

9 September 2011: Optical fibre roll-out – the role of local authorities

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The Senate has sought the opinion of the *Autorité de la concurrence*

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The Senate Committee for the Economy, Sustainable Development and Town and Country Planning yesterday sought the opinion of the *Autorité de la concurrence* regarding a working framework for local authorities for the deployment of very high speed broadband networks.

This referral for opinion falls within the scope of the cooperation between the *Autorité de la concurrence* and the Parliamentary Committees responsible for economic affairs, which was strengthened by the law on the modernisation of the economy (2009) that allows these Committees to ask for the opinion of the *Autorité* in all matters relating to competition. Within this legal framework, the *Autorité* already issued an opinion in 2009, at the request of the Senate, regarding the dairy sector and another one in 2010, at the request of the National Assembly, regarding a Government bill on the new organisation of the electricity market.

In formulating its recommendations, the *Autorité* will mention the applicable provisions in national and European competition law with regard to public intervention. It will recall the important role played by local authorities in digital planning at local level and will make its recommendations, as appropriate, to the French public authorities, to take into account the distinctive nature of their operations and to ensure that the latter dovetail with private investment. The analysis carried out by the *Autorité* will help to supplement the operations that have already been adopted or are in the process of being implemented, on

which the *Autorité* has already issued an opinion – especially the Government's *Programme national très haut débit* (national very high speed broadband programme) and the sector-specific regulatory obligations that are issued by the French Telecommunications and Posts Regulator (ARCEP).

The Autorité will issue its opinion at the end of the year.

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