

WELCOME TO YOUR APRIL 2019 NEWSLETTER. WE HAD GOOD ATTENDANCE AT THE MARCH GENERAL MEETING. THE MEETING HELD A MINUTE'S SILENCE FOR THE VICTIMS OF CHRISTCHURCH. THIS DEADLY ASSAULT WAS A VILE AND COWARDLY ATTACK ON INNOCENT PEOPLE AS THEY WORSHIPPED IN THEIR MOSQUES.

Warren Morely spoke about his recent experience shopping for a home loan. What was of interest in Warren's experience was the response of the *Big Four Banks*. The large banks required Warren to cash-out his superannuation and shares before they would consider his application.

This would have had future tax implications, and financial loss for Warren, all he was merely seeking to do was to obtain funds to purchase a new home while his current home is being sold. Fortunately, the story had a happy ending, with a smaller bank offering him the loan without the conditions wanted by the Big Four. It tells me this country has a long way to go before the large banks begin to work in the interest of their customers.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Vince Haywood

Age Care

This month, I would like to talk about age care and in particular the *"home care package"*. It was of no surprise to learn from the first round of the *Age Care Royal Commission* that many Australians would prefer to receive help in their home rather than have to move into an aged care facility. The term *"home care package"* refers to a fixed amount of money allocated by the federal government to an older person to provide services which will enable them to continue to live independently. The amount of money offered depends on the person's needs, as assessed by an independent agency. There are four levels of support that range from basic up to high care needs. The process to obtain a *"home care package"* starts with an assessment will be conducted by a regional assessment team. After an aged care package has been approved, they will be placed in the queue for their approved package level. Once a place is available, you nominate a provider to coordinate your care. Care needs will be negotiated with the provider, and a plan will be developed. The provider may deliver some or all of the care needs or broker other providers if they don't offer certain services, or if the person wants a different provider. For example, you may continue with your current podiatrist and receive their care under your package. The *"home care package"* does not provide cash in hand to the recipient. Instead, you received a code to take to an approved service provider. The service provider should work with you to decide how the money is spent. Services begin with help like cleaning, showering or basic home maintenance.

Important Notices

APRIL GENERAL MEETING

The April 2019 General Meeting will be held a week earlier on Thursday, 18th April 2019, as the 4th Thursday of the month is ANZAC Day.

The meeting location is the FSU Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, 321 Pitt Street, Sydney.

JULY GENERAL MEETING

The July General Meeting scheduled for the fourth Thursday, in July at O'Donohues Hotel, Emu Plains has to be postponed to the fourth Thursday, in August. This is because the hotel has a prior booking for our previous planned date.

The July General Meeting will now be held at the FSU Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, 321 Pitt Street, Sydney



Retired Members Association

The April 2019 General Meeting
will be held on:

Thursday, 18th April 2019 at 10.15 am.

Meeting Venue:

Financial Sector Union (FSU)
Level 2, 321 Pitt Street,
Sydney

Note the week earlier meeting
date, as ANZAC Day this year is
on the Fourth Thursday in April
- our regular meeting week.

Notice Of Motion

*The RMA make a donation of
\$250 to Alzheimer's Australia.*

Moved: John Lane **Seconded:** Bob Hamblion

WANTED

**DO YOU HAVE A PAPER COPY
OF THE RETIRED MEMBERS
ASSOCIATION'S NEWSLETTERS
PRIOR TO 2000?**

**IF YOU DO, WE WOULD LIKE A
COPY.**

**BRUCE MUIRHEAD NEEDS
THEM FOR ASSOCIATION'S
ARCHIVES.**

**Please contact Bruce.
Contact details are on page 2.**

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Col McQueen, Paul Rewhorn, Jim Spencer, Ron Milosh, Warren Morley, Alan Stevens.



PRESIDENT MESSAGE (CONT'D)

Packages range from \$8,250 pa to A\$50,250 depending on the level of care provided. When you receive your "home care package", you are expected to contribute a fixed at 17.5% of the single aged pension (currently A\$10.43 a day or A\$3,807 a year). In some cases, this can be waived for hardship.

