



Speech By  
**Hon. Leeanne Enoch**

**MEMBER FOR ALGESTER**

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**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

**Broadband for the Bush Forum**

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (10.10 am): Later this year Queensland will host the 2016 Broadband for the Bush Forum. This will be the fifth annual forum and will be held at the State Library of Queensland in June. This year's theme, 'Digital Journeys', will focus on how digital engagement and inclusion can benefit everyone. The forum aims to capture the diversity of experiences, digital tools and practical solutions used across a wide range of industry sectors such as education, tourism, cultural heritage and more. To complement the two-day forum on 8 and 9 June, an Indigenous Focus Day will be held on 7 June 2016.

The Broadband for the Bush Alliance is a not-for-profit organisation that speaks for the digital needs of, and seeks to advance the digital capacity and capability for, those who work and live in remote Australia. Through their work, they champion digital inclusion and opportunities for economic and social development in remote and rural Australia. The alliance is supported by the Indigenous Remote Communications Association.

As we move towards a future knowledge economy, it is vital that all Queenslanders are provided with the tools to participate fully in an increasingly digital world. Last financial year almost 70,000 Queenslanders attended digital literacy sessions in Queensland's public libraries across our state. These figures demonstrate that digital inclusion is an important issue.

The Broadband for the Bush Forum and Indigenous Focus Day are part of a suite of initiatives introduced by the Palaszczuk government that aim to improve Queenslanders' access to online information and services. In addition to the Broadband for the Bush Forum, the Palaszczuk government's other digital literacy programs being run across the state include Tech Savvy Seniors Queensland, coding and robotics activities, and the Everyone Online project. We are also finalising accredited training for up to 30 Indigenous people from remote North Queensland as the final part of the previous Commonwealth funded Remote Indigenous Public Internet Access program. This government is focused on helping Queenslanders obtain the skills needed to participate in the economy both now and in the future.