# ACCANect 2018

**Session 6: 11:00 – 11:05am**

**Message: Shadow Minister for Communications**

**Michelle Rowland MP, Shadow Minister for Communications**

**ACCAN is very pleased to welcome the Member for Greenway and Shadow Minister for Communications, Ms Michelle Rowland MP to deliver a pre-recorded video message.**

JULIE McCROSSIN: Everybody got their number?

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome back, I'm going to start early, I'm

that sort of girl but I'm vowing to get you to drinks early! It's very

exciting for me to announce that the new chair, Deidre O'Donnell

will have her debut here today in front of you as my beautiful

assistant. What this involves is initially holding the bowl, she'll work

her skills up during the day. I'll gradually give her more

responsibility. Don't want to overreach her and embarrass her in

front of her peer, what we have on offer are $50 vouchers to go to

the movies if you haven't had a life for a while, you're always

downloading at home, there's nothing like a big dark cave with a

crowd of people and a bag of popcorn so it's an old fashioned

concept. It's called going to the movies. Did you look at that.

Already showing initiative? See how she women the chair? What I'm

going to do is pull a number, and then your training involves putting

the bowl down and running as quick as you can one of these $50

movie vouchers. Don't drop the bowl yet. I haven't pulled it yet. I

overexplained. Poor thing. I would be terrible to work for. The

winner, remember it's redraw if they're not here, the winner is

orange 30. 30... Want to give her a present? A round of applause.

APPLAUSE

Now in my fifth of excitement I've lost my notes, there that they

are. Under the bowl. In all seriousness, I think that was an amazing

opening session and if the opportunity arises during the day for

people to offer their thoughts about how to address the identified

lack of digital literacy in communities that was part of that prior

presentation I personally would welcome those comments because

obviously if adults lack those skill young people may lack those skill

and what a terrible gap that will be for their capacity in the world of

now and in the future. But we move now to two more video

messages due to the intensity of the parliamentary life, our first

video message which we are grateful for is from Michelle Rowland

MP, the shadow minus for communications and the member for

Greenway so please clap as if she was physically here for my own

satisfaction, Michelle Rowland.

MICHELLE ROWLAND: I'm the shadow minister. I regret that I'm not

able to join you this year for the ACCAN conference, due to

parliament being in session. As usual, the theme of this year's

conference confidence in the connected world, is entirely on point.

With the add vent of 5G and other areas of technological change

ACCAN continues to lead the discussion in term of technology, and

consumer safeguards. On that point I would note that ACCAN has

been most active in the area of service continuity safe guards when

migration to the National Broadband Network is occurring. It's

thanks to ACCAN's advocacy that new rules are in place to ensure

that consumers benefit. I also wish to thank ACCAN for their most

constructive engagement as Labor has developed and launched its

NBN service guarantee policy. Which we are confident will make a

real change for consumers and small businesses as they deal with

faults, connections and service time frames on the NBN. I wish

everyone a most productive ACCAN conference 2018 and look

forward to my continued engagement and Labor's continued

engagement with ACCAN and all of the industry.

JULIE McCROSSIN: Thank you. Could you give her a round of

applause. When I first joined ABC Radio we used to line the room

with egg cartons and then put the curtains and that stops that

echoey effect. If you want a corner of the room where you can send

these messages without sounding hike you're in an empty space.

Our next video message is from the shadow minus for regional

service, territories and local Government and the shadow minus for

regional communication, the member for Whitlam, Stephen Jones,

please make him digitally welcome.

>> I'm sorry I can't be there in person but parliament is sitting at

the moment and looks like it's going to be another exciting week

over here. Congratulations to Teresa and the ACCAN team for

bringing together another great discussion of policy leaders and

consumer advocates. The job of an Opposition is to keep the

Government accountable for the things they said they were going to

do but also to ensure that we're developing policy to be a

responsible alternative Government and over the last few weeks

we've been doing exactly that. As an example, a couple of weeks

ago Labor exposed a plan by the NBN to slow regional broadband

consumers an additional $20 a month for using a bit of wireless

broadband product. City users connecting to the NBN product

through a fixed line service $45 a month, getting the same service

through a wireless broadband product in the region, $65 a month.