The "home care package" is system challenging to navigate with the numerous agents and brokers who have entered the market; therefore a trusted family member or friend can assist.

Some important points to note. There are delays to having a *home care package* put place, even after you have received your approval. Therefore, if you feel you now need some support, so start now.

Service providers have responsibilities:

A Home Care Agreement must be offered to each recipient. The Agreement records the administrative details of the service delivery relationship.

A written care plan must be provided to a recipient within 14 calendar days of entering into a Home Care Agreement, which sets out the day-to-day services that will be provided and how they will be delivered.

An Individualised budget must be provided to the recipient that records the funds available in their home care package (including Government subsidies and supplements and fees or contributions paid by the client) and how they will be used. Watch out for administration fees, the amount can vary between providers.

A Monthly statement must be provided to the recipient outlining the available funds and expenditure for their package in the relevant month.

You will find more information on the level of care and service providers on the www.myagedcare.gov.au website. The contact number is 1800 200 422.

Ageing and Disability Commissioner

The NSW Government has announced the welcomed appointment of an Ageing and Disability Commissioner from the 1st July 2019.

- ◆ The Commissioner has many functions;
- ◆ investigating allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- ◆ providing support after an investigation
- ◆ reporting and making recommendations to the government

- ◆ raising community awareness
- ◆ administering the community visitors' program.

The Commissioner will be independent and will not be subject to ministerial direction. They will be given substantial powers to ensure they can address problems comprehensively. These include the power to initiate investigations as well as responding to complaints, and the power to apply for a search warrant, search premises and seize evidence. The Commissioner will mainly focus on what happens in people's homes and in the community. However, they will work closely with other agencies that are responsible for protecting people who are receiving disability and aged care services such as the *Aged Care Complaints Commissioner*.

The NSW Police will appoint new Specialist Elder Abuse Officers in each area command to support and work with the Commissioner. These officers will investigate criminal matters as well as undertaking crime prevention.

Until the Commissioner is established, you can call the following to report any concerns:

- ◆ **Elder Abuse Helpline:** 1800 628 221
- ◆ **Aged Care Complaints Commissioner:** 1800 550 552
- ◆ For urgent assistance, call the NSW Police on 000

I hope the above information is of some interest and provide a reference source if needed in the future.

Before I sign-off

I will end with a couple of reminders, please note the General Meeting has been moved forward by a week to Thursday, 18th April 2019 and the Emu Plains meeting has moved from July to August. There is a notice about both these changes in this month's newsletter. **A reminder for our members in Newcastle and on the Central Coast, there is our General Meeting at Woy Woy in May, please come along.**

Bye for now,
Vince.



Paul Christopher Trevaskis

The Association is sad to report the passing of Paul Trevaskis. Paul passed away peacefully on Tuesday, 19th March 2019. A funeral service was held for Paul on Monday, 25th March 2019 at Saint Finbar's Catholic Church, Glenbrook.

Paul was aged ninety years of age and was just short of his 91st birthday on the 24th of April.

Paul in the later part of his career worked with Material Testing as a Quality Auditor and spent many years at Alcatel (formerly STC) a supplier of telecommunications equipment at Liverpool.

Paul was well known on the Blue Mountains and was heavily involved in the commuter council. Paul was a member of the Australian Labor Party. He had a strong sense of community, working as a Saint Vincent de Paul volunteer.

Paul took a keen interest in Unions activities as a member of the Materials Sub Branch.

Paul was the father of ten children and will be sadly missed by his large family of 54 members that include grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The *Retired Members Association* extends its condolences and deepest sympathies to Paul's family and friends.



John Frazer Chisholm

The *Retired Members Association* is sad to report that John Frazer Chisholm passed away peacefully on Saturday, 16th March 2019 surrounded by his loving family. A funeral service was held for John on Tuesday, 26th March 2019 at the Northcliffe Chapel of Hanson & Cole, Kembla Grange.

John was a 1965 Trainee who enjoyed the wonders of the Alexandria Training School.

He spent his formative years as a Technician at Unanderra Telephone Exchange before he transferred to the Radio and TV Section as Technician at ABWN 5A transmitter at Knights Hill.

John went onto to complete the Electronics and Communications Certificate at Wollongong TAFE.

