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**From:** Craig Byrnes  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2010 10:36 AM  
**To:** Grainger, Joanna  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] Rhonda Griffin  
**Subject:** RE: Meeting with NBN Co [SEC=IN-CONFIDENCE]

Hi Joanna,

Looks excellent.

Kind regards,

Craig Byrnes  
General Manager - IR

D: 02 9927 4144  
M: [REDACTED]  
E: [craigbyrnes@nbnco.com.au](mailto:craigbyrnes@nbnco.com.au)  
Level 11, 100 Arthur Street  
North Sydney NSW 2060



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**From:** Grainger, Joanna [<mailto:Joanna.Grainger@dbcde.gov.au>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 17 November, 2010 9:45 AM  
**To:** Craig Byrnes  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Meeting with NBN Co [SEC=IN-CONFIDENCE]

Hi Craig

Here is the draft qtb we have prepared. Any comments?

Thanks  
jo

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## NBN – UNION AGREEMENTS WITH SUB CONTRACTORS BUILDING THE NBN

### Issue

- **Media article: Unions seek NBN Wage and job deals [The Australian, p1, 17/11/10]**

### Key Points

- NBN Co has undertaken a range of competitive procurement activities including for the design and construction of the rollout of the network.
- NBN Co is currently assessing the proposals from prospective tenderers for the design and construction of the network.
- Enterprise arrangements for companies which are successful in tendering for design and construction with NBN Co are a matter for those companies.
- However, it is not expected there will be a blow-out in wages costs for the project.

Cleared by: Marianne Cullen  
Position: First Assistant Secretary, NBN Implementation Division  
Telephone and Mobile: 6271 1122,    
Created on: 17 November 2010

\* Material highlighted in yellow has been provided by the Minister's Office and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Department

Contact Officer: Jo Grainger  
Telephone: 6271 7771  
Div/Br: NBN Implementation, Shareholder & Policy Branch  
Last updated: 17 November 2010

T#

- NBN Co is a Government business enterprise which understands the challenges of managing resources effectively.
- It has an eminently well qualified Board with the skills to manage this major infrastructure project effectively including its rapidly expanding workforce.
- NBN Co is doing the right thing by its staff and is acting in accordance with Australian employment law, including compliance with the Fair Work Principles and the Australian National Code of Practice for the Construction Industry 2009.
- NBN Co has entered into four enterprise agreements covering its workforce and has worked with the ACTU and relevant unions in finalising these agreements.
- NBN Co is developing its workforce planning strategy to identify the supply of qualified people and where they are located around the country.

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Cleared by: Marianne Cullen  
Position: First Assistant Secretary, NBN Implementation Division  
Telephone and Mobile: 6271 1122 [REDACTED]  
Created on: 17 November 2010

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Telephone: 6271 7771  
Div/Br: NBN Implementation, Shareholder & Policy Branch  
Last updated: 17 November 2010

T#

- As well, NBN Co has established an internal Training Group which, in addition to addressing NBN Co training requirements, is designed to provide a forum that addresses the needs of industry organisations.
- NBN Co is developing a workforce development strategy that will identify the skill requirements, determine the training programs and ensure compliance.
- A key objective of this strategy is to ensure there is access to the right skills at the right time in the right place.
- NBN Co has identified the availability of employees/contractors with existing skills across 16 geographic regions.

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Cleared by: Marianne Cullen  
Position: First Assistant Secretary, NBN Implementation Division  
Telephone and Mobile: 6271 1122, [REDACTED]  
Created on: 17 November 2010

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Last updated: 17 November 2010

T#

- NBN Co is working with its partners, contracting companies, vendors and the training institutions and private companies about future training needs, with its requirements to be refined by the learnings from work on the first release sites.
- NBN Co has also advised that Innovation and Business Skills Australia and the Electrocomms and Energy Utilities Industry Skills Council have indicated they have current training competencies that would meet the skills required for the roll out and ongoing maintenance of the NBN.
- My Department is also working with the Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relation (DEEWR) to determine current workforce size in relevant areas, and to identify skills and qualifications needed to perform the required jobs.

