Prof. Heather E. Hudson, Director of the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Alaska Anchorage, gave a lecture in Wellington, New Zealand, on August 30. The topic of the lecture was “Bridging the Broadband Divide: Strategies for Rural and Developing Regions.

Topics of questions and discussion after the lecture included further information on rural broadband investments in Alaska and northern Canada, strategies for helping Pacific Island nations to increase investment in broadband and to develop planning and policy capacity in telecommunications, and New Zealand’s recently announced Rural Broadband Initiative.

The lecture was sponsored by three organizations:
(1) IEEE Joint Chapter of Communications, Signal Processing and Information Theory
(2) IEEE New Zealand Central Section
(3) The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), Wellington Network.

The lecture was organized by Prof. Edmund Lai Chair, Joint Chapter of COM/SP/IT, IEEE NZ Central Section, and Professor Richard Harris, Deputy chair, IEEE Central Section NZ. Dr. Lai stated that this was the first time that all three organizations had met together, and that they hoped for further collaboration.

Professor Hudson’s lecture was given in conjunction with her presentation of a paper on “Extending Rural Broadband: Lessons from North America: at the International Telecommunication Society’s (ITS) Asia-Pacific Regional Conference held at Victoria University. While in Wellington, she also met the Honourable Steven Joyce, Minister for Communications and Information Technology, and was invited to meet with senior staff in the Telecommunications Division of the Ministry of Economic Development to exchange information on New Zealand’s broadband Rural Broadband and Ultra-Fast Broadband initiatives, and current policies and strategies to extend rural broadband in the U.S. and Canada.