



## AARNET Calls for Continued Investment in Australia's Innovation Future

Sydney, AUSTRALIA

— 6 May 2008 - In order for Australia to remain at the forefront of innovation, AARNET, Australia's National Research and Education Network (NREN) has called on the Australian Government to continue to invest in Australia's research and education network infrastructure particularly in regional and rural Australia. [www.aarnet.edu.au](http://www.aarnet.edu.au).

Chris Hancock, CEO of AARNET said, "AARNET is an enabler of innovation in Australia. From our beginning as the first Internet Service Provider in Australia, AARNET now plays an important strategic role in delivering the nation's research and education network infrastructure for over one million users ranging from students, academic staff to researchers."

"Research and education are the critical enablers of an innovative environment and AARNET is calling for the Federal Government to continue to invest in our network to ensure that all Australian researchers and educators have equitable access to high-speed Internet."

"The government's continued investment in improving and developing the network infrastructure of the research and education community will ensure that Australia continues to be an innovative country, a clever country."

AARNET has made a submission to the Review of the National Innovation System, co-ordinated by the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research. In its submission, AARNET stressed the importance of resolving the "last mile issues" saying that AARNET needed to seamlessly connect researchers, educators and students from their homes with the same facilities they would have at major metropolitan campuses. AARNET also called for the Government to re-invigorate the building of dedicated last mile dark fibre into research and education institutions. AARNET plans to establish a national fibre bank specifically for the benefit of research and education and would welcome the donation of spare fibre from government funded entities, state and local government and public and private utilities to benefit its research and education community.

Mr Hancock also called for Government support for upgrading international capacity especially to emerging powerhouses such as India and China. AARNET's submission included case studies that illustrate how its network plays a strategic role in enabling collaboration and the exchange of ideas and information between Australia and the world. Through AARNET, strategic research initiatives have been made possible for institutes such as The Tasmanian Partnership for Advanced Computing, Australian Institute of Marine Sciences, New Climate Change Research Centre, University of Melbourne OptiPortal and the Garvan Institute.

AARNET celebrates the 19th year of the birth of the Internet in Australia in 2008. It serves more than one million users with around 2 petabytes of data annually. In 2007, AARNET achieved a 99.960% network availability and was ranked 28th in the world for peering adjacency.

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For further information or for a copy of AARNET's submission to the Review of the National Innovation System, please contact:

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About AARNET

AARNET Pty Ltd (APL) is the company that operates Australia's Academic and Research Network (AARNET). It is a not-for-profit company limited by shares. The shareholders are 37 Australian universities and the CSIRO. AARNET provides high-capacity leading edge Internet services for the tertiary education and research sector communities and their research partners. AARNET serves more than one million end users who access the network through local area networks at member institutions. For further information, please visit:

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