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Cleared by: Marianne Cullen  
Position: First Assistant Secretary, NBN Implementation Division  
Telephone and Mobile: 6271 1122.    
Created on: 17 November 2010

\* Material highlighted in yellow has been provided by the Minister's Office and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Department

Contact Officer: Jo Grainger  
Telephone: 6271 7771  
Div/Br: NBN Implementation, Shareholder & Policy Branch  
Last updated: 17 November 2010

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**From:** Grainger, Joanna [Joanna.Grainger@dbcde.gov.au]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2010 10:23 AM  
**To:** Craig Byrnes  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] Rhonda Griffin  
**Subject:** RE: Political Alert - Broadband (FED) [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Thanks Craig

j

-----Original Message-----

From: Craig Byrnes [<mailto:CraigByrnes@nbnco.com.au>]  
Sent: Wednesday, 17 November 2010 10:22 AM  
To: Grainger, Joanna  
Cc: [REDACTED] Rhonda Griffin  
Subject: FW: Political Alert - Broadband (FED)

Hi Joanna,

Hansard attached.

As we suspected the comments have been taken out of context. Questions were aimed at the NBN Co enterprise agreements, not contracting.

Kind regards,

Craig Byrnes  
General Manager - IR

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North Sydney NSW 2060

-----Original Message-----

From: Rhonda Griffin  
Sent: Wednesday, 17 November, 2010 10:15 AM  
To: Craig Byrnes  
Subject: FW: Political Alert - Broadband (FED)

Craig

Here is the Hansard question without notice.

-----Original Message-----

From: CCH Parliament [[mailto:\[REDACTED\]](mailto:[REDACTED])]  
Sent: Tuesday, 16 November, 2010 9:49 AM  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Political Alert - Broadband (FED)

Please find attached:BROADBAND (FED)Question without notice and additional answer319N1408Total number of pages 2CCH POLITICAL ALERT: Better Informed, Better Protected. Your Mailbox at [REDACTED] contains an archive of your Political Alerts. For support please email [REDACTED] or ph (02) 6273 2070.

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the strategy to further strengthen our economy. We have been able to achieve what no other major economy could during the crisis: increase job numbers during the worst global recession in 75 years. (*Time expired*)

**Senator HUTCHINS**—Mr President, I ask a further supplementary question. How will the Critical Skills Investment Fund be used to address emerging skills shortages as the economy grows and strengthens?

**Senator CHRIS EVANS**—As the economy continues to grow and strengthen, the government is working hard to respond to what are emerging skills shortages. The Critical Skills Investment Fund is a key part of the government's skills and sustainable growth strategy of more than \$660 million to address those skills shortages, lift foundation skills and reform and improve access to vocational education and training.

The Critical Skills Investment Fund of \$200 million will upskill workers and train job seekers who wish to work in the critical industry sectors that have strong demand. It will target skills shortages in the resources, construction, renewable energy and infrastructure sectors. It will also increase workforce participation by groups traditionally underrepresented in these sectors. Government funding support for training will be matched by enterprise contributions on a sliding scale. We will look to double the Commonwealth investment to try and ensure that young people get the opportunity to take advantage of the economic growth. (*Time expired*)

### Broadband

**Senator FISHER** (2.20 pm)—My question is to the Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy. The CEPU says it is mustering resources to unionise the workforce rolling out the NBN and to get good wages and conditions for NBN workers. Has a significant increase in wages been factored into the spend of \$43 billion on the National Broadband Network?

**Senator CONROY**—I thank the senator for her ongoing interest in this issue. I am aware Mr Quigley appeared—and you may even have been present—when there were a number of discussions around the enterprise bargaining agreements that have now been signed and agreed to between the workforce and NBN Co. There are agreements in place based on all the normal principles. I am a little confused when you talk about a blow-out. There is an EBA in place; it covers all of those things. There are no individual contracts for the workforce.

Overall, I believe that the answer will be no, there is no blow-out in wages costs because we have an agreed set of EBA principles. They have now been signed and agreed by the ACTU, coordinating right through with the CEPU and a range of other unions that have been

involved in these discussions, and I have been kept reasonably abreast of the issues as they have evolved. These were handled at arm's length. They have been signed off and agreed and there is no suggestion at all that there would be a wages blow-out. I think that it is a fantasy of those opposite who simply hope that these things will happen, because they just cannot understand why those residents in Willunga are going to get access to fibre optics. I picked Willunga, Mr President, because the good senator who asked the question is from South Australia, and the 84 per cent of people in a small country town like Willunga who want fibre optics. (*Time expired*)

**Senator FISHER**—Mr President, I ask a supplementary question. Notwithstanding that trite reassurance, Minister, the industry warns that the NBN rollout will add to construction costs, forecasting that a one per cent rise in construction costs will add \$1.4 billion to the bill to build the NBN. Coupled with acute shortages of skilled workers particularly in the government's priority areas, what extra costs need to be added to the NBN total bill? (*Time expired*)

**Senator CONROY**—I thank you for that question. That is a very old front-page headline in the *Australian* you are drawing from there, Senator, and I would put to you that it is inaccurate in every sense. We have an EBA in place.

