless service while people in Sydney log on to a superior fibre network."

"Federal Labor, in contrast, will build a high-speed fibre to the node National Broadband Network which will cover Newcastle, which will be a minimum 12 megabytes per second, and which will not suffer the technical problems associated with Mr Howard's wireless proposal."

"Last year, the economic cost of inferior quality internet access to the Hunter region was \$55.4 million in exports and 627 jobs." (*ALGA, State of the Regions 2006-07*).

"Under the Howard Government's 2<sup>nd</sup> rate wireless plan, the wasted opportunities will continue."

"Only Federal Labor will lay the broadband platform for Newcastle to continue to grow as a centre for industrial, business and educational innovation."

"Our broadband policy is just one part of Kevin Rudd and Labor's fresh approach to nation-building for a more productive future."

Attached: The Howard Government's previous 17 broadband announcements

**Canberra**  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Ph: 02 6277 4221  
Fax: 02 6277 8461



**Newcastle**  
427 Hunter Street  
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300  
Ph: 02 4926 1555  
Fax: 02 4926 1895  
[www.sharongrierson.com](http://www.sharongrierson.com)



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The Howard Government's previous 17 Broadband announcements:

- A Telecommunications Action Plan for Remote Indigenous Communities (2002);
- An Australian Research and Education Network Framework (2002);
- A Higher Bandwidth Incentive Scheme (2003);
- A National Broadband Strategy (2004);
- A National Broadband Strategy Implementation Group (2004);
- A Coordinated Communications Infrastructure Fund (2004);
- A Demand Aggregation Brokers program (2004);
- A Metropolitan Broadband Blackspots program (2004);
- A Broadband for Health Initiative (2004);
- A Broadband for Health Pharmacy program (2004);
- An NBSIG Australian Government Action Plan (2005);
- A Clever Networks program (2005);
- The Broadband Connect Subsidy program (2005);
- The Broadband Connect Infrastructure program (2005);
- The Communications Fund (2005);
- The Broadband Blueprint (2006); and
- Most recently the Broadband Guarantee (2007).

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