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## **Telco chief welcomes new network**

The launch of the National Broadband Network (NBN) in Tasmania will transform the state's telecommunications market from a monopolised structure to one where providers can finally differentiate on service, price and product offerings, rather than their ability to access networks, according to the head of independent telecommunications provider Tastel Community Telco.

Richard Mulligan, CEO of Tastel Community Telco said, "The transition to this new format will bring a vast array of social and economic benefits to the people of Tasmania, and we warmly welcome the federal government's initiatives."

Pending senate approval, the Tasmanian network will be introduced as early as July 2009, before a full national roll-out in early 2010.

Mr Mulligan said Tastel Community Telco would be well placed to become a major provider of high speed Internet to Tasmanian businesses following the NBN roll-out, in light of the Telco's existing wholesale relationship with Aurora, who will jointly construct the network with the Tasmanian government.

"Bearing in mind our connection with Aurora, I feel we'll be one of the obvious avenues for many businesses and service providers to consider," said Mr Mulligan. "We have already been delivering Fibre Optic Broadband to residential and business customers in the Devonport and Newtown areas for some time now."

Industry experts believe the new network has the potential to reform Tasmania's current telecommunications market, thanks to equitable access to network infrastructure. This may stand to benefit developing market players such as Tastel Community Telco, which is one of nine franchises in the nation-wide Community Telco Australia group.

"Our focus revolves around providing local personalised service, and building Tasmania's economy," said Mr Mulligan, "Any positive development for our state's business environment is beneficial for us, and vice versa."

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