

## Labor is right on broadband, says French minister

PRINT EDITION: 05 Mar 2013

Gift Article:  100



French minister for Digital Economy Fleur Pellerin, has backed the Australian government's approach to broadband  
**Photo: AFP**

### David Ramli

France's digital economy minister Fleur Pellerin has offered strong support for Labor's method of rolling out the national broadband network, calling it a competitive advantage.

Ms Pellerin made the comments during the Sydney signing ceremony between NBN Co and French company Arianespace, which is being paid \$300 million to launch two dedicated broadband satellites in 2015.

[The Australian Financial Review named Arianespace as the front-runner in February 2012.](#) The two satellites are being built by US company Loral Space for \$620 million and will provide high-speed broadband to 200,000 rural users.

Where Labor wants to connect 93 per cent of homes and businesses directly into a fibre optic network, the Coalition has offered a fibre-to-the-node approach that relies on existing copper cables and runs the fibre to street cabinets. It will provide lower broadband speeds at a lower build cost.

In late February French President Francois Hollande announced a €20 billion (\$25.5 billion) plan to encourage the construction of a fibre-to-the-premise network similar to Australia's.

Ms Pellerin said that investors valued France's infrastructure network and that it would encourage economic growth in the country.

"I'm very impressed by your plan to develop very high speed broadband in Australia," she said. "High speed broadband is a very important factor in the attractiveness of a country and that's why we chose also the best technology.

"In fibre to the home you don't lose signal according to the distance so it's the best technical solution."

She said France was having the same debate over how best to finance and roll out broadband networks.

### READ NEXT:

- [Politics intrudes into NBN Co plans](#)
- [Low pay turns workers off NBN](#)
- [Turnbull, Conroy trade blows on NBN policy](#)

The Australian Financial Review