

COMMUNICATIONS PORTFOLIO CONFERENCE REPORT – 2020

What a lifetime ago it seems since we were all gathered in Charters Towers for our conference in 2019. COVID-19 has really rocked our world since then. From a communications perspective it is incredible how our Qld Education department and all our Catholic and independent schools transitioned from face to face learning to online learning in such a short timeframe. This has changed our learning landscape forever. Their efforts are to be commended by all.

In effect many ICPA issues, which we have lobbied tirelessly for years, have been proven to be not that difficult after all!! For example, online speech therapy etc. and virtual engagement in classrooms. ICPA Qld sincerely hopes this is now the norm and not the exception.

The Education Departments emergency response team is ramping up again should the current COVID-19 outbreak worsen. Many schools continue to utilise the learning from home materials.

As a recap the Charters Towers state conference saw four communication motions presented. All motions were carried.

Reliable and affordable internet for rural and remote students continues to be of a concern for members. ICPA Qld works very closely with The Department of Education IT team to identify and resolve connectivity issues. ICPA Qld holds a minimum of two face to face meetings per year with the IT team as well as monthly teleconferences. State Council thanks Stephan Woodhouse and his team for their willingness to work with ICPA Qld to solve as many technical issues as possible.

Screen time is a rising concern for members. How long should kids be exposed to screen time is the question asked. ICPA Qld met with the ITB branch to discuss this issue at delegations in August. Currently research is underway regarding e-book usage in schools. A literature review was completed two years ago and the department is also monitoring research from National Guidelines. State schools is also undertaking some research. Watch this space

ICPA Qld continues to lobby the Queensland government for a whole of government approach to invest in connecting all rural remote schools to adequate internet which allows full access to virtual classrooms.

ICPA Qld has raised the topic with relevant Ministers and Members of Parliament at Parliamentary Delegations.

The Learning Place/New Enterprise Solution

The ITB branch of the education department is having a major overhaul of the Learning Place. Tenders are out, globally, for an organisation to build a new platform to replace the current Learning Place and an announcement is due very shortly. The department held a special teleconference with the Learning Place team and ICPA Qld representatives to address the issues faced by Distance Education students using the platform. Workshops around replacing The Learning Place were held and the learning place team have consulted with small schools and DE's and different departments within State Schools. They have also engaged with telehealth and hospital schools on what platforms they use. 980 ideas for the new platform were identified.

Other points to note at this time are

- Blackboard Collaborate closed down on 30th June 2020
- Blackboard Ultra, which is cloud based has taken its place
- The Education Departments contract with Blackboard ceases 30th June 2021
- The NEW enterprise solution will be rolling out progressively until all on board at 30th June 2021
- There are intense training programs, templates and resources in development to coincide with the launch of the new enterprise solution

nbn™

The Sky Muster plus service, which was launched in August 2019, is well and truly established now and generally performed very well for users through online learning from home. Sky Muster plus provides a 25/5mbps download/upload. Many sites are unmetered on Sky Muster plus including general web browsing, email, software updates and education platforms. This should allow uninterrupted services for students and businesses alike. Even the most basic plan should cover your essential needs. However, if you watch YouTube, Netflix and the like this data is metered and you will need to adjust your plan accordingly.

Sky Muster plus should negate the need for an education port, which was needed on the original Sky Muster service, as all education platforms are unmetered.

The Government's new Statutory Infrastructure Provider regime came into effect on July 1st, which means all people in Australia can access high-speed broadband, no matter where they live or work. This regime underpins the Universal Service Guarantee, meaning there is now a legislated framework for access to broadband, as well as voice and payphones.

Under the new laws, nbn™ will have a statutory obligation to provide networks that allow end-users to receive broadband with peak download and upload speeds of at least 25/5 Megabits per second. The Regional Broadband Scheme, which is part of the same package of reforms, commences from 1 January 2021, and will provide transparent, sustainable and ongoing funding for rural, regional and remote broadband.

Together, these new laws guarantee access to modern telecommunications services for those living in regional, rural and remote areas.

nbn™ Scams

In order to combat scams, nbn™ is working with stakeholders and the community to raise awareness about how to recognise a scam related to nbn™. To make this simple, nbn™ have created an animation which clearly articulates what an nbn™ scam is, how to recognise one, and what you should do. It can be found at <https://lion.app.box.com/s/nrfie1t83sotv4lcw7i6lgyvowmsmrk>

Have you been contacted by someone claiming to be from nbn™ asking for personal information and you're not sure if it is a scam? Learn more: <https://nbnco.com.au/scamadvice>

Telstra – 3G services to be phased out by 2024

This is a letter from Telstra to ICPA Qld

"Telstra has announced plans to switch off the 3G service in June 2024. Telstra's 3G technology - which you might also know as NextG - was switched on in [2006](#) and has reliably served Australians for nearly one and a half decades.

Telstra's 5G service is now available in selected sites within [10 cities](#) around Australia, and we have a range of devices commercially available. 5G will bring advancements in mobile gaming, virtual reality experiences, HD video conferencing and other apps not yet thought of. This is in stark contrast to 3G, which only supports basic access to online information. With 5G rollout proceeding at pace, we have decided it no longer makes sense, from commercial or customer experience perspectives, to maintain the legacy 3G service offering beyond June 2024.

We are letting our customers know about the switch off at least four-and-a-half years before it takes place. We will be there to help along the way and will work with affected customers to ensure the transition is as seamless as possible. This isn't the first time we have upgraded our technology to another generation of mobile technology (another 'G'). In December 2016 we switched off our 2G network; in April 2008 we closed the CDMA network; and earlier this year, we switched off the 2100 MHz band for 3G. So, we have gained a lot of experience to help us ensure that the transition away from the 3G technology will be a smooth one for our customers.

Our 4G network will have a similar size and reach as our 3G network ahead of the closure of the 3G service, aiming to ensure that our customers and the communities they live in are not disadvantaged.

You may also like to read a blog on the [Continuing evolution of Telstra's mobile network](#) by Telstra Group Executive Networks & IT, Nikos Katinakis"

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