

BigAir calls Labor's \$100m spending plan to hotwire schools with fibre links 'excessive'

Alternative wireless technologies can substantially reduce costs and increase flexibility

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BigAir Group Limited (BigAir), a leading provider of wireless broadband solutions for businesses and residential customers, is concerned by some of the choices of the major political parties in relation to their national broadband plans. This is highlighted by the Labor party's recent announcement that a national fibre link build is essential to reach a digital revolution for schools.

With BigAir's fixed WiMAX* broadband network covering major metropolitan areas in Sydney and Melbourne, schools can be serviced with fibre like speeds without the expense and time constraints of fibre builds. The BigAir WiMAX technology operates by installing a WiMAX radio at the school or business, which communicates via a high-speed wireless connection to BigAir base stations located throughout Sydney and Melbourne. The capital investment therefore required for laying direct fibre or fibre-to-the-node (FTTN) technologies is substantially reduced, saving significant upfront and ongoing costs.

"We are a little dumbfounded by the major parties calling for large scale fibre builds to be undertaken when, in most cases, alternative technologies such as wireless broadband can achieve the same results at a fraction of the cost and without any lengthy construction delays," said BigAir CEO Jason Ashton.

BigAir has provided services to a number of schools in the Sydney region including Loreto Normanhurst, Emmanuel College and Trinity Grammar with symmetric services at a fraction of the cost of fibre. These links are easily upgradable and speeds up to 30Mbps can be achieved without changing the existing equipment, and even 100Mbps or faster is available with a simple radio upgrade.

BigAir was the first national carrier to deliver fixed WiMAX wireless broadband services in Australia: "BigAir can now provide broadband services to schools and businesses frustrated with the current limitations of fixed line options in Sydney, Melbourne and shortly Brisbane. Using WiMAX allows us to deliver services that are more reliable, higher quality and with greater coverage than other proprietary wireless services," commented Ashton.

The BigAir network allows broadband speeds from 2Mbps to 100Mbps

and delivers uptime of 99.99%, anywhere within the coverage area. Its Mean Time to Repair (MTTR) is also above industry average and often faster than wired Internet connections. Because BigAir owns its own network, it is able to bypass telephone exchanges owned by the current providers and provide greater flexibility and control over the quality of service.

Coverage information, pricing and technical information is available from BigAir's WiMAX specialists on 1300 BIGAIR.

* WiMAX® and WiMAX Forum® are trademarks of the WiMAX Forum

About BigAir Group Limited (ASX: BGL)

BigAir is a wireless broadband service provider, which offers high-speed data telecommunications services to customers using its own state of the art WiMAX networks. BigAir owns and operates its own fixed WiMAX network covering the greater Sydney and Melbourne metropolitan areas. BigAir is also a provider of iBurst mobile wireless services which has coverage in most Australian Capital cities as well as the Gold Coast. BigAir also provides services on the Unwired network which has coverage in Sydney and Melbourne. Access to these three leading wireless networks positions BigAir as the leading integrated wireless solutions provider in Australia. BigAir is able to offer a range of wireless communication solutions including high-speed symmetric fixed broadband services from 2Mbps to 100Mbps, as well as mobile data and portable data services at 1Mbps. The company also offers email and web hosting as well as data centre co-location services. For more information, please visit www.bigair.com.au <<http://www.bigair.com.au>>.

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