

PUBLIC SCHOOLS — INTERNET CONNECTIONS

1581. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the internet connection at each public school, and I ask:

- (a) what technology is utilised by each school for connection;
- (b) what is the connection speed for each school connection;
- (c) has the school connected to the national broadband network;
- (d) if no to (4), and the national broadband network is available, why has connection not occurred;
- (e) what is the Department of Education's policy with respect to school connection to the national broadband network; and
- (f) who is contracted to provide internet services to public schools in Western Australia?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a) The following technologies are used for broadband as at 21 August 2018:
 - 783 sites are connected via fibre optic services;
 - 20 sites are connected via satellite services;
 - 10 sites are connected via 3G/4G mobile services; and
 - two sites connected via copper.
- (b) The connection speed is determined by student numbers. As at 21 August 2018:
 - 630 sites at 10 megabits per second (Mb/s) symmetrical (download and upload are both 10Mb/s);
 - 81 sites at 20 Mb/s symmetrical;
 - 53 sites at 50 Mb/s symmetrical;
 - 14 sites at 100 Mb/s symmetrical;
 - 15 sites at 4/0.5 Mb/s asymmetrical (download is 4Mb/s upload is 0.5Mb/s);
 - 17 sites at 10/2 Mb/s asymmetrical;
 - two sites at 25/4 Mb/s asymmetrical; and
 - two sites at 2 Mb/s symmetrical.
- (c)–(d) Only the schools at Christmas and Cocos Islands have been connected to the National Broadband Network (NBN) because NBN is the only solution available in these territories.

Until now, the NBN has not had the technology solution to meet the Department's security requirements. The Department is negotiating with the GovNext prime contractors to determine the capability of NBN services. In the interim, the Department is allowing schools to implement NBN broadband services for access to online systems that do not require higher levels of corporate/secure application and associated data (eg Internet).
- (e) NBN is a wholesale service provider and there is no specific policy related to NBN.
- (f) The Department has maintained a contract with Telstra to provide private secured network connections to schools. A recent network security design change at schools has enabled schools to supplement the centrally provided broadband service with a low-cost locally funded residential grade internet connection. The solution, named School Managed Internet (SMI), was recently announced to schools, and allows them to procure internet services provided through retail service providers, which may include NBN.

Internet services are provided to the Department via ServiceNet, a business unit of the Department of Finance. For schools that implement SMI, the internet service will be delivered from a range of providers.