His brother and father both Bill Chisholm were linesman.

John was the loving husband of Diane and father of daughters Melissa and Vanessa. The *Retired Members Association* extends its condolences and deepest sympathy to Diane, Melissa and Vanessa, other family members and his friends.

Vale John Chisholm.

RETIRED MEMBERS PRESENTS LIFE MEMBERSHIP TO BRUCE MUIRHEAD

Vince Haywood

I had the honour of presenting our Secretary, Bruce Muirhead with life membership of our Association.

Bruce has held the Secretary position for the past five years after Peter Hack moved to Temora. Prior to his current position, Bruce was the Assistant Secretary. The secretary position is pivotal to the ongoing functioning of the Association. The role requires the reading in full, the committee and general meetings minutes, the register of incoming and outgoing correspondence, payment of invoices and the organisation of receipts for collected monies.

The position can be time-consuming mainly when members pay their deposits for the annual trip away.

Bruce is currently working on our Association's archives. Our records go back to the Association's formation in 1980; a big job that will preserve our history.

I am sure all members will join me in congratulating Bruce on his achievement of life membership.





1957 TECHNICIANS IN TRAINING - CELEBRATE THEIR 62 YEAR REUNION

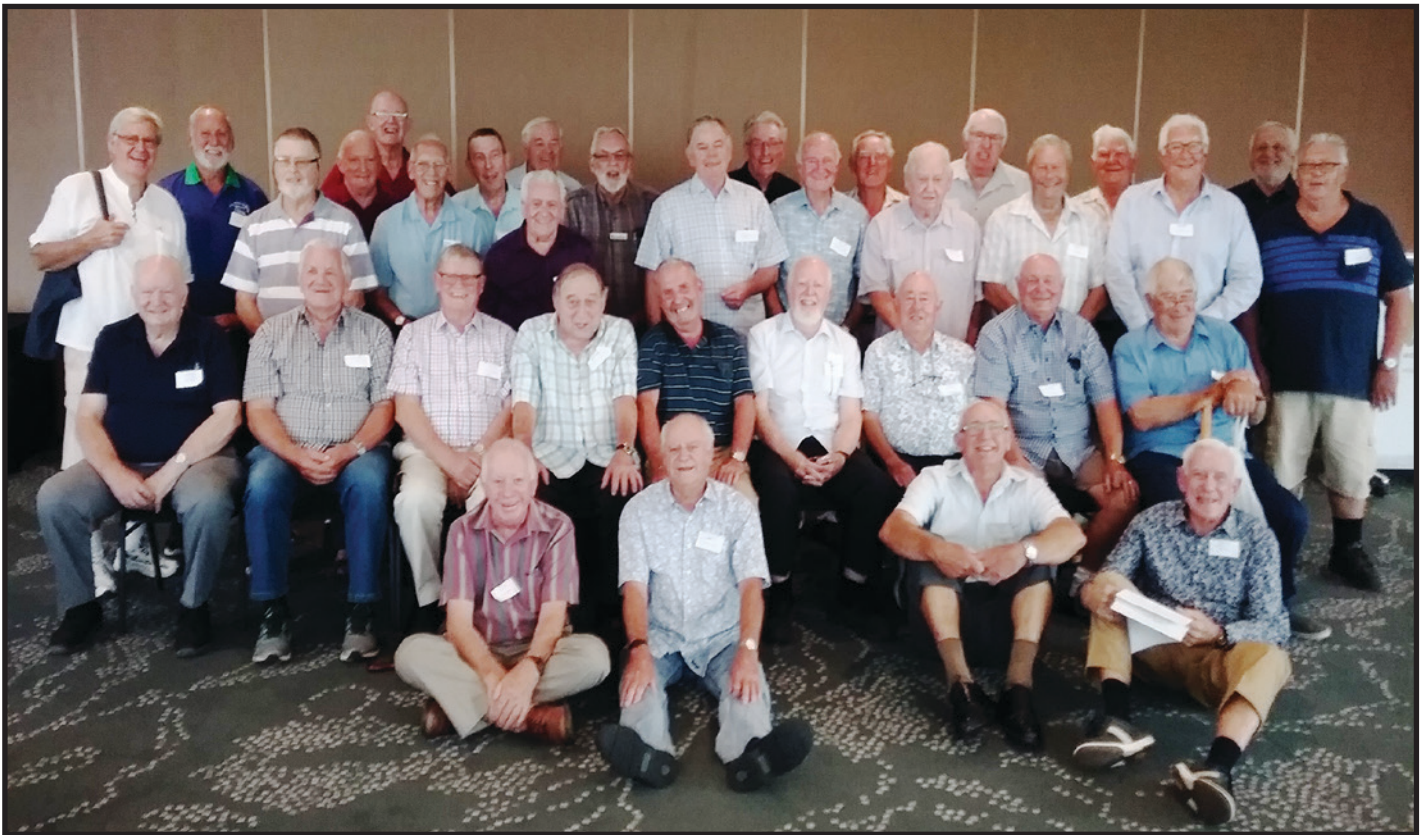
Bob Speer

Thirty-seven former 1957 Technicians in Training came together with wives and friends that brought the total to fifty-six people for the reunion. The reunion was held at Port Macquarie on the 13th March; an occasion to celebrate and reminisce after 62 years.

Attendees had travelled from NSW, Queensland and South Australia. Some 39 apologies were received. It is becoming a custom for attendees to tow their caravan and met-up with their like-minded friends, allowing extra time for additional fraternisation.

As part of the proceedings, each former Technician in Training was asked to recall their first field station appointment as a trainee. The quality of the presentations (off the cuff) was impressive as well as their recall. The 1957 trainees work life's experiences were wide-ranging, including stints with OPTUS (our then only competitor) and their overseas travel as employees of communications companies.

