



COMMUNICATIONS ALLIANCE LTD

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### AUSTRALIA'S COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY PROPOSES BLUEPRINT FOR BROADBAND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

**Sydney, 26 February 2008** – Australia's communications industry has agreed on a series of "fundamental principles" that should be the basis for development of policy governing the broadband environment.

The Board of Communications Alliance, the industry's peak representative body, has signed off on the principles and will advocate that the Federal Government adopt them as the framework for its broadband policy development.

In support of the Government's broadband initiatives, Communications Alliance has also decided it will proactively lead work on a defined set of priority areas in 2008.

Communications Alliance CEO Anne Hurley said the Board believed that, with the Government's policy initiatives for broadband infrastructure deployment, it was the right time to develop a policy framework for the broadband-enabled environment of converged networks, technologies and services.

"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 we have enunciated," Ms Hurley said.

Communications Alliance will pursue this objective 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.

Announcement of these initiatives – titled *Preparing for a Broadband World* -- complements the discussion and debate that will ensue when the industry comes together next week for the **Broadband and Beyond 2008** conference, co-hosted by Communications Alliance and Telstra Wholesale (see [www.broadbandandbeyond2008.com](http://www.broadbandandbeyond2008.com)).



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The Communications Alliance policy principles and the prioritised work program for 2008 are the culmination of several years of industry forums, workshops and consultation involving a broad cross-section of participants in the Australian communications industry.

Communications Alliance believes the following principles should guide the development of the convergence framework:

- **Ubiquity** – Ubiquitous national coverage of broadband network infrastructure;
- **Access** – broadband access should be “open access” networks. All Australians should have access to affordable, sustainable, 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 and appropriate, should be consistent across all delivery mechanisms. 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.



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

- Review of the Universal Service Obligation (USO)
- Law enforcement
- Content
- Customer Service, complaint handling and the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) Scheme
- Industry code development
- Outline of convergence legislation

### **About Communications Alliance**

Communications Alliance was formed in 2006 to provide a unified voice for the Australian communications industry and to lead it into the next generation of converging networks, technologies and services.

Membership of Communications Alliance is drawn from a wide cross-section of the communications industry, including service providers, vendors, consultants and suppliers.

The prime mission of Communications Alliance is to promote the growth of the Australian communications industry by fostering the highest standards of business ethics and behaviour through industry self-governance.

For further information see [www.commsalliance.com.au](http://www.commsalliance.com.au)

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