



**Sharon Grierson MP**  
Federal Member for Newcastle

**Media Release**  
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**LABOR TO PROVIDE ALL NOVOCASTRIANS WITH  
HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND**

Federal Member for Newcastle, Sharon Grierson, says Labor's commitment to build a new network would make a faster broadband service accessible to all households and businesses in Newcastle.

In his Budget reply in May, Labor Leader Kim Beazley announced that a Labor Government will build a national fibre-to-the-node network to give Newcastle families access to broadband speeds of at least 6 megabits per second - 25 times faster than the current benchmark speed.

Ms Grierson will tell Federal Parliament today, "it has been revealed that complaints to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman from the Hunter region have doubled in the past twelve months."

"Unfortunately, this comes as no surprise to me. Hundreds of people have contacted my office in the past year alone to ask for help to access broadband."

"The residents of Fletcher, Maryland, Birmingham Gardens and Shortland have been working hard with me to convince the Howard Government to allow them to access broadband."

"We have had some victories. Yet even when we convince the Government of the need to upgrade Telstra's equipment to allow broadband access, many still miss out."

Under Labor's plan, no-one who wants broadband will miss out.

"This guarantees Newcastle families and businesses access to the educational and economic productivity benefits of high-speed broadband internet."

"Newcastle and the Hunter deserve nothing less. Certainly we deserve more than the Government's current proposal to restrict high speed broadband access to the capital cities only."

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