*Senator Abetz interjecting—*

**Senator CONROY**—It is a very old edition, Senator Abetz. The information I have been given—

*Senator Boyce interjecting—*

**Senator CONROY**—Sorry—

**The PRESIDENT**—Senator Conroy, ignore the interjection. Just address the chair.

**Senator CONROY**—It sort of pierced an eardrum, Mr President. The costs from the EBA are in place. Yes, there is a very competitive labour market evolving in Australia. It is not yet quite back to the levels of the GFC, but going in that general direction. The NBN Company are very conscious of this. They have been engaged in discussions with the local industry about provision of services. They are aware of that. The government is conscious of wanting to ensure that we have enough technicians. (*Time expired*)

**Senator FISHER**—Mr President, I have a further supplementary question. All right then. Given that the push for good wages and conditions is exacerbated by skill shortages particularly in regional areas, will the minister repeat the government's promise that there will be no blow-out in the \$43 billion cost to build the National Broadband Network?

**Senator CONROY**—The excitement of those opposite while they are waiting for the release of the NBN business case is understandable. It is a very, very worthwhile read, the NBN Co. business case. Once

again it confirms that the NBN project is financially viable and will deliver cheap and affordable broadband to towns like Willunga. It will be one of the most historic builds of an infrastructure project in this country. The government is committed to ensuring that there is a well-trained and accredited workforce. That is why we are putting forward \$100 million as part of a package to retrain technicians, who have their primary experience in copper networks, into the future fibre based networks. We are putting \$100 million on the table to ensure that we do not have to waste all that experience and expertise. *(Time expired)*

### Mining

**Senator BOB BROWN** (2.26 pm)—My question without notice is to the minister representing the minister for the environment. When is it expected that the government will approve or disapprove of the Wandoan coalmine project in the Surat Basin in the north of the Darling Downs in Queensland? Is this the world's largest open-cut coalmine? Is it true that in terms of carbon it will produce when burnt, wherever in the world, the equivalent of 10 per cent of Australia's current greenhouse emissions from this one mining source?

**Senator CONROY**—Thank you for that question, Senator Brown. The minister, I am advised, has discretion that he has to exercise under the EPBC and he is going to consider all the facts of this case. In terms of some of the more detailed questions you ask, I will take them on notice and get back to you as soon as I can.

**Senator BOB BROWN**—Mr President, I have a supplementary question. Amongst the detail I asked: is this the world's biggest open-cut coalmine, at 11,000 hectares? Will it produce the equivalent of 10 per cent of Australia's greenhouse gases through the combustion of that coal overseas or domestically? My added supplementary is: how much federal government monies have been expended on this project to date and how much is earmarked for the assistance of this project in any way, including transport of coal to port?

**Senator Wong**—Mr President, I rise on a point of order. The supplementary question—or most of it—is clearly not in the minister's portfolio, or the representing minister's portfolio. It is just to the wrong minister.

**The PRESIDENT**—All I can do, Senator Wong, on your point of order, is to ask the minister to answer that part of the question that is relevant to the portfolio that he is representing.

**Senator CONROY**—Thank you, Mr President. I would concur with my colleague that probably the majority of that question was outside the portfolio. I am happy to take on notice those parts that are relevant to the portfolio and come back to Senator Brown with the information as it becomes available.

**Senator BOB BROWN**—I cannot get the answers to the questions in the portfolio or outside it, but I will persist, Mr President, with a further supplementary question. I am quite happy for the minister to pass on that question about the expenditure of taxpayers' money on this massive carbon pollution project in Queensland. But I ask the minister: what studies has the Commonwealth done independently on the impact on the natural heritage, the cultural heritage and the water systems of the Surat Basin?

**Senator CONROY**—Thank you again, Senator Brown. I am happy to get any additional information around those questions that the minister is able to provide.

