

The IEEE Society on Social Implications of Technology presents...

## DR. ROSS KELSO

### THE POLITICS OF NEXT GENERATION BROADBAND

Date: Wednesday 3 December 2008

Time: 6:00pm

Theatre 2, Ground Floor, ICT Building, Melbourne University,  
111 Barry St. South Carlton

Public welcome — no entry charge



#### Abstract

By the time of this lecture, one week would have passed since proposals were submitted to build a National Broadband Network (NBN) for delivering data speeds of at least 12 Mb/s to 98 per cent of Australian homes and businesses, using fibre-to-the node or fibre-to-the home architecture and providing open access to wholesale broadband services. Being a key election promise, the Rudd Government has committed up to \$4.7 billion in funding support for the successful bid.

Optical fibre in the access network offers a quantum change – the potential to end the scarcity of communications bandwidth available to small to medium enterprise and residential customers, heralding the arrival of a veritable cornucopia of services. Given the right settings, an NBN could significantly assist in further developing Australia's networked information economy and improving our international competitiveness. Yet this proposed National Broadband Network is predicated on a new policy and regulatory framework yet to be devised; and so far there has been a distinct lack of transparency of process. Some parties are arguing this initiative could even sound the death-knell of effective competition in Australian telecommunications.

This lecture will discuss issues such as:

- how the idea for an NBN entered recent Australian politics;
- why an open access network is being prescribed and what should it mean;
- what are the competitive implications of a given network architecture;
- whether it is really necessary to expend \$4.7 billion of public money in this way.

In brief, will the National Broadband Network be in the better interests of end-users?

#### Dr. Ross Kelso

Ross Kelso has recently completed doctoral studies at Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, examining the matter of open access to next generation broadband. Until mid 2002, he was a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for International Research on Communication and Information Technology, CIRCIT@RMIT in Melbourne. Between then and commencement of doctoral studies, Ross joined the National Office for the Information Economy to work on the report of the Broadband Advisory Group.

Dr Kelso is an independent researcher and consultant, skilled also in writing, lecturing and media presentation. His professional background includes more than 30 years as an engineer and manager in the telecommunications industry. He currently serves on the boards of the Internet Society – Australian Chapter (ISOC-AU) and the Consumers' Telecommunications Network (CTN) of which he is also the Chair.

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