

SOURCE : ACIF

TITLE : ACIF Activities since GSC8 & Looking Ahead

AGENDA ITEM : GSC9 4.1

DOCUMENT FOR :

Decision	
Discussion	
Information	X

INTRODUCTION

The attached paper provides information about ACIF's activities, and its strategic direction.

ACIF Activities Since GSC8 and Looking Ahead

GSC9 May 2004

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A Difficult Time, but Getting Better?

***IN AUSTRALIA, AS IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES, WE
NOW SEE HOPE FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN THE
COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY***

- **Growth is now close to general economy growth**
- **There is still considerable consolidation in the industry**
- **Still diminished resources from industry members for standardisation**

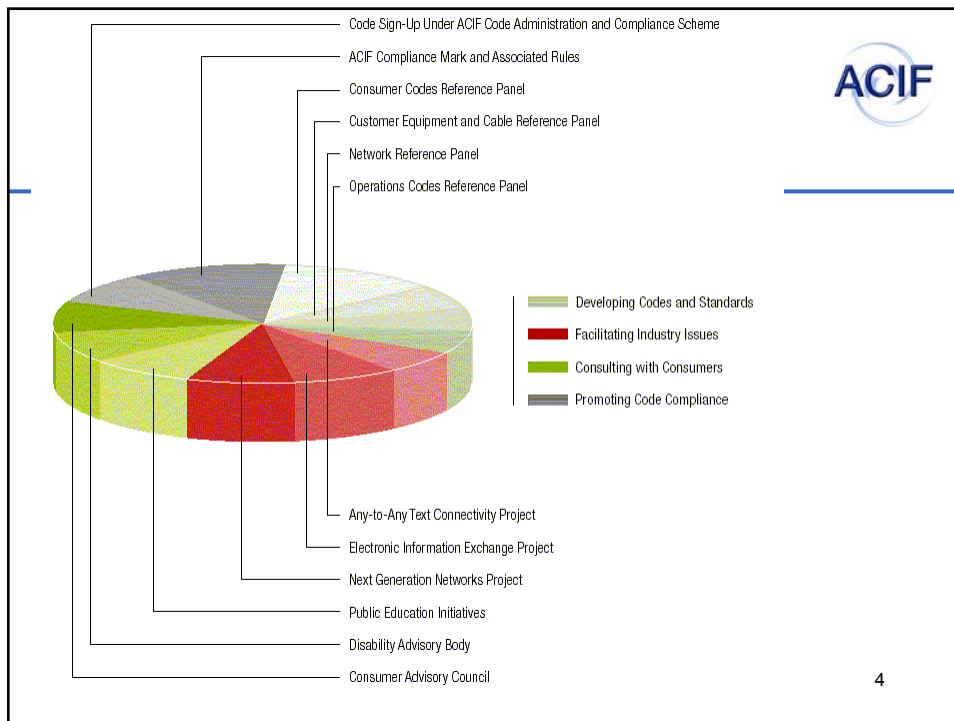
***MAJOR INDUSTRY INITIATIVES ARE NOW BEING
PLANNED, BUT AT A MORE REALISTIC PACE***



ACIF Areas of Work

- **Development of Standards, Codes of Practice and Guidelines**
- **Promoting Compliance with Codes**
- **Acting as a meeting point for Industry Issues (Industry Facilitation)**
- **Consulting with Users**

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Developing Standards and Codes

- **ACIF has four “Reference Panels”, continuing Committees with responsibility for defined areas.**
- **When a Reference Panel agreed work is required in an area, the Reference Panel proposes establishment of a Working Committee**
- **The ACIF Board establishes a Working Committee to do an agreed task.**

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ACIF Reference Panels

- **CONSUMER CODES REFERENCE PANEL**
 - **Responsible for developing Industry Codes and Guidelines relating to consumer issues**
- **CUSTOMER EQUIPMENT AND CABLE REFERENCE PANEL**
 - **responsible for the development and maintenance of Standards and other documents concerning telecoms customer equipment and customer cabling**

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ACIF Reference Panels

- **NETWORK REFERENCE PANEL**
 - responsible for developing Standards/Specifications, Codes and Guidelines relating to assist interworking between networks.
- **OPERATIONS CODES REFERENCE PANEL**
 - responsible for developing Industry Codes, Guidelines and other related documents which address operational matters from a multilateral perspective

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Some Current Areas of Work (1)

CONSUMER CODES REFERENCE PANEL

- Fairness in consumer contracts for the supply of telephone services;
- Third party service billing (e.g. by use of mobiles)
- Updating of current Codes to comply with Australia's Privacy Act
- "Spamming", particularly by mobile SMS

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Some Current Areas of Work (2)

CUSTOMER EQUIPMENT AND CABLE REFERENCE PANEL

- Increasing the alignment of Australian customer equipment standards with international standards
- Development of “*Expressions of Intent*” to provide explanations of the intent of Standards
- Standards covering general IT equipment safety and surge protection respectively
- Update to Unconditioned Local Loop standards

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Some Current Areas of Work (3)