### Broadband

**Senator IAN MACDONALD** (2.29 pm)—My question is to Senator Conroy as the Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy. Is the minister aware of the growing chorus of criticism directed at Labor's National Broadband Network from people like Professor Paul Kerin, the OECD and internationally recognised experts in the field, such as Mexican telecommunications tycoon Carlos Slim Helu and Japanese internet industry leader Masayoshi Son, who said that the NBN could be built by private enterprise without the government having to dip into its dwindling resources? Is the minister also aware that these experts believe that the estimated cost of \$7,000 per household to provide broadband services is far too high and that the government should consider adopting a multiplatform approach? Minister, why is it that all of these experts are wrong and only you are right?

**Senator CONROY**—I thank Senator Macdonald for his ongoing interest. It is important for those opposite to read all of the OECD report and not just selectively quote it. The report released by the OECD yesterday concludes that the National Broadband Network has the potential to yield substantial benefits, especially in terms of productivity, and that it will improve internet services for the entire population—something those in the far corner used to believe in—and will promote fairer competition between private firms on retail services. The OECD states that the National Broadband Network is a far-reaching reform project that has been undertaken to fill the gaps in the broadband internet sector.

Through the NBN the Gillard government is ensuring that every Australian, no matter where they live, has access to affordable high-speed broadband. This was confirmed by the OECD's report which again, if you do not take selective quotes, states that the NBN will avoid the risk of a geographic digital divide as it will cover the entire population, whereas if it were done by the private sector it would be done more gradually and only to the most densely populated areas. I recommend it to you, Senator Joyce. The OECD re-

port also outlined that recent research suggests that the use of the new network can bring large savings, between 0.5 per cent and 1.5 per cent of GDP, to the cost of public services over a 10-year period in just four areas—health care, education, transport and electricity—which on its own would warrant the construction. So the OECD says that just in those four sectors—*(Time expired)*

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Mr President, I ask a supplementary question. Is the minister aware of the recent statement by Councillor Annie Clarke, Mayor of the Burke Shire Council in the Gulf of Carpentaria, that broadband was wasted in the gulf where residents are screaming out for basic services such as reticulated electricity, roads and mobile phone services? Minister, can you go up there and explain to these people why your government is about to splurge \$43 billion on this much maligned NBN in preference to providing basic infrastructure services? *(Time expired)*

**Senator CONROY**—I am prepared to listen to the Mayor of Barcoo Shire, Mr Bruce Scott, who says, ‘We want fibre to these small communities.’ His communities are begging, crying out and campaigning to ensure that they get fibre—and this is a National Party council. They are demanding that they get fibre. They do not want the opposition’s mickey mouse wireless network. I repeat for those who want to listen that in just the four areas of health care, education, transport and electricity there will be a 0.5 per cent to 1.5 per cent improvement in GDP from building the National Broadband Network. So in all of those areas that the mayor you referred to is expressing concerns there is concrete support from the OECD which says that building the National Broadband Network will benefit health, will benefit education, will benefit electricity and will benefit transport. *(Time expired)*

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Mr President, I ask a further supplementary question. The minister’s arrogance is surmounted only by the government’s waste of \$43 billion. I wonder if the minister understands the mounting criticism of the \$43 billion white elephant. Is the minister’s refusal to ask the Productivity Commission to conduct a cost-benefit analysis yet another sign that he is not only out of step with telecommunications experts but also out of his depth?

**Senator CONROY**—To draw on the question: I was lucky enough to recently travel to Mexico, the land of Mr Slim’s wonderful monopoly that he has run so effectively to make himself the world’s richest man. I have to tell you that I prefer our telecommunications system and how it works to Mr Slim’s any day of the week. I invite you to go to Mexico and try it yourself, Senator Macdonald. When it comes to the question of trying to find a new cloak to hide behind to delay rolling out to residents of Townsville, residents of Willunga, residents in Tasmania, residents in Kiama

Downs and residents in Armidale, who have signed up in droves to get the National Broadband Network’s fibre-optic connection—87 per cent in Armidale, 84 per cent in Willunga and it goes on and on—*(Time expired)*

### Housing

**Senator HURLEY** (2.36 pm)—My question is to the Minister for Social Housing and Homelessness, Senator Arbib. Can the minister please advise the Senate about the progress of the government’s Social Housing Initiative investment under the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan? Can the minister also inform the Senate about the improvements and upgrades to existing social housing stock as well as additional dwellings constructed? Can the minister inform the Senate as to how many people have been employed under the government’s Social Housing Initiative?

