

# **BROADBAND CONNECT AND CLEVER NETWORKS:**

**Supporting investment in sustainable  
broadband infrastructure**

**Response to DCITA Discussion Paper**

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*Geospatial services for broadband*

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**Context:** *Clever Networks 4.3.2 Demand Aggregation/ Broker Activities p.19*

### **Issue: That Large Pair Gain System (LPGS) polygons are not available to Broadband Demand Aggregators**

Callpoint draws attention to the fact that LPGS polygons are available to customers of Telstra Wholesale (eg DSL carriers who rent Unconditioned Local Loop services). However, this dataset is not available to Demand Aggregators.

Callpoint believes that for the Demand Aggregation component of DCITA's Broadband Connect initiative to succeed, Telstra Wholesale should provide Demand Aggregators with "approval to purchase" for the ExchangeInfo Plus dataset.

Such a move would facilitate comprehensive ADSL blackspot analysis for the Demand Aggregation community.

#### **Background 1: LPGS and ADSL**

In the 1990s, Telstra introduced Large Pair Gain Systems as a means of increasing the number of copper to high growth areas. This was done at a time when demand for PSTN services were also growing eg fax machines being installed by business and residential customers. As such, these systems were seen as astute, both from a technical and commercial perspective.

Later, customers that were served by LPGS noticed that they could not obtain ADSL services. Telstra has made enormous strides by upgrading its Customer Access Network. However, there are many premises that are still unable to obtain ADSL due to these systems.

#### **Background 2: Access to LPGS information**

In January 2003, the Broadband Advisory Group outlined a number of elements necessary to encourage efficient market entry, including "the need to reduce information asymmetries facing new entrants"<sup>1</sup>.

In August 2004, the Senate final report recommended "the Australian Communications Authority be provided with all of Telstra's current geospatial datasets, and that the Australian Communication Authority make available these datasets on request, in a useable format, to other carriers and ISPs"<sup>2</sup>.

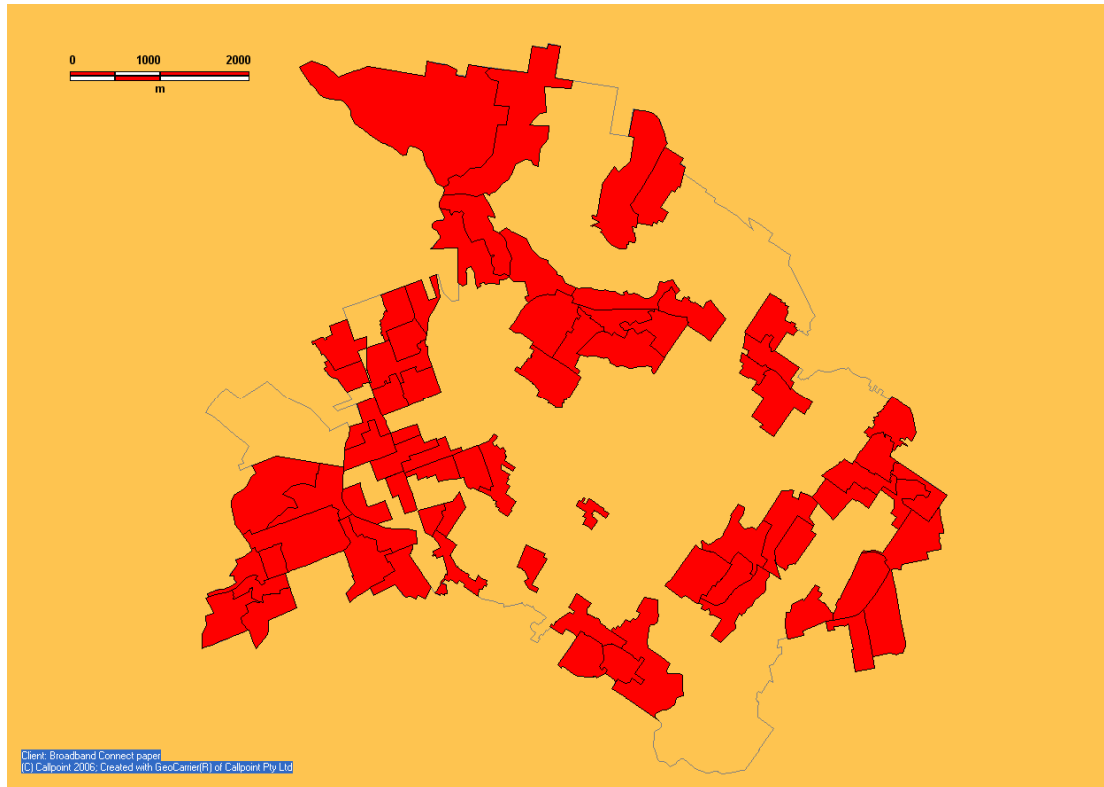
In December 2004, Telstra Wholesale commercialised its geospatial datasets. LPGS polygons became included within ExchangeInfo Plus. However, the sale restrictions outlined above apply.

#### **Background 3: LPGS Penetration**

The majority of Exchange Service Areas (ESAs) have no LPGS. Some have only a few. Others have significant LPGS penetration. An example of an ESA that has substantial LPGS coverage is shown below:

<sup>1</sup> "Australia's Broadband Connectivity" report, p.41

<sup>2</sup> "Competition in Broadband Services" report, p.103



## Summary

Maps (and analysis) that indicate the presence of LPGS within Demand Aggregation Broker ESAs cannot be presently provided. From Callpoint's perspective, this would seem to be at odds with objectives of the Demand Aggregation programs.

Access to the LPGS dataset, as included within ExchangeInfo Plus, is important in order that Demand Aggregators can be provided with comprehensive ADSL coverage and blackspot analysis.

Accordingly, Callpoint believes that for the Demand Aggregation component of DCITA's Broadband Connect initiative to succeed, Telstra Wholesale should provide Demand Aggregators with "approval to purchase" re the ExchangeInfo Plus dataset.

*Note: Callpoint has not included any analysis eg proportion of Australian premises that are served by LPGS, the proportion of LPGS by ESA that have been ADSL-enabled by Telstra etc in this paper. Aside from commercial considerations, these analysis services are of course currently restricted to clients that have "ExchangeInfo Plus approval to purchase" from Telstra Wholesale.*

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