

23 November 2007

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Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject: Draft Amendment to the Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2002 – blocking of SIM-less calls

Please find attached Communications Alliance's submission in response to the proposed amendment to the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2002* for the blocking of SIM-less calls.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Hurley
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COMMENTS ON DRAFT AMENDMENT TO THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS (EMERGING CALL SERVICE) DETERMINATION 2002 – BLOCKING OF SIM-LESS CALLS

COMMUNICATIONS ALLIANCE

1. INTRODUCTION

Communications Alliance is pleased to have this opportunity to provide comments on the proposed amendment to the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2002* ('the Determination') for the blocking of SIM-less calls.

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

Communications Alliance offers a forum for the industry to make coherent and constructive contributions to policy development and debate. By providing leadership on new trends and directions, Communications Alliance fulfils a vital unifying role on behalf of the industry and its members, particularly in areas of competition, innovation and industry development.

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

Through our work in developing requirements for customer equipment connected to air interfaces such as the PMTS and Satellite Services, Communications Alliance would like to provide specific comments on the requirements of AS/ACIF S042.1:2006 **Requirements for connection to an air interface of a Telecommunications Network — Part 1: General** Standard in relation to the proposed changes to the Determination. Communications Alliance understands that individual organisations will be responding to the five specific questions listed on Page 8 of the Consultation Paper and it will defer to those organisations to address those questions.

2. INCONSISTENCY WITH INDUSTRY STANDARD

The ACMA Consultation Paper raises the issue of an inconsistency with the proposed amendment to the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2002* and AS/ACIF S042.1:2006.

Notwithstanding that AS/ACIF S042.1 is a Technical Standard under Part 21 of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* and not an Industry Standard under Part 6 of the Act, as referred to in the Consultation Paper, the following two sections of this submission consider the two relevant requirements of the Standard, the first for dialling requirements and the second for the display requirements.

3. DIALLING REQUIREMENTS FOR CUSTOMER EQUIPMENT

AS/ACIF S042.1:2006 **Requirements for connection to an air interface of a Telecommunications Network — Part 1: General** specifies in Clause 5.1.2 (b) that for customer equipment for voice communications (e.g. mobile handsets) shall allow the dialling of the emergency service number 000 under the following condition:

*Where an identity module is required for normal operation, CE **shall** allow dialling of the emergency service number 000 regardless of the presence of the identity module.*

This requirement recognises the approach at the time of the last revision of the Standard that the customer equipment did not restrict the ability of a network to manage emergency calls according to the obligations of the network operator under existing legislation. The approach reflected the understanding that the handling of calls was a network function and not a function of the customer equipment.

This approach was consistent with the GSM/3GPP Standards that were reviewed as a part of the last revision of the Standard.

In addition, it is important to highlight that the customer equipment Standard cannot impose any requirements beyond the device itself, i.e. beyond the customer equipment side of the network boundary.

Under the proposed amended Determination, the requirements for SIM-less customer equipment becomes redundant in the Standard. This requirement is not in conflict with the proposed amendment to the Determination but the removal of this requirement in a future revision of the Standard could be considered for better alignment with the amended Determination. Nevertheless, it is understood that the network would manage the blocking of calls from SIM-less customer equipment irrespective of the requirements in the Standard.

4. DISPLAY REQUIREMENTS FOR CUSTOMER EQUIPMENT

The introduction of the display requirements in AS/ACIF S042.1:2006 had its origins in the recommendations in the ACA **Emergency Service access from mobile phones** Report. This followed the earlier **Investigation into the provision and maintenance of telephone services to the Boulding family in Kergunyah, north-eastern Victoria** report developed by the ACA in 2002 for the Minister for Communications. One of the recommendations stated that 'the ACA promotes the adoption of a consistent message displayed on mobile phone screens indicating that only emergency calls may be made'.

AS/ACIF S042.1:2006 specifies in Clause 5.2.3 that:

*CE using GSM and GSM derived technologies designed for voice communications with a user display and with such display not in battery save or screen save mode, **shall**, when unable to provide network access other than to make emergency calls to 000 and 112, display a message to indicate that emergency calls are possible.*

The wording of the warning message should be: '000 emergency calls only'

The behaviour of the customer equipment is highlighted by the two following scenarios:

- 1) if the network is capable of providing a response to a SIM-less customer equipment that the network is unable to provide network access to emergency calls, this requirement would not apply.
- 2) if the network is not capable of providing a response to a SIM-less customer equipment that the network is unable to provide access to emergency calls, the display will still erroneously indicate that the emergency calls are possible even when the network has blocked emergency calls from such SIM-less customer equipment.

The behaviour of the SIM-less customer equipment in displaying the state of the accessible services is dependant on the communications between the device and the network. In the second scenario, this inconsistency, as noted in the Consultation Paper, exists but could be considered low risk as the Paper notes that SIM-less devices are not being used to make genuine emergency calls.

5. SATELLITE CUSTOMER EQUIPMENT

Communications Alliance would like to draw ACMA's attention to consider the inclusion of blocking SIM-less calls from satellite customer equipment as a part of the proposed draft amendment to the Determination. It is our experience with current Communications Alliance **WC05 Satellite Customer Equipment** Working Committee that a consistent approach for customer equipment connecting to a PMTS or to a Satellite Service would be preferable.

In addition a number of devices on the market have the dual capabilities of connecting to both these services and the consistent behaviour of these devices in both modes could be advantageous to the user.

6. REVIEW OF AS/ACIF S042.1:2006

It is anticipated that Communications Alliance will be commencing a review of the AS/ACIF S042.1:2006 requirements for customer equipment connected to PMTS services in AS/ACIF S042.1 late 2008 as a follow-on from the work carried out by the WC05 Working Committee. It may be an opportune time to include as a part of this proposed review the consideration of the issues raised by ACMA's Consultation Paper concerning the requirements for SIM-less emergency calls and displays for customer equipment used with the PMTS.

7. REVIEW OF ACIF C536:2003

It is noted that the ACIF C536:2003 **Emergency Call Services Requirements** Industry Code refers to dialling emergency services in an informative Appendix. This information will be considered in a future review of the Code.

8. CONCLUSION

Communications Alliance acknowledges that the AS/ACIF S042.1:2006 customer equipment Standard need not impact on the decision to introduce the proposed amendments to the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2002* for the blocking of SIM-less calls. The parts of the Standard which have been identified in this submission for future review will be included in the Communications Alliance Standards review program under the Customer Equipment and Cable Reference Panel.