



Connecting the Coast

December 2008 - Council tackles broadband black spots

The notion of black spots has been a point of contention across the Sunshine Coast for some time.

Council is beginning to tackle the sticky problem of how to eliminate broadband black spots in both business and residential premises, by identifying areas that experience poor coverage or are under served by current providers.

Research consistently links high levels of broadband penetration with significant economic benefits and there is a widely accepted view that regional communities with inferior services also risk restrictions in social, community and economic development opportunities.

To help tackle this problem council is currently working with its partners and the local telecommunications industry in an attempt to provide ideas on how to plug the gaps in coverage and to also provide high speed broadband services to businesses and residents throughout the region.

By collecting and collating this information, council will be able to:

- Pinpoint broadband coverage gaps
- Understand current service standards and what home based businesses, residents and businesses want in terms of service standards and price.
- Provide information on broadband and importantly the different ways that residents may be able to use broadband to enhance their work and home life.
- Collate the demand for broadband and pass it on to our Commonwealth Government Partner- the Department of Broadband, Communications & the Digital Economy (DCBDE) (www.dbcde.gov.au) in an attempt to seek a solution for improvements in these areas.

By aggregating demand for improved broadband, council will then be able to work through the technical options available or identify the technical solutions required to address the black spot area. Council will then use this information to prepare a business case for broadband providers to invest in the black spot area. Some locations may qualify for Commonwealth Government assistance in the form of the Australian Broadband Guarantee. The timing and ability of council to influence private sector investment will depend on a number of factors, including; location, topography, vegetation, number of affected premises and other particular circumstances.

To register your interest in high speed broadband, go to www.connectingthecoast.com.au