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# FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION SHEET

**\*\*\*PLEASE DELIVER IMMEDIATELY\*\*\***

TO: Professor B G Wilson

FAX NO: (07) 365 1266

FROM: T J Mullarvey

NO. OF SHEETS (including cover sheet): 3

DATE: 9 December, 1991

**SUBJECT:** AARNet Links with Queensland

When you are available could we please discuss the following.

Refer to A. Conetta  
for advice.  
Cogn. F. DVC.

AV-CC

## Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee

(INCORPORATED IN THE A.C.T.)

*Recvd 9/12/91*  
*9/2406*

Ref: AARNET/135/91  
9 December 1991

### AVCC Memorandum

To: *Queensland Vice-Chancellors*  
From: *T J Mullarvey*

### *Re: AARNet links within Queensland*

As a result of recent actions taken by the Queensland Universities which impact on the ability of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) to provide an effective and efficient computer network I felt it necessary to write and express AVCC concerns.

To briefly recap on the background to these matters, as you are no doubt aware, AARNet is a program undertaken by the AVCC, with funding drawn from AVCC member institutions in accordance with the accepted AVCC funding formulae, and a consequent service commitment to provide equal levels of access to AARNet for all institutions. In order to ensure operational reliability of the service a regional hub has been nominated in each State where, within the conditions of a regional hub operational agreement, the hub site undertakes operational duties on behalf of the AVCC. Within this program individual institutions are at liberty to provide supplemental funding which can augment the levels of access to AARNet by the institution.

The AVCC Secretariat understands that through funding from the Queensland State Government, the AARNet access link to the Queensland University of Technology was upgraded in capacity in 1990. It was noted by the AARNet Advisory Board that due to poor communication between the regional network group, QUESTNET, and the AVCC, the AVCC was placed in the position of having to leave the original AARNet link in place for some seven months due to contractual obligations with Telecom Australia. The issue of effective coordination of activity was raised by the AARNet Advisory Board and the AVCC were assured that any perceived problems relating to coordination of activity would be rectified.

The AVCC was informed of a possible second phase of Queensland State Government funding early in 1991. Discussions with relevant government officials indicated that the guidelines relating to the potential funding were to include the full capital costs of the upgrade to levels of access to AARNet and the first 18 months of recurrent expenditure. The facilities were intended to augment levels of access to AARNet by the James Cook University of North Queensland, The University College of Central Queensland and The University College of Southern Queensland. Comment was made by the AARNet Advisory Board in May 1991 regarding the levels of actual traffic over AARNet links and some questions were raised regarding the requirements of the upgraded levels of access. I am unaware whether these views were passed back to yourselves at the time.

In June 1991 I understand that the Queensland Minister of Business Industry and Regional Development announced a grant of some \$900,000 to the Queensland institutions to undertake the proposed upgrades. At the time we were assured that detailed coordination of activity would take place between AVCC staff and institutional staff once precise details of the program had been formulated. Unfortunately this has not eventuated, and it comes as somewhat of a surprise to be given 3 days notice that AARNet facilities were to be replaced, and to be done so with no evident provision for testing of the new facilities before commissioning. Equally of concern is that the equipment has been deployed without any documented operational procedures being formulated to cover unforeseen instabilities in the new equipment configuration, and that the underlying network infrastructure had been re-engineered without reference to AARNet network engineering staff.

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- 6 In attempting to provide a comprehensive high technology service to the AVCC member institutions, the importance of adequate consultation and careful engineering practices cannot be overstressed. From my understanding of the events of the past few months it would appear that elements of both of these concepts have been inadequately resourced within this project of upgrades.
  - 7 While the level of additional recurrent commitment to the upgraded links is a matter for each university, I am concerned that the additional costs of some \$500,000 p.a. will have to be borne by the institutions concerned, in addition to the normal AARNet financial commitments.
  - 8 I would welcome any suggestions you may have that would provide a means to address these issues, particularly those relating to a evident lack of coordination of activity between those involved in QUESTNET and the AVCC staff who are responsible for the day to day operations of AARNet.
  - 9 If you feel that there would be benefit, I, or Geoff Huston, would be available to visit Queensland immediately to discuss this major issue

Yours sincerely,



T J Mullarvey