



MEDIA STATEMENT – 17 April 2012

Chorus chosen to build more of rural New Zealand's fibre future

Chorus is to extend the reach of fibre to many more schools, hospitals, integrated family health centres and now libraries after being selected by the Government to help deliver the second phase of the Rural Broadband Initiative (RBI).

Chorus CEO Mark Ratcliffe said they are delighted to have been selected to help build more of rural New Zealand's fibre future.

"Chorus' existing 29,000km fibre network means we can quickly connect these community focal points and we will work with local communities to complete this rollout by the end of 2015," said Ratcliffe.

In return for completing its RBI Phase 2 deployment in the North Island, Central and Lower South Island, Chorus will receive a large portion of the \$12m allocated by the Government, as well as a small share of the \$2.4m funding for remote schools.

Chorus' deployment plans for RBI Phase 2 are close to being finalised and will be published on its website before the end of April 2012.

Since beginning its work on the RBI in July last year, Chorus has deployed 345km of RBI fibre connecting 234 rural schools and 104 fibre-fed roadside cabinets, putting fixed line broadband within reach of thousands of rural homes and businesses.

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Hon Amy Adams

**Minister for Communications
and Information Technology**



17 April, 2012

Media statement

RBI extended to remote schools, hospitals and libraries

Some of the most remote schools in New Zealand, as well as rural hospitals and libraries can now look forward to faster broadband after the Government selected its preferred providers for the final Rural Broadband Initiative contracts, worth \$14.4 million.

Communications and Information Technology Minister Amy Adams says the announcement signals the second and final phase of the Government's \$300 million Rural Broadband Initiative (RBI).

The contracts provide for 193 provincial schools, 183 rural public libraries, 37 rural hospitals and ten Health Centres receiving fibre connections. In addition, 57 remote schools will be upgraded to faster broadband, capable of being used for the Network for Learning.

"The Government promised that no school would miss out on faster broadband and I'm delighted that we are delivering on that promise," Ms Adams says.

The RBI recognises the huge importance of the rural sector to New Zealand's economy.

"While good progress has been made in major cities upgrading broadband availability, I have long advocated the need to bring faster broadband and better connectivity to rural communities. I'm equally convinced of the benefits it will bring to other sectors of our economy and society.

"Ensuring rural New Zealand is well connected with the latest technology is a key part of the Government's push to lift productivity and global competitiveness and to drive economic growth that benefits all New

Zealanders."

Chorus and Network Tasman will deploy fibre to provincial schools, rural hospitals, Health Centres and public libraries, worth \$12 million.

Network Tasman will focus on roll out in Wakefield, Mapua, Motueka and Picton.

A further \$2.4 million has been awarded to connect 57 remote schools and their surrounding communities with fast wireless broadband. Inspire.net, Gisborne.net, Chorus and Araneo have been selected to do this work.

In addition to the 57 remote schools, the Government has previously announced a special grant to improve telecommunications services on the Chatham Islands. A condition of this grant is that the three schools located on the islands will receive enhanced satellite broadband.

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