**Senator ARBIB**—I thank Senator Hurley for her question. The Australian government’s \$5.6 billion social housing program under the nation-building plan is on track and delivering much-needed homes for vulnerable people, such as people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Around 31,000 Australians will benefit from the Australian government’s investment in social housing under the stimulus plan.

The federal government initially committed to constructing a total of 17,460 dwellings. I am happy to report that we are exceeding our targets. The average price of an individual dwelling is about \$272,000, well below the original target of \$300,000. Because of that excellent value for money, we will build around 2,000 additional social housing dwellings for Australians in need.

Construction has commenced on 17,800 dwellings, and more than 5,100 dwellings have now been completed. With the high level of rainfall in the states, this is a good figure. Because of the rainfall we are experiencing, there will understandably be some delays in construction, but the states are overall delivering under the agreement. It is also good news for the regions, because four out of every 10 new social housing dwellings are being built in regional Australia.

With regard to repairs and maintenance, 12,000 dwellings that were uninhabitable have been repaired under the stimulus funding, further boosting social housing supply. Our initial target was 2,500 dwellings, so we have successfully surpassed that target in partnership with the states and territories. A total of more than 80,000 dwellings have benefited from repairs and maintenance which was completed in June this year, and that is a very good figure.

**Senator HURLEY**—Mr President, I ask a supplementary question. Can the minister also advise the Senate if there has been any special recognition of the standards achieved under this program? Is the minister

**Broadband**

**Senator CONROY** (Victoria—Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Digital Productivity) (3.03 pm)—I would like to update an answer to a question I gave in the last parliamentary session. Senator Barnett asked me about NBN in Tasmania, and I have some further information. I had been advised that there had been 700 phone calls requesting participation in Telstra's trial. I am advised that it is only hundreds rather than 700.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE: TAKE NOTE OF ANSWERS****Economy**

**Senator PAYNE** (New South Wales) (3.03 pm)—I move:

That the Senate take note of the answer given by the Minister for Finance and Deregulation (Senator Wong) to a question without notice asked by Senator Payne today, relating to the economy.

In that response the minister referred, amongst other things, to the recently released Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook, MYEFO, papers which were released last Tuesday. In fact, as the coalition has been at great pains to point out, what the MYEFO really showed was that Labor's budget position has deteriorated even as the economy is actually projected to be stronger—quite a 'stunning' accomplishment, really, when you think about it. What they have managed to do is to deliver higher deficits, lower surpluses and higher net debt. So what actually should have been going on in this period of time is that so much more should have been done to cut spending and to reduce upward pressure on interest rates, which of course was the tenor of the question I asked the minister. What is clear to us from their actions in relation to these issues is that they simply cannot take the hard decisions. They make a lot of noise and they talk about it quite a lot but, when it comes to the reality, there is no capacity to make the hard decisions that this economy needs.

The fiscal deficit this year, for example, is projected to be \$48½ billion. But for the month of September alone the government's deficit was \$13.8 billion, the highest on record. In the first three months of the financial year, Labor's spending was \$9.6 billion higher than for the same period last year, despite the fact that revenue was \$1.9 billion lower. And who is paying the price? The price is being paid by Australian homeowners. They are paying the price for Labor's extravagance through higher interest rates, and that is a pretty simple fact that the government seems incapable of accepting. The net debt relative to the pre-election fiscal outlook has increased by \$4.9 billion and is now expected to peak at \$94.4 billion in 2011-12.

When you look at government programs and what is actually being done at the moment, like the Building

the Education Revolution debacle, they are quite simply inflationary. They are putting pressure on inflation and on interest rates. Just last week the Treasurer of Victoria, Mr Lenders, said that only 20 per cent of BER projects in Victoria were completed, and that means that 60 per cent of the funding has still to be rolled out. So, by their own admission, Labor are continuing to stimulate the economy even after the worst of the global financial crisis has passed. There is a further \$6 billion to come in the construction of school halls in response to that quarter of negative growth back in 2008.

They do try and wave it away. They try and dismiss it with a wave of the hand and a waving around of the MYEFO documents. It is actually not quite that simple, though, because we then come to the September quarter CPI, and that shows that Labor's excessive spending still continues to put pressure on inflation. We see steep rises in power, in water and in rents accounting for most of the increase in CPI. It is not rocket science to work out where that hurts the most: it hurts the most in the average Australian family.