The 1957 Technicians in Training have resolved to meet again in Port Macquarie on the 10th March 2021.



Autumn Leaves Lunch

Thursday, 16th May 2019

Springwood Bowling Club
81 Macquarie Road,
Springwood

Meet between 12 and 12.30pm

May Newsletter will have train timetables & map

Retired Members Association



Class of 1953

Technicians in Training

66th Year Reunion

RSVP: Tuesday, 28th May 2019

Our reunion lunch is to be held on Friday, 31st May 2019. Meet at 11.45 am for lunch commencing at noon.

Venue:

**Petersham RSL Club
7 Regent Street
Petersham
A 200m walk from
Petersham Station**

Please confirm your attendance with Allan Fairbairn by:

**E-mail: abfairbairn@bigpond.com
Phone: 02 9484 6146**

Retired Members Association

The Life Of Riley Tour of the Snowy Mountains

SIX DAYS / FIVE NIGHTS

\$ 745

Stay at the Lake Jindabyne Hotel on the foreshore of the Lake Jindabyne.

Includes Return Bus Travel between Sydney and Jindabyne, All Meals, Accommodation, Tours and their entry fees

**2019 Annual Trip Away
10th to 15th November 2019**



For details on how to make a booking and options to pay a deposit (\$50 per person); see the notice in this month's social function report page.



THE RETIRED MEMBERS GOT OFF TO A GREAT START WITH ITS SOCIAL FUNCTIONS FOR 2019 WITH LUNCH AT THE SYDNEY ROWERS CLUB. WE HAD BOTH GOOD NUMBERS OF MEMBERS ATTENDING AND GREAT WEATHER. WE WERE ABLE TO SECURE THE DINING ROOM WITH ITS EXCELLENT VIEWS OF THE PARRAMATTA RIVER.

Our next social function is the Autumn Leaves Lunch at *Springwood Bowling Club on Thursday, 16th May 2019*. This lunch has been a regular feature for the retired Members Association and offers an excellent opportunity to attend for members in Sydney's West and Blue Mountains areas. I look forward to seeing you there.

I have had a great response to this year's trip away to the Snowy Mountains; I cannot recall having so many numbers so soon after announcing a trip away. There is still plenty of time for you to book this trip. Last month, the newsletter showed the full itinerary, therefore if you want to know more about the trip, please have a look at the March 2019 Newsletter.

