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MEDIA RELEASE

INDUSTRY COMES TOGETHER TO TACKLE THE ISSUE OF THE UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION

Communications Alliance Forum to focus on the Universal Service Obligation in new housing estates

Sydney, 9 August 2007 – As part of its commitment to leadership on industry issues which impact the future delivery of broadband-enabled IP services, Communications Alliance is hosting an industry forum to examine issues in the application of the Universal Service Obligation (USO).

As the USO cost potentially has an impact on the price for access to a FTTN network, it is timely that the industry now considers the potential future of the USO – its scope, cost and who funds it – as the work of the FTTN Expert Taskforce takes shape with this week's release of the draft guidelines.

An imminent factor that will add to the USO debate is next week's expected release by Senator Helen Coonan of the discussion paper on the review of the USO.

The Forum's main focus will be on the issues inherent in the application of the USO in new housing estates, commonly referred to as greenfields. It is expected that this Forum will be the start of industry dialogue on all aspects of the USO.

"A fundamental question surrounds estates where developers have gone to competitive tender for high capacity communications networks to deliver services such as broadband and pay television. Should Telstra (if it is not the provider of the network), be required under USO obligation to provide basic voice services on request?" said Anne Hurley, CEO of Communications Alliance.

"Communications Alliance encourages all industry participants to take the opportunity to share their views and be a part of the shaping of the future of the USO in the evolving environment of broadband networks."

The Forum will hear the views from all stakeholders – including carriers, developers, local, state and federal government bodies – on the extent of, and possible options for resolution of the issues. It will take place on Thursday August 16, from 2pm to 5pm, in Sydney.

For further details, please go to:

http://www.commsalliance.com.au/Events/USO_Greenfields



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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.

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.

For further information see www.commsalliance.com.au

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