In the September quarter, water and sewerage charges rose by 12.8 per cent, electricity by six per cent, property rates and charges by 6.2 per cent and rents by over one per cent. When you put that all together, though, since the end of 2007—since this government was elected—electricity prices have risen by 35 per cent, gas prices by 24 per cent, water prices by 29 per cent and rents by 15 per cent. Add to that the fact that there have now been seven interest rate rises on Labor's watch since October 2009. And what do those interest rate rises do? They also increase the cost of building materials, they make badly needed new homes yet more expensive to build—and we are falling ever behind on new home construction—and renters suffer more as landlords, reasonably, try to pass on the higher costs of mortgage interest rates to tenants. Who hurts? The Australian people hurt. Australian families hurt. In November they have had an interest rate rise, and the commentators say that more are expected. So we look to December, to Christmas and to a new year. If the record of this government since the end of 2007 is anything to go by, there will be very little in the Christmas stocking for most Australian families.

**Senator JACINTA COLLINS** (Victoria—Parliamentary Secretary for School Education and Workplace Relations (3.08 pm)—I am glad Senator Payne has chosen, of all the questions today, to focus on this particular matter, because there has at least been an attempt at some serious consideration of some of the fiscal issues confronting Australia. However, I need to take a short divergence back to the issue of interest rates, because I think Senator Payne has demonstrated—as indeed have some of the other comments today—a fairly selective consideration of some mat-

**From:** Grainger, Joanna  
**To:** [REDACTED] Craig Byrnes; David Auld  
**Cc:** Ian McAuley; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Letters from CEPU to Minister Conroy and Minister Evans [SEC=IN-CONFIDENCE]  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 17, 2010 11:58:36 AM  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg

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Hi [REDACTED]

Just an quick update. David called me earlier today re the 'legacy program'. I gather the article has given it a higher profile than it deserves. There is a clear intention from DEEWR and NBN Co to encourage opportunities for employment of local people in the rollout, but David is not aware that there is a 'legacy program' on this.

Cheers

j

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 17 November 2010 10:25 AM  
**To:** Craig Byrnes; david.auld@nbnco.com.au  
**Cc:** ian.mcauley@nbnco.com.au; Grainger, Joanna; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Letters from CEPU to Minister Conroy and Minister Evans [SEC=IN-CONFIDENCE]

Dear David and Craig

We have received a briefing request from the Minister's office for a proposed meeting with Peter Tighe (CEPU) next week. Our brief is due Friday 19 November.

The covering request states that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss [technical and vocational] skills required for the NBN rollout and notes the information in the attached letter.

To assist us, would NBN Co be able to provide some input which could be used as background and/or discussion on:

- Status of Workforce Development Strategy
- How NBN Co plans to address the issue of technical and vocational skills, including the OH&S angle
- Status of enterprise bargaining
- Anything else relating to articles in the press over the past day or so. For example, The Australian quotes Peter Tighe as lobbying NBN Co to support a "legacy" program and encouraging the employment of young local people in areas where the network is being rolled out.

The brief is due Friday, however, I'm hoping you will be able to get me something either later today or tomorrow as I work part time (not Fridays). Let me know if that is a problem.

Please do not hesitate to call me if you need to discuss.

Regards



[Redacted]  
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GPO Box 2154 Canberra, ACT, 2601

---

**From:** Craig Byrnes [mailto:[CraigByrnes@nbnco.com.au](mailto:CraigByrnes@nbnco.com.au)]  
**Sent:** Monday, 8 November 2010 9:01 AM  
**To:** [Redacted]  
**Cc:** David Auld; Ian McAuley  
**Subject:** RE: Letters from CEPU to Minister Conroy and Minister Evans

Hi [Redacted]

Further to our conversation last week, please find attached.

Kind regards,

Craig Byrnes  
**General Manager - IR**

D: 02 9927 4144  
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22 October 2010

Senator The Hon. Stephen Conroy  
Minister for Broadband, Communications  
And the Digital Economy  
Level 4, 4 Treasury Place  
Melbourne VIC 3002

**Re: Critical skills required for National Broadband Network (NBN)  
Roll Out**

Dear Minister,

As you are aware the Communications, Electrical and Plumbing Union (CEPU) has a specific interest in the roll out of the NBN from an industrial and occupational health and safety (OHS) perspective. Over the last six months we have been involved in a number of peak industry discussions, which have involved NBN Co, Energy Networks Australia (ENA) and the peak industry skills council (EE-Oz).