This month's newsletter has notice showing the trip away dates and price. There is also an insert telling you how to book and pay the \$50 per person deposit. Of course, if you have any questions, please contact me (my contact details are on page 2 of the newsletter). One last thing, if you are paying the deposit by cheque, please make the cheque payable to the *Retired Members Association*, this will assist with banking.

Upcoming Social Events



John Lane

2019 Annual Trip Away Payment Details and Inclusions

We are now taking bookings and payment for the annual trip way to Snowy Mountains.

First, please contact John Lane (*contact details are on page 2 of the newsletter*) to advise you want to join the tour. Let me know your numbers.

The Tour Operator requires a deposit of \$50 per person. You can pay the deposit at a general meeting, post a cheque to Bruce Muirhead, our Secretary (the address on page 2). **Make the cheque payable to the "Retired Members Association".**

There is also the option of electronic payment. **Credit Union Australia (CUA) BSB 814-282, eSaver Account No: 10642769** - please include your surname and confirm with John Lane your payment. All payments made for *Life of Riley Tours* are fully refundable to the day of departure.

All lunches while on sightseeing are usually a picnic packed lunch, i.e. sandwiches, fruit and other items.

All the hotel rooms configurations are queen, single or bunk bed.

There is no single supplement for a single traveller.

See notice in this month's newsletter



NBN - MUCH OF IT WILL NEED TO BE RE-DONE

Paul Rewhorn

THE RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION HAS BEFORE FEATURED ARTICLES ON THE SUBJECT OF NBN. ALSO, THE SUBJECT HAS HAD MUCH DISCUSSION AT OUR GENERAL MEETINGS. SIMILAR TO OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY, MEMBERS HAVE TALKED ABOUT THE ROLLOUT OF NBN IN THEIR AREA AND PERFORMANCE. THE RMA MEMBERS ARE PERHAPS BETTER QUALIFIED TO COMMENT ON NBN, AS THEY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED WITH PAST NETWORK TRANSFORMATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN SUCESSFUL WITHOUT THE INTERVENTION OF POLITICANS.

The reason for this article on NBN is because I came across in *"The Monthly" - March 2019* issue. Mr Michael Quigley, the former CEO of NBN is the article's author. His article chronicles the political interference to the NBN by the current government after they came to power in 2013. Mr Quigley is none too impressed with former Prime Minister Turnbull's role or better expressed as interference, first as the Communications Minister and later when the Prime Minister.

Michael Quigley in his article makes some interesting points.

When the Labor federal government announced the NBN project in April 2009, the primary objective for NBN was to deliver high-speed broadband via optical fibre to 90 percent of premises. The remainder of the premises would have their broadband service delivered via next-generation wireless and satellite technology.

The original NBN, fibre to the premises was an ambitious project in terms of its scale and complexity. Billions of dollars are at stake. However, the objective, in the end, would give Australia a world class high-speed broadband that would replace the nation's ageing copper network and last for at least the next forty years. Despite the complexity and scale of the project, politicians like Mr Turnbull decided to become fully involved with the infrastructure design rather than leave that aspect to the experts.

Immediately after the announcement of the NBN, it became a hot political topic. The opposition first argued that the private sector was best suited to deliver the project. Michael Quigley reminds that almost all of Australia's major communications infrastructure have been delivered by government. The one exception was the delivery of cable PayTV by Telstra and Optus. Where you had these two telecommunications companies following each with

their cables down the same street. Eventually, Telstra and Optus run out of capital to complete the project. Large areas were without PayTV cable while other areas had two PayTV cables in the same street.

No company including Telstra was willing to undertake a project on the scale of NBN.

Next, the Coalition attention turned to NBN CEO, Mr Quigley. They criticised Mr Quigley performance. They made continued with their claims the project was running behind schedule and over budget.

After the Coalition was elected to office in 2013, they ramped up their acts on the NBN.

Mr Abbott, on becoming prime minister instructed to the Communications Minister Mr Turnbull to kill NBN.

The new government claimed that fibre to premises would cost on average \$3000 per household and the NBN project would eventually cost a total of \$94 billion compared with the project's original estimate of \$45 billion. The government's treasury department did not agree with the \$94 billion figure. Michael Quigley recalls advising the government that the cost of fibre to premises would likely reduce with technology advances. He proved to be correct, in New Zealand the cost of the rollout of *fibre to premises* has decreased by 44 percent in the past few years.

