

**COMMUNICATIONS
ALLIANCE LTD**



Communications Alliance

Policy Focus 2008

Preparing for the Broadband World

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1 Development of policy framework for convergence

With the Government's policy initiatives for broadband infrastructure deployment, it is the position of Communications Alliance that now is the time to develop a policy framework for the broadband-enabled environment of converged networks, technologies and services.

2 Fundamental Principles for the Development of the Convergence Framework

The following principles should guide the development of the convergence framework:

Ubiquity

- Ubiquitous national coverage of broadband network infrastructure.

Access

- Broadband access networks should be 'open access' networks.
- All Australians should have access to affordable, advanced and secure broadband communications services.
- Communications technologies should expand the accessibility and usability of communications networks and services by people with disabilities.

Technology

- Broadband deployment policies should be technology-neutral.
- Technology neutral spectrum policies to promote competitive wireless services and technologies.

End-user

- Promotion of broadband take-up and provision of end-user education about the full potential of broadband applications.
- Delivery of social and economic benefits to all end-users.

Competition and innovation

- Competition in the provision of converged content, services and applications should be fostered and facilitated.
- Foster innovation in communications technologies and services.

Regulation and industry self-regulation

- Minimal regulation - competitive market forces and industry self-regulation should be the principal means of achieving outcomes for network deployments, network operations, industry behaviours and end-user outcomes.
- Regulation, where necessary, should be targeted and applied in circumstances of market failure.
- Regulation of content/services/applications, where necessary or appropriate, should be consistent across all delivery mediums.
- A single converged regulator should be created.

Privacy and Security

- Provisions relating to security and privacy of communications so as to increase consumer confidence should be appropriate and applicable to broadband communications.

Stakeholder collaboration

- Technical solutions for security, privacy, content regulation, law enforcement should be developed in collaboration with industry.

3 Communications Alliance Policy Priority Areas 2008

In addition to responding to Government-led initiatives for developing the broadband and convergence framework, Communications Alliance will pro-actively lead work in the following policy areas in 2008:

USO review

- Continuing work on defining the scope, cost and funding of a consumer right to access to a 'voice safety net'.

Legislated customer service/consumer protection provisions

- Review of legislated customer service/consumer protection provisions – STS, CSG - and their applicability in an environment of competitive broadband networks and services.

Accessibility for people with disabilities

- Review of current applicable international standards with a view to identifying issues for Australian consumers and identifying opportunities for promoting accessibility design into communications technologies and applications at global standards fora.

Law enforcement

- Collaborative engagement of CA members and A-Gs regarding potential for development of industry guidelines for data retention.

Content

- Identification of potential policy responses for consistent regulatory approach to content across all delivery mediums; collaborative Government/industry action for responses to and solutions for consumer issues in the delivery of content - including filtering for mobiles and internet, access to and cost of mobile premium services.

TIO Scheme

- Building on Galaxy market survey, undertake research and surveys with the objective of working collaboratively with the TIO to ensure a strong and effective dispute resolution scheme in the broadband convergence environment.

Industry Code development

- Review of provisions in Telecommunications Act and Broadcasting Services Act with a view to proposals for consistent provisions.

Outline of convergence legislation

- Development of an outline of convergence legislation and roles/responsibilities of convergence regulator.

Communications Alliance will also continue with input to:

ALRC Privacy Review

- Implementation of recommendations for collaborative production of guidelines relating to privacy.

Productivity Commission Review of Australia's Consumer Policy Framework

4 Communications Alliance Support of Government-Led Policy Priority Areas 2008

Communications Alliance will support the implementation of the Government's policy initiatives and advocate for a policy framework for the convergence era based on the policy principles set out above by:

- providing a forum for and facilitating industry-Government dialogue
- providing industry perspectives on proposed regulatory reforms and key issues
- facilitating industry-led initiatives for the operational, technical and commercial requirements for migration to the broadband environment.



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