Amongst the issues discussed was the critical need for the issue of technical and occupational skills to be addressed to facilitate the NBN roll out. Anecdotal reports associated with the pilot broadband roll out in Tasmania show that consistent quality occupational health and safety and vocational skills training is critical to a smooth roll out. In the view of the CEPU it is in the best interests to address these specific training requirements prior to the final mainland roll out of the NBN.

Accordingly we would like to meet with you and officers of your Ministry to discuss the above issue. You will note that I have jointly addressed this correspondence to you and your parliamentary colleague. It is my view that both Ministries should work jointly on this issue. I would suggest that the matter be given some urgency as initial discussions with NBN Co. and major tendering contractors shows that this issue needs to be addressed to facilitate a timely, seamless roll out process.

Given my own background in vocational skills and occupational health and safety I certainly concur with their views.

Thank you for your consideration of our request, please feel free to contact the undersigned if there are any queries regarding the above.

Yours sincerely



**National Secretary**

**cc.** Senator The Hon. Chris Evans Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations

NATIONAL  
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Communications Electrical  
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**Government Liaison**

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M:

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Barton ACT

<image001.jpg>

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**From:**  [mailto:@dbcde.gov.au]  
**Sent:** Monday, 15 November, 2010 5:28 PM  
**To:** David Auld; Craig Byrnes  
**Cc:** Ian McAuley; Grainger, Joanna  
**Subject:** Meeting with NBN Co [SEC=IN-CONFIDENCE]

Dear David and Craig

Further to Jo and my telephone conversation a short time ago with David, I have rescheduled the meeting with DEEWR from **10 – 11:00 am** on Wednesday 24 November. I trust that this time suits you both. I haven't heard back from DEEWR but will proceed on the basis that it will suit them too.

As discussed we would like to meet with NBN Co before the combined meeting with DEEWR and suggest **9:30am** for that meeting.

Could you please advise if anyone in addition to yourselves and Ian McAuley will be attending from NBN Co?

I am pulling together an agenda for the meeting. At this time I have the following items for NBN Co but would appreciate your advice on what you would like included on it and what you might be seeking from DEEWR and DBCDE.

**NBN Co labour force and skills planning**

- Workforce Development Strategy and market supply analysis (Deloittes)
- Skills and Training issues identified
- Quality assurance strategies
- Workplace Agreements

I look forward to your response

Kind regards



**Assistant Manager | NBN Shareholder and Policy Branch**

**NBN Implementation Division**

Phone: +61 2 6271 1182

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**Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy**

Level 1, 44 Sydney Avenue, Forrest ACT 2603

GPO Box 2154 Canberra, ACT, 2601

**From:** Craig Byrnes  
**To:** David Auld; [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Ian McAuley; Grainger, Joanna; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Letters from CEPU to Minister Conroy and Minister Evans [SEC=IN-CONFIDENCE]  
**Date:** Thursday, November 18, 2010 9:18:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [NBN Co Technical Employees Agreement FWA APPROVED.pdf](#)  
[image001.jpg](#)

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Hi [REDACTED]

Other IR information:

NBN Co Enterprise Agreement names for you information – I have included the Fair Work Australia identifiers in case you need them for internal purposes. These agreements only apply to parts of the NBN Co workforce, not NBN Co subcontractors or suppliers.

1. (Approved) NBN Co and CEPU Technical Employees Agreement 2010 – 2014 – already approved by Fair Work Australia (FWA identifier AG2010/17962) – union CEPU;
2. (Awaiting Approval) NBN Co and APESMA Professional Employees Agreement 2010 – 2014 – lodged with Fair Work Australia (FWA) on 11 October 2010 (FWA identifier – AG2010/18152) - union APESMA;
3. (Awaiting Approval) NBN Co Clerical and Administrative Employees Agreement 2010 – 2014 – lodged with Fair Work Australia on 21 October 2010 (FWA identifier – AG2010/18614) – agreement with employees and the ASU has applied under the Fair Work Act as a bargaining representative to be bound to the agreement;
4. (Awaiting Approval) NBN Co Contact Centre Employees Agreement 2010 – 2014 – lodged with Fair Work Australia on 10 November 2010 (FWA identifier – AG2010/19486) – unions ASU and CPSU.

