



Media Release

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Connectivity projected to spur Mackay business boom

Fast broadband predicted to create 700 new local businesses by 2021

New research released today reveals the **nbn**[™] broadband access network is expected to generate up to 700 new businesses and up to 3,400 additional digital jobs in the Mackay region by 2021.

Commissioned by NBN Co, the Regional Australia Institute compiled the *Mackay Business Growth Opportunities* report using research from AlphaBeta's first national economic and social study of the impact of the **nbn**[™] access network.

It highlights the region is well positioned for business growth and economic diversification as a result of increased connectivity.

Businesses within the Mining Equipment, Technology and Services (METS) sector are set to see the most benefit from digital technologies by opening up new market opportunities and reducing reliance on local industry.

Mackay's innovation ranking was reported as one of the top scores for regional Queensland (12 out of 73 Local Government Areas), which indicates a supportive business environment willing to build on traditional industries.

Chief Executive Officer for the Regional Australia Institute, Jack Archer said:

"The Mackay region has an opportunity to beat its historic 'boom or bust' economic cycle pursuing a more diversified economy and strengthening its traditional areas of specialisation.

"The immediate imperative for businesses in the region is to get connected, focus on building technological skills and apply digital applications to existing industries to secure future economic growth.

"Those who act early will be best positioned for growth, and be better prepared for new competitors outside the region."

Head of nbn[™] local Queensland, Ryan Williams said:

"With the rollout of the **nbn**[™] access network almost complete in Mackay, the region is in a strong position to take advantage of a fully connected workforce to drive growth, reach new markets and increase efficiency.



“It’s encouraging to see early positive early signs of growth as a result of connectivity with local businesses taking advantage of access to fast broadband to expand their market and increase productivity.”

Key imperatives recommended for Mackay from the Regional Australia Institute:

- **Get connected** – businesses in Mackay can tap into applications such as cloud computing and video conferencing to reach new markets and compete globally;
- **Build technological knowledge and upskill the workforce** – to fuel business innovation in the form of new products and services, efficiency gains and new ways to connect with customers;
- **Apply the capabilities of digital technologies** – to enable workers to lift existing business performance as well as increase the number of new ones.

Connecting Australia - Mackay

The impact of the **nbn™** access network on the lives of Australians and the economy*

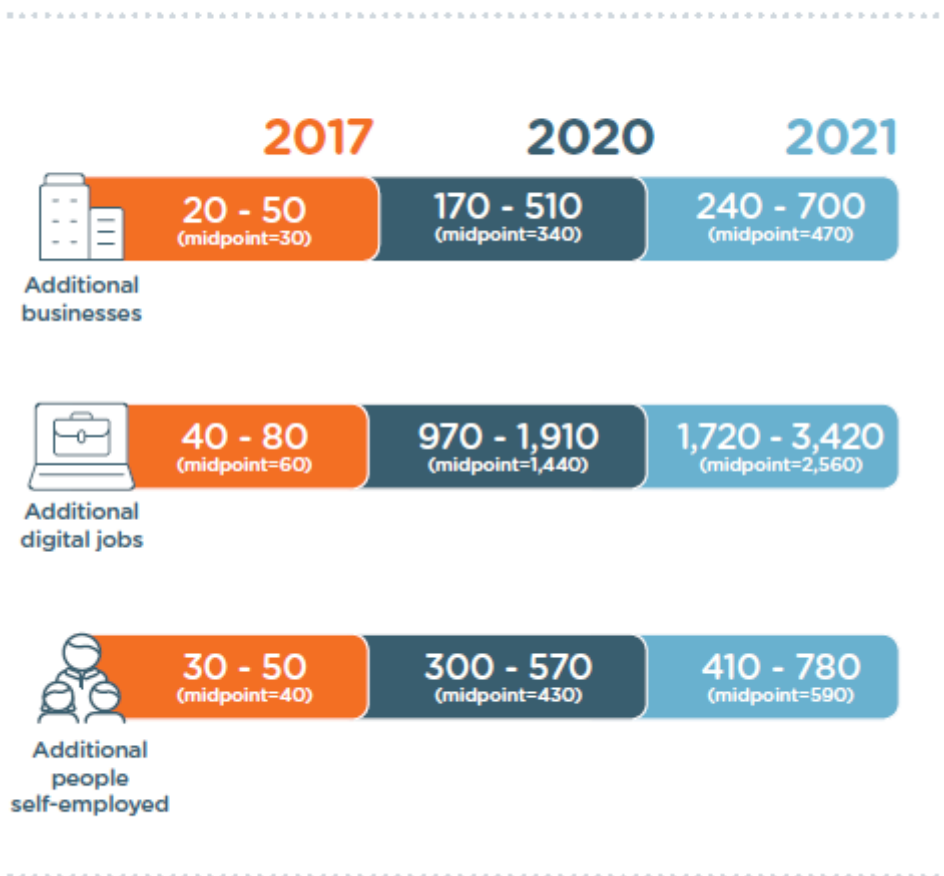


Figure 3 | Source: Regional Australia Institute 2018 | *alphaBeta and 89 Degrees East (2018)

The rollout of the **nbn™** access network in the Mackay region is almost complete with more than 40,000 homes and businesses now able to order a service through a phone or internet provider. Construction work to build the network is currently underway for the remaining 400 homes and businesses across Seaforth, Habana North and Carpet Snake.



Media enquiries:

Talia Spink

Email: taliaspink@nbnco.com.au

Phone: 0488 902 436

NBN Co Media Hotline

Email: media@nbnco.com.au

Phone: 02 9927 4200