The Coalition when in opposition claimed they could deliver high-speed broadband using existing copper, wireless and HFC cable technologies at a modest cost of \$6.3 billion. When the Coalition came to office in 2013; they revised their estimate to \$29.5 billion to build what they termed *Mixed Technology Model (MTM)* to deliver high-speed broadband.

The *Mixed Technology Model (MTM)* uses existing copper, wireless and HFC cable networks. Michael Quigley points to NBN's corporate plan released in August 2018 that now has the cost for the delivery of the MTM at \$59.9 billion *i.e. a 70 percent increase on the original estimate.*

Continued on Page 8



NBN - MUCH OF IT WILL NEED TO BE DONE AGAIN (CONT'D).

Mr Quigley expressed surprise there was no outcry in the media and public over this latest cost rise announcement.

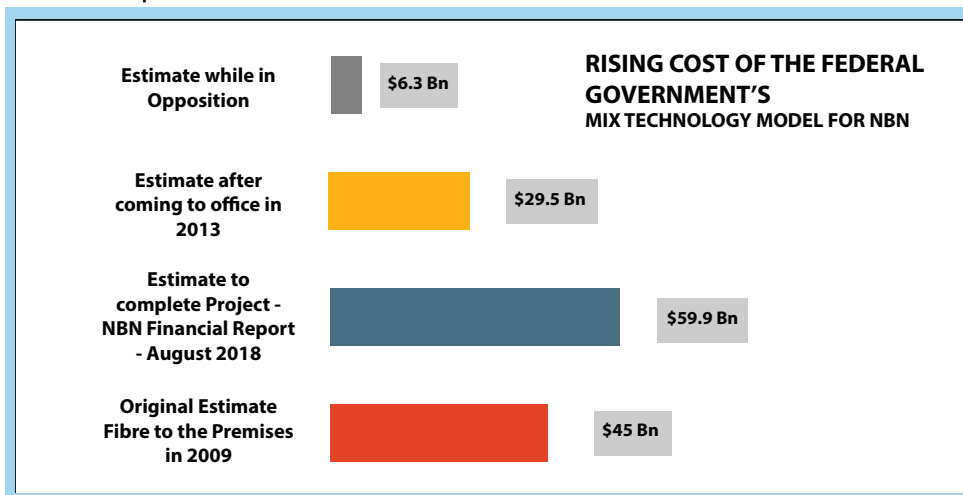
The cost of implementing the Coalition's MTM will likely increase further; poorly served *fibre-to-the-node* areas with long copper wires will require upgrades to cope with an ever-increasing demand for speed and bandwidth. Then there are the additional operational costs because of the complexity of needed IT systems, maintenance costs, the holding of spares and training associated with MTM.

There is more bad news for the MTM; NBN has had to announce that customers were very unlikely to obtain speeds nowhere near their stated maximum

service on an HFC cable (Foxtel) reported that retailers wanted them to make the change to NBN with speeds of 25 megabits per second accept they have to pay more if they want a higher speed service. These members already have a broadband service delivering speeds of around 80 megabits per second. Members report when they have refused to connect to NBN and pay more for a higher speed service; the retailers usually relent and not charge them extra money for a high-speed service.

Other developed countries have faster network speeds and pay less for their broadband service than Australia. Our broadband network continues to slip further down the international broadband

rankings in terms of cost and speed. One day, perhaps in the not too distant future, the conversion from MTM to fibre to premises will be necessary but at what cost and will a future government be willing to make such an undertaking? The cost will add substantially to the current estimate of \$59.9 billion to deliver the MTM infrastructure. Michael Quigley observes that we now know that the decision not to roll out the *fibre to the premises*



of 100 megabits per service. The ACCC ordered the broadband retailers to refund customers who had paid for a higher speed service because of this discrepancy. Let me insert my personal experience; when I was on ADSL my rate was 4.8 megabits per second on the conversion to NBN, the speed increased to 18.8 megabits per second, well below the predicted minimum of 25 megabits per second. When I renewed my broadband contract, I was able to change to a 100 megabits per second service at a substantial discount. With the so-called 100 megabits per second service, my speed increased to 46.8 megabits per second. Also, in the past two years, I have experienced around six outages lasting more than a day.

