

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Connecting classrooms: University works to broaden online network sharing in Tasmania

Tasmania has become the first Australian state to implement a uniform sharing network in public schools, which paves the way towards increasing the number of higher education sites where students can access their educational files and study.

University of Tasmania IT staff in partnership with Australia's Academic and Research Network (AARNet), the Tasmanian Department of Education and TasTAFE, have assisted in the successful rollout of *eduroam* across the state's public schools and TAFE campuses, which officially went live on Monday.

Eduroam (education roaming) compliments existing internet services on each site, as an independent global wireless network providing users with "mobility" to move between participating institutions while still being able to access their email, applications and files through remote access to network drives.

University of Tasmania Chief Information Officer Jeff Murray said eduroam was already in use at the institution's three campuses, and its introduction to public schools would in time provide pathways towards higher education.

"University staff who now visit public schools will be able to access their files through the eduroam network and this forges an even stronger partnership between the University of Tasmania and the Department of Education," Mr Murray said.

"Stage two of the project will open even more doors to our university for young people as it will allow students from Department of Education schools and TasTAFE visiting any of our campuses to simply connect their wireless devices to the eduroam network and enter their own username and passwords to access files or websites allowing them to study on site," Mr Murray said.

In Australia, eduroam is operated by AARNet and offers high-speed internet connectivity through a network that is data and privacy protected.

Mr Chris Hancock, CEO of AARNet, said the company facilitated eduroam's integration into Tasmanian schools and TasTAFE through its Buddy University Program.

"This is wonderful news for Tasmania. Universities around the world have adopted eduroam and we could see that it could solve some of the problems with roaming wireless access our school and TAFE customers face," Mr Hancock said.

Mr Trevor Hill, Director of IT Services and eStrategy at the Department of Education said it was exciting to now be exploring ways to expand eduroam access for Department of Education and TasTAFE staff and students.

"We will work closely with AARNet and the University to ensure the eduroam network is accessible both ways, so that Department of Education and TasTAFE staff and particularly students can complete their work and study within the walls of a higher education institution," Mr Hill said.

Stage two of the eduroam project in Tasmania is hoped to be completed by the end of this year.

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