Just not fair, just not on, we exposed it, thankfully the Government

backed down, it should never have been on the table. There are

other things we want the do as well. A few months ago my

colleague Michelle Rowland and I announced our NBN service

guarantee. We've responded to people explaining to us the problems

they're having with their NBN connections and having their faults,

simple faults rectified. They're tired of the game of NBN ping-pong.

Our service guarantee will ensure that will are tough new standards

put in place for fault rectification and for connections and

installations and missed appointments and we'll be ensuring that

there is a tough standard and when the standard isn't met that

penalties will be imposed. With we think this will go a long way to

ensuring that the NBN is stopped and the customers get the service

that they expect from their retail service providers and from the

NBN. We've had a lot to say around wireless Internet service

providers as well. As important as the NBN project is, we know that

there are a lot of nimble players out there providing a much-needed

wireless Internet broadband service particularly in regional

Australia, we're very concerned that the Government hasn't

adequately catered for those providers with the forth coming option

of the spectrum allocated for 5G. We support the rollout and the

early rollout of 5G but we don't think that the customers of these

wireless Internet service providers should become the victims of

this, we think more needs to be done to ensure that those

consumers and the businesses servicing them an adequate and

secure access to spectrum. Mobile phone blackspots, a big issue for

everybody living in regional Australia or people who are visiting

regional Australia on holidays or for important event. We think the

Government's focus has been a little bit off the mark on this, we've

match them dollar for dollar in term of every cent that they've put

into the program but we think a lot of this money can be spent

better. We're not so much caught up about funding polls in

paddocks as important as having a new mobile phone base station

is, we think a lot of new technologies becoming available whether

that's small cell, whether that's repeaters and boosters or looking at

low orbit satellites, we're want to ensure that our alternative

program, we're looking at alternative all of the alternative

technologies, to ensure that we provide slept connectivity for people

wherever they are in the country. To this end, we are proposing that

we establish area connectivity plan, this is a way of ensuring that

local communities, local Governments and State Governments can

be brought to the table, bringing their assets, and their abilities and

knowledge to the plan so that we have a pipeline of investable

products - sorry a pipeline of investable projects throughout the

country, which are informing where we make our decisions, less

politics more community input so that we can do the best job

possible of closing down the mobile phone blackspots and ensuring

the public safety, community need and economic benefits are met in

regional Australia. We have a lot to do. We've also announced our

plans to ensure that in emergency situations we essential battery

back-up for our mobile phone towers. We'll be consulting with

industry to ensure that appropriate mobile phone coverage and

appropriate back-up battery back-up to our mobile phone towers in

those fire-prone and emergency service areas is covered off.

Consulting with industry to ensure that we have appropriate plans in

place, and an appropriate standard in place, we're going to think

that the existing arrangements are sufficient. Talking about the

mobile phone blackspot program, we think a lot more can be done

to get better competition in regional areas between the mobile

phone carriers, a lot going on in this space as we speak, but we

think that if public funds are being allocated to funding public assets

sorry private assets in regional communities, then as a bare men

mum there should be open to all providers so we're talking to the

carriers, talking to the industry how we can have as a default

position public funded towers than they should be open to all

carriers, to attach their equipment to. A lot more can be done in this

area. So as a responsible Opposition we're holding the Government

to account but we're also ensuring that we have comprehensive

plans whether they are new wholesale service standards, plans for

mobile coverage, plans for broadband coverage, particularly in those

areas in regional Australia, where we should be able to expect the

same sorts of services as those that are provided for people in the

capital cities. I western you all the very best for your conference, it's

all a great conversation and I look forward to her hearing back

about how we can improve policy, to ensure that we are meeting

the needs of consumers, because at the end of the day that's what

it's all about. Good luck and all the best.

JULIE McCROSSIN: A round of applause. Before I introduce our next

speaker, we've had a bit of reference to remote areas in Western

Australia, I've MCed on a number of occasions, the ambulance

service conferences in Perth for the whole of Western Australia, as

many of you may be aware I wasn't, a very significant proportion of

the ambulance service in WA is volunteer, and as a future grey

nomad when I let the hair go grey and it already really is you don't

want to be on a remote road in a blackspot, are you with me guys?

It really matters. We have a lot of - my generation the baby

boomers out there already, so I was moved by what that gentleman

was talking about.