

MEDIA RELEASE

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Funding to Improve Broadband Services to the Mid North of South Australia

The Mid North Broadband Steering committee has been working for twelve years to attract a telecommunications company to the region that is able to provide broadband services that equal the quality and price of services offered in the metro areas of Adelaide and compatible to speeds outlined in the National Broadband Network.

Regional Development Australia Yorke and Mid North are pleased to announce the establishment of a public private partnership with Aussie Broadband, an Australian owned company that specialises in the development of regional broadband networks.

The Broadband Development Fund (through the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology); the Regional Project Fund (through the Department of Trade and Economic Development); Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council; Regional Council of Goyder, Regional Development Australia Yorke and Mid North and Aussie Broadband will all contribute funding to develop the infrastructure which capital cost is over \$1M.

The South Australian Government will provide a total of \$450,000. The Broadband Development Fund, which is overseen by Minister for Science and Information Economy, Hon. Jack Snelling MP, will contribute \$350,000 and \$100,000 will come from the Regional Project Fund, which is overseen by Minister for Regional Development, Hon. Michael O'Brien MP. The Federal Government through Senator Conroy and the Department of Broadband Communications and the Digital Economy has registered Aussie Broadband as a registered wireless provider for the Mid North as part of the Australian Broadband Guarantee enabling eligible customers to receive subsidised service where applicable.

The public private partnership will develop infrastructure to support the delivery of high speed broadband services through WiMAX fixed services capable of data rates up to 12 Mbps in areas of the Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council, Regional Council of Goyder and the Wakefield Regional Council.

Currently broadband services are limited to parts of the major regional centres and some nearby outlying areas. Outside these areas the only broadband services available are satellite based and mobile wireless technology. The Mid North Broadband Project will cover a broader area, as the next generation of wireless technology will broadcast services to multiple points across the region.

Regional Development Australia Yorke and Mid North CEO Kelly-Anne Saffin was pleased, 'All three levels of government have come on board providing significant funding, time and support for the Mid North Broadband project. We encourage individuals and businesses to utilise this unique opportunity to access affordable high speed broadband in the Mid North. In particular the work of the Mid North Broadband Steering Committee in pursuing this project has been crucial in evaluating tenders and negotiating with public and private partners. Members include Central Local Government Region, Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council, Regional Council of Goyder, the former Mid North Regional Development Board, the Department of Trade and Economic Development and the Department of Further Education Employment Science and Technology.'

Driven by the needs of businesses in the Mid North, for high quality and high speed broadband services, the project will have wide community benefits, providing low cost internet plans that start at \$19.95 per month for 2 Giga bytes peak and 2 Giga bytes off peak per month downloads.

Aussie Broadband expects to provide services progressively from July 2010 and expect to complete network construction in early 2011. Their experience developing regional networks will assist them to meet the tight timeframes associated with the project.

The Yorke and Mid North currently has the lowest broadband uptake and average internet connection speeds of all the South Australian Government Regions, the Mid North Broadband Project will help to address through this community driven project.

For information in relation to this project or to register your interest, individuals and businesses are encouraged to contact Aussie Broadband on 1300 880 905 and further details can also be found at www.aussiebroadband.com.au. Queries regarding the ABG program can also be directed to the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy on 1800 883 488 or www.dbcde.gov.au/abg.

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*Regional Development Australia Yorke and Mid North is a joint initiative of Australia,
State and Local Government*