

## MEDIA STATEMENT



# Tony Simpson MLA

## Shadow Minister for Consumer Protection; Forestry; Volunteers; IT & Communications

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### **Australian Internet speeds lag behind competition**

Professor Larry Smarr, one of the original creators of the Internet, has criticised Australia's broadband access and says this will impact on the living standards of its citizens.

Shadow IT and Communications Minister Tony Simpson, who has regularly voiced concern about the State Government's lack of commitment to communications infrastructure, supported the call.

"Mr Smarr's statements only confirm what the Liberal Opposition already feared," Mr Simpson said.

"Australia is at risk of being left behind by other countries, reducing our economic competitiveness.

"This will affect businesses, jobs and people's standard of living."

Professor Smarr, now Director of the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology, said that current Australian 'broadband' is 1000 times slower than real broadband.

He said Australia ranks:

- 42nd in the world in the cost of internet services
- 28th for the cost of mobile phone services
- 40th in the availability of skilled labour and engineers and
- 20th in scientific infrastructure.

The professor also criticised recent plans to upgrade Australia's Internet network, saying that these improvements would still leave the nation's network 80 times slower than real broadband.

He said real broadband achieves speeds of one gigabyte per second and Australian broadband rarely exceeded one megabyte per second.

Mr Simpson was worried that Australia was being left behind in the knowledge economy.

"Connecting Australia to a fibre optic system may not necessarily be the solution to Australia's situation," he said.

"However, finding a real solution must be a priority for Governments if we are to be really competitive in today's knowledge economy.

“Governments at all levels must do more to make sure Australia does not fall behind or people could eventually pay with their jobs and their livelihoods.”

**Media Contact: Tony Simpson – 0400 254 666**