



Media release

From the Minister for Information and Communication
Technology

Wednesday, 26 September, 2007

REGIONAL BROADBAND INVESTMENT TO BOOST ENVIRONMENT

Environmental workers in regional Victoria will access cutting-edge technology out in the field, thanks to a \$6.3 million broadband expansion project announced today by the Minister for Information and Communication Technology Theo Theophanous.

Mr Theophanous said the three-year Broadband Innovation Fund (BIF) Spatial Imaging Project will vastly enhance the state's ability to manage environmental issues such as water quality and land degradation.

"Technology similar to the revolutionary Google Earth mapping service will help deliver statewide data such as aerial photography and satellite imaging through broadband networks direct to field officers," Mr Theophanous said.

"This will translate to significant improvements in environmental monitoring, more effective management of natural resources such as water catchments, and more targeted exploration of land for minerals, cutting time and duplication for industry and government.

"By integrating information such as satellite images, catchment data and addresses, field officers will have the ultimate in decision-making power at their fingertips, making the information more powerful and useful than ever.

"Part of the project will include mobile computing, which will mean data can be both collected and accessed live in the field, cutting out double handling and increasing efficiency, allowing officers to make decisions on the spot.

"The technology will mean that very large images which are commonplace for natural resources managers – and that can often take days or weeks to download to a desktop – will be able to be viewed online within seconds.

"Providing our natural resource managers with the latest cutting edge technology will make it possible to deliver more information more accurately, meaning better decisions about managing our environment can be made sooner.

"This will help establish Victoria as a clear leader in helping regional communities to address critical regional environmental issues."

Mr Theophanous said the project would bring about a major upgrade to the quality and scope of planning, analysis and decision making in regional Victoria, involving a range of environmental partners.

This new project forms part of the Brumby Government's \$15million Broadband Innovation Fund, which was established to improve the availability of high bandwidth infrastructure and support the innovative use of broadband technology particularly in regional Victoria.

It is a strategy that falls under the *Broadband Framework* – the Brumby Government's vision for positioning Victoria as the smartest and most strategic user of broadband technology in Australia.

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