Attached is the approved CEPU agreement, the others for your internal reference can be found at :

**[http://www.fwa.gov.au/index.cfm?  
pagename=agreementsapps](http://www.fwa.gov.au/index.cfm?pagename=agreementsapps)**

We will not be doing any new enterprise agreements in the near future.

Kind regards,

Craig Byrnes  
**General Manager - IR**

D: 02 9927 4144

M: [REDACTED]

E: [craigbyrnes@nbnco.com.au](mailto:craigbyrnes@nbnco.com.au)

Level 11, 100 Arthur Street

North Sydney NSW 2060



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**From:** David Auld

**Sent:** Thursday, 18 November, 2010 8:59 AM

**To:** [REDACTED] Craig Byrnes

**Cc:** Ian McAuley; Grainger, Joanna; [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Letters from CEPU to Minister Conroy and Minister Evans [SEC=IN-CONFIDENCE]

Hello [REDACTED]

I think the following are the main points:

- NBN Co has met with Peter on a number of occasions - sometimes in his capacity as Chairman of the eeOZ industry skills council and other times in his capacity as National CEPU secretary.
- NBN Co, in concert with the CEPU, is planning to hold detailed discussions with energy utilities to work through the skilling and licensing implications of aerial construction in the "power corridor". The first of these is in QLD on 30 November.
- The identification of potential demand and skill shortages is well advanced with the workforce model being updated to reflect the latest construction plan. The experience we are taking from the first release sites is also going to be inputted into the model but this is still a work in progress.
- NBN Co is in ongoing discussions with the key industry skills councils – IBSA, eeOZ and SkillsDMC – to work through potential skill needs and to determine the required training programs
- NBN Co has had preliminary discussions with some workforce program organisations (eg; Boystown, WorkVentures) about potential programs to assist long term unemployed and other disadvantaged groups. These discussions will be ongoing and will also involve DEEWR.

It would be reasonable to assume that given the scale of construction that there will be many local jobs created, notwithstanding the report in the Sun Herald regarding the non-local workforce in Kiama which is a first release site.

Please let me know if you need more.

I look forward to our telepresence meeting this afternoon and confirm that you will need to go to our Canberra office at 16 National Circuit, Barton.

I will leave Craig to provide input on IR issues.

**David Auld**

General Manager - Training Strategy & Internal Communications

P +61 3 8662 8122 M [REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED] [mailto:[REDACTED]@dbcde.gov.au]

**Sent:** Wednesday, 17 November, 2010 10:25 AM

**To:** Craig Byrnes; David Auld

**Cc:** Ian McAuley; Grainger, Joanna; [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Letters from CEPU to Minister Conroy and Minister Evans [SEC=IN-CONFIDENCE]

Dear David and Craig

We have received a briefing request from the Minister's office for a proposed meeting with Peter Tighe (CEPU) next week. Our brief is due Friday 19 November.

The covering request states that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss [technical and vocational] skills required for the NBN rollout and notes the information in the attached letter.

To assist us, would NBN Co be able to provide some input which could be used as background and/or discussion on:

- Status of Workforce Development Strategy
- How NBN Co plans to address the issue of technical and vocational skills, including the OH&S angle
- Status of enterprise bargaining
- Anything else relating to articles in the press over the past day or so. For example, The

Australian quotes Peter Tighe as lobbying NBN Co to support a "legacy" program and encouraging the employment of young local people in areas where the network is being rolled out.

The brief is due Friday, however, I'm hoping you will be able to get me something either later today or tomorrow as I work part time (not Fridays). Let me know if that is a problem.

Please do not hesitate to call me if you need to discuss.

Regards

[redacted]

[redacted]

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**Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy**  
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GPO Box 2154 Canberra, ACT, 2601

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**From:** Craig Byrnes [mailto:[CraigByrnes@nbnco.com.au](mailto:CraigByrnes@nbnco.com.au)]  
**Sent:** Monday, 8 November 2010 9:01 AM  
**To:** [redacted]  
**Cc:** David Auld; Ian McAuley  
**Subject:** RE: Letters from CEPU to Minister Conroy and Minister Evans

Hi [redacted]

Further to our conversation last week, please find attached.

Kind regards,

Craig Byrnes  
**General Manager - IR**

D: 02 9927 4144  
M: [redacted]  
E: [craigbyrnes@nbnco.com.au](mailto:craigbyrnes@nbnco.com.au)

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