Metroweb reaches cabling agreement with the Municipality of Sesto San Giovanni

Work to commence by the end of February 2001, beginning from the Sesto Rondò underground station.
Innovative technology aids the transition from an industrial to a services culture

Sesto San Giovanni, 1 February 2001. The Municipality of Sesto San Giovanni this morning signed an agreement with Metroweb – a joint venture set up by Aem and e.Biscom – providing for the cabling of the entire local territory.

The cabling project, named "Sesto 3000", will implement a broadband platform over a 70 km network infrastructure, with the installation of approximately 7,000 km of fibre optics.

Work will commence by the end of February 2001, starting from the Sesto Rondò underground station and gradually extending to the local industrial and residential areas, to permit delivery of the entire range of FastWeb services.

The main town districts, beginning with public buildings, will be cabled over a two-year period, using solutions designed to minimise visual and environmental impact. A maximum timescale of three years has been set, so that work can also be completed on areas currently under development.

Sesto San Giovanni is already well equipped with traditional infrastructures and transport networks, and is situated in a prime location. With the cabling project, it will rapidly become a natural choice for territorial development north of Milan. Thanks to the opportunities offered by broadband telecommunications, millions of square metres of undeveloped land will be transformed into a modern business centre, taking the area from an industrial to a services culture.

The growth of innovative businesses active in information technology and communications, the spread of tele-working and distance learning facilities, and improvements in public urban mobility services will boost Sesto San Giovanni's competitive potential, and help the town attract new investments, create new jobs and enhance the quality of life for residents and the business community.

“e.Biscom’s FastWeb subsidiary is the only telecommunications operator currently offering integrated telephone, television, video on-demand and data transmission services via a network based entirely on Internet Protocol (IP) technology and fibre optics, which gives households as well as business users direct broadband access directly from their homes,” said **Silvio Scaglia**, chief executive officer of e.Biscom, MetroWeb and FastWeb. “Spreading out from Milan, we intend to cable more than 500 towns and cities. The key value added we offer is the transformation of the territory into a driver for growth and a catalyst for new employment opportunities.”

“As chairman of a company operating in the area and above all as a resident of Sesto San Giovanni, this agreement is a double source of satisfaction,” said Giuliano Zuccoli, chairman and chief executive officer of AEM. “The project offers Sesto San Giovanni’s residents and business community the chance to enjoy the benefits of broadband communications. The municipal authority’s attention to technological innovation means that this is the largest commune in the Milan hinterland to be cabled. The disruption inevitably caused by the cable-laying work will be limited, thanks to AEM’s familiarity with the local subsurface through its gas and remote heating networks.”

Metroweb (67% Aem, 33% e.Biscom) is the first Italian provider of “dark fibre” in the Milan metropolitan area. It rents its extensive network infrastructure facilities mainly to FastWeb, to other Italian and international telecommunications operators and to Internet Service Providers. Ahead of its original schedule, the company plans to extend its range of operation to the area from the Po River to the Swiss border and from Novara to Verona. In ten years time, at a regional level, its fibre network will cover more than 4,000 km, including 1,500 km of metropolitan network, 1,700 km of regional network and approximately 1,000 km of infrastructure and access links. The network infrastructure currently extends over more than 1,000 km, compared with the 800 km projected at the time of the e.Biscom IPO.

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