



G9 to lodge broadband bid with Government's Expert Taskforce

The G9 group of competitive telecommunications companies announced today that the G9 will prepare and lodge a bid with the Federal Government to build a national broadband network.



This follows the Government's recent announcement that it will conduct an open and competitive bidding process and legislate to enable a new high speed broadband network for built-up areas.



"G9 CEOs have met to consider the Government's announcement and we were unanimous in our view that the G9 should proceed to prepare a bid to build such a network," Michael Malone, CEO of iiNet said.

"The details of participation by individual G9 members – for example as equity participants, as launch customers, or as supporters – will be determined as the bid is finalised."



"The G9 has consistently argued that Australia needs a new high speed broadband network – and a competitive market structure to protect and nurture the interests of Australian consumers and businesses. This is the way to ensure the most rapid take up of services, the greatest degree of innovation and the lowest possible pricing," Ravi Bhatia, CEO of Primus Telecom said.



"We look forward to working with the Government to ensure that the bidding ground rules lead to the selection of the proposal which best meets both important objectives – the physical availability of a high speed broadband network, and a competitive market structure facilitated by fair access pricing," David Tudehope, Chief Executive of Macquarie Telecom said.



"In the last twelve months the G9 has worked carefully to develop a detailed model which meets both objectives, and we now stand ready to build on our existing work to develop a compelling bid," Optus Chief Executive Paul O'Sullivan said.



"As a first step, we look forward to working with the Minister's Expert Taskforce to identify the issues that the Government will need to consider in assessing competing bids, including the regulatory changes sought by bidders, and the extent to which each bid leverages existing fast access infrastructure investments where appropriate.

"We expect that our input will assist the Expert Taskforce in its task of preparing detailed bidding guidelines, which is a necessary first step before parties can finalise their bids."



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