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## Government delivers high speed broadband to rural NSW

NSW Minister for Rural Affairs Tony Kelly today announced the first 11 rural communities to benefit from the Rees Government's Community Broadband Development program.

Mr Kelly told Parliament the Community Broadband Development program would provide \$11.6 million over five years to deliver affordable high speed broadband to some of the more isolated communities in NSW.

"The tyranny of distance is one of the greatest hurdles faced by rural and regional communities," Mr Kelly said.

"Over the years there have been far too many examples of communities eager to grow and prosper, only to be hampered by a lack of access to the sort of modern technology their city cousins take for granted.

"We're determined to improve job prospects, social horizons and service delivery in rural communities right across NSW – and levelling the playing field between the city and the bush."

Mr Kelly said the first 11 communities to be hooked up to high speed broadband under the Community Broadband Development program are:

- Quambone
- Hill End
- Pilliga
- South West Rocks
- Delegate
- Dalgety
- Wilcannia
- Jubulum near Tabulam
- Coleambally
- Goodooga
- Balranald

"Until now, the prospect of affordable, reliable high-speed broadband has been a pipe dream for these communities," Mr Kelly said.

"From a position of isolation, these communities will now be able to reach out and grasp trade and business opportunities across Australia or across the world - and do so at internet speeds that will not disadvantage them against city based competitors."

Mr Kelly said the program is well underway.

"Community consultation and engagement is taking place now, and the next steps will see the development of business cases and technical plans followed by the building of a high speed wireless network," he said.

"This is being made possible through a whole of community approach that allows the sharing of state, federal and local government assets to benefit the community."

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