

## ○ FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome to the first online issue of *TJA* in its proud 73-year history.

Many of our subscribers, including all members of our Editorial Board, enjoyed the tactile pleasure of holding a physical copy of past issues of the Journal in their hands. But the reality of increasing costs of traditional printing and postage, without the offset of large advertising revenues, has forced us to move to an online Journal – as has been the case with many major specialist journals in the world. Fortunately, the move has provided several additional benefits.

Firstly, we do not have the same constraints on article length as hitherto; if an article is valuable enough, we can offer it at extended length in our online edition. Secondly, we can now offer full colour with all our authors' figures and diagrams. Thirdly, we can offer the convenience of hyperlinks within our articles to all referenced online articles. Fourthly, we can offer you online access to past issues as we progressively digitise them. Lastly, staff and students at any university around the world will be able to obtain online access to *TJA*'s articles, courtesy of their library's taking out an institutional online subscription. Employees of TSA's corporate members and sponsors will similarly be able to obtain convenient online access to *TJA* from their workstations.

To boost the range of articles we can offer to you in *TJA*, we have enlarged our Editorial Advisory Board; we are pleased to announce that David Lindsay from Monash University's Law Faculty and Professor Jock Given from Swinburne University's Institute of Social Research have become members of our Advisory Board.

The main theme for this issue, *Broadband for a Sustainable Environment*, brings together two important issues in this year's Federal election in Australia: broadband and the environment. We are pleased to publish the best four papers entered for the Eckermann-*TJA* \$8000 prize for demonstrating the best application of broadband to help the sustainable environment, and the Water for Rivers \$2000 prize for the best broadband application to conserving water. We are grateful to Robin Eckermann for initiating the competition, and for Alcatel-Lucent, Mr Greg Crew and Multimedia Victoria for co-sponsoring the first prize; and to Waters for Rivers for sponsoring the second. The prize-winners are announced further into this issue; as are the winners of the Rothwell Prize for the best papers published by *TJA* in 2006.

Continuing with the broadband election theme, Peter Darling has contributed an excellent tutorial paper to help explain the main issues, and thereby evaluate the major political parties' policies. And in our *Informed Comment* section, Ross Kelso and Kevin Morgan provide some devastating critiques of past and present government investment policies in telecommunications infrastructure in Australia. Elaine Chow asks why Australia is taking so long to come up with a Fibre-to-the Home solution.

Our second theme is *Revisiting the Universal Service Obligation* (USO). Trevor Barr argues why the USO should be upgraded to included the basic right to a broadband connection, and David Luck revisits the application of Australia's USO regime in the context of the Australian Government's decision to allocate close to one billion dollars to the Opel consortium to roll out a fibre-plus-WiMax wholesale infrastructure solution in regional and rural Australia.

Peter Roberts' excellent TSA Innovation Address on the *Innovation Crisis in Australia* is published in this issue. The opposition parties' attempts to raise innovation as an election issue

were almost entirely ignored by Australia's mainstream media. Peter Roberts, Managing Director of *Business Review Weekly*, is somewhat of a lone voice on this topic amongst Australia's financial journalists.

The Liz Fell interview for this issue is with Paul Budde, fearless media commentator on telecommunications issues in Australia, and successful entrepreneur in providing regular analyses of the state of telecommunications markets around the world.

Finally, we are pleased to offer book reviews of three important recent books: on the state of Australia's media, on mobile phone culture, and on Australia's telecommunications regulation. Do let us know by email ([editor.tsa@optusnet.com.au](mailto:editor.tsa@optusnet.com.au)) what you think of the new online *TJA*.

*Peter Gerrand, Editor-in-Chief*

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