The delivery of NBN broadband via *HFC* has also proved to be a disaster. Plans were abandoned to use the *OPTUS HFC* as it was unusable. Telstra's *HFC* needed extensive upgrades that delayed by eighteen months the NBN rollout over *HFC*.

Members who have with their current broadband

solution and instead use MTM was thoroughly flawed. We have a broadband network that will cost at least \$59.9 billion instead of the original \$45 billion; perhaps at an even lower cost for an entirely new network that would have met requirements for the next forty years.

The network performance and NBN Co's financials demonstrate the nation has a significant piece of national infrastructure that just about meets today's demand but doesn't allow for any significant growth in that demand over the next 10 or 20 years without the need for substantial upgrade costs.

Sadly, we have seen these partisan politics play out in other infrastructure areas, such as electricity generation and water security. In the short term, politicians indulge in cheap political point scoring and later leave Australians to pay the cost and accept the consequences of their actions.



THE NEWCASTLE RADIO INSPECTOR

Bob Hyde

In this month's newsletter, Bob Hyde reminds of the Radio and Television Licences era. When radio broadcasts were introduced in Australia they were only available to listeners who had a subscription. When a person purchased a radio (commonly known as wireless), the radio was regulated to a specific wavelength for which a subscription applied. Back in 1923, a subscription cost £3/3/- plus an additional licence fee 10 shillings was payable to the Postal Department.

However, the subscription model did not last; people began to build their own radio sets that enabled them to receive radio programmes from multiple broadcasters. Over the years, radio licences underwent various changes based on cost and classes of use.

Back in January 1957, television users were required to pay £5 plus £2/15/- for their radio. Non-payment was a punishable offence with fines of up to £50. People to avoid paying the television licence would hide their antennas in chimneys and inside their roofs. By the 1970s, a combined television and radio licence cost \$26.50. Eventually, because of the high cost of policing compliance, the Whitlam Government decided in September 1974 to abolish radio and television licences.

In the 1960's Australia still had a system of radio and television licencing. Every household which had a radio and/or a television receiver was required to pay an annual licence fee. The fees were supposed to be paid at the local post office. In theory, the funds raised went towards funding the ABC radio and television service.

The PMG employed people called Radio Inspectors to ensure that people complied with the radio and television licencing laws. The Radio Inspectors drove around the suburbs in vans equipped with receivers, which were designed to detect radiation from the IF stages of radio and television receivers. The Radio Inspectors had broad powers to enter and search premises, in search of unlicensed radio and television receivers. The Radio Inspectors were also required to administer the operation of all radio networks, eg taxi services, ham radio operators, emergency services etc.

One Radio Inspector based in Newcastle, Frank (I cannot remember his surname) had a reputation as a very fast driver. One day he came over the crest of a hill and was signalled to stop by a member of the NSW Police Force. Parked at the roadside, in NSW Police colours, was a panel van with some shiny new equipment in the back. Frank quickly worked out that this must be one of the new Police radar units, designed to detect speeding drivers.

The policeman was walking towards Frank's car, getting out his notebook. However, before the policeman could say anything, Frank whipped out HIS notebook, and demanded: *"I want to see the licence for that transmitter!"*. The NSW Police had forgotten to

obtain licences for their new equipment, so Frank booked the policeman for operating an unlicensed transmitter. Naturally, the radar units were all licenced the next day, but Frank had had a moral victory, and it was rumoured that he even slowed down a bit.

There was a footnote to the radio and TV licencing story. Years later, when I was working on long-distance coaxial cable laying projects, we used radios in the cars and trucks to provide communications between the work groups and the supervisors and the mobile stores. The radio system operated in the CB band, and each vehicle had a prominent aerial. The Postmasters in the country towns along the route were pleasantly surprised by a sudden rush of locals coming into the Post Office to buy radio and TV licences. Apparently, the locals thought that we were all Radio Inspectors.