CUSTOMER EQUIPMENT AND CABLE REFERENCE PANEL

- Disability issues for the Standard Telephone Service (Emergency Service Access and Network Interoperability)
- Acoustic safety
- Cordless telephone standards
- Analogue/xDSL issues (filters, etc)

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Some Current Areas of Work (4)

NETWORK REFERENCE PANEL

- Interconnection Signalling Specification for Circuit Switched Networks and Interconnection Implementation Industry Guideline;
- Broad Mobile Location for Emergency Services and Location Based Services
- SMS Interchange (GSM to CDMA)
- End-to-end network performance
- xDSL architecture and standards

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Some Current Areas of Work (5)

OPERATIONS CODES REFERENCE PANEL

- *Priority Services;*
- *Broadband Customer Transfer;*
- *Pre-selection and Number Portability Implementation (review of arrangements);*
- *Rights of Use of Numbers*
- *Integrated Public Number Database (IPND)*
- *Emergency Call Services Requirements*
- *Customer Requested Barring*

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“Industry Facilitation”

- **Problems or question arise in areas beyond those allocated to Reference Panels**
- **ACIF *Industry Facilitation Groups* are established on a permanent or “*as needed*” basis to cooperatively address and resolve industry issues – *strategic, technical, operational and consumer*. This work has included the implementation of regulator determinations, the coordination of industry arrangements and the facilitation of consumer issues.**

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Current Industry Facilitation Work

- **There are currently three Groups working on a longer term basis, together with ad-hoc Groups called as required:**
 - **The Any-to-Any Text Connectivity Working Group;**
 - **The Electronic Information Exchange Management Committee; and**
 - **The ACIF Next Generation Networks Project**

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Any-to-Any Text Connectivity

- This Group is responsible for identifying, scoping and assessing short-term and longer term options/possible solutions to the issue of achieving and maintaining any-to-any text connectivity whilst maximising ongoing opportunities for enhanced text communications through the exploitation of new technologies.
- A separate contribution to GSC9 outlines the current work of the Group.

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Electronic Information Exchange (1)

- ACIF's EIE is an electronic Business-to-Business messaging platform that allows subscribers to exchange ebXML messages with each other, in order to perform business functions. Message exchange is essentially between peer-to-peer messaging nodes, with some administrative functions (*e.g. digital certificate distribution*) performed by a central node.
- Messaging nodes are connected through one or more interconnected networks, with access also possible via an Internet gateway.

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Electronic Information Exchange (2)

- The EIE messaging platform is designed to accommodate a large variety of business applications. The topography of EIE allows both centralised and decentralised applications to be deployed, or even applications that are a combination of both.
- The first application – *the Lost and Stolen Mobile Phones Initiative* - supports the exchange of IMEI information between GSM mobile carriers for the purpose of locking/ unblocking mobile phones

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Next Generation Networks Project

- ACIF's NGN Project has been running for the past two years, helping ACIF members, users, the policy makers and the regulators understand more about the likely future developments in services and networks.
- The focus has been wider than strictly technical, looking at the environment within which future networks will operate, and the transition from current to future networks

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ACIF NGN FOG

- The project is being driven and managed by the *ACIF Next Generation Networks Framework Options Group (ACIF NGN FOG)* comprising representatives of telecommunications industry policy makers, regulators, carriers, service providers, equipment suppliers and consumers.
- The *ACIF NGN FOG* has served as a steering committee for the overall project, with subsidiary Working Groups being established as required to address specific issues.

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NGN Issues Considered (1)

- The NGN FOG considered issues about the services that may be offered by future networks, including
 - possible future services (including support for current services);
 - service interworking across networks and for end-to-end services;
 - features and functionality requirements, end-to-end service quality, support for existing/legacy services etc.

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NGN Issues considered (2)

- They also looked at network architecture and protocol issues, including
 - network/service architecture and protocol options and arrangements;
 - interconnection options and arrangements (for different services) both within the NGN and to existing networks (the PSTN/ISDN and the Internet);
 - Transitional arrangements.

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NGN Issues Considered (3)

- During the later stages of the ACIF NGN Project, we have had concentration on the policy and regulatory positioning of services, including
 - network service management, interception and security, emergency services and privacy implications;
 - policy and regulatory options and arrangements both for existing services and features likely to be supported on the NGN and new services

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Policy and Regulatory Work

- The NGN Project has supported groups looking at:
 - *Routing, Numbering, Naming and Addressing;*
 - *Regulatory Treatment of Services;*
 - *Emergency Services, Security and Privacy Considerations; and*
 - *Institutional Arrangements for Market Growth.*
- There has been considerable attention paid to developing transitional issues, covered in a separate contribution.

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Australian Radio Standardisation Work

Work in Australia on radio and spectrum standardisation is split between a number of bodies

- ACIF
- Standards Australia
- The government regulator, the Australian Communications Authority (and its industry-based bodies)

This contribution covers this work in some GRSC High Interest areas

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International Standards

- The radcom (and telecom) systems used in Australia are generally based on use of international or regional standards
- In many cases, radcom standards are not directly mandated by the regulator
 - For example, the owner of a Spectrum Licence is able to use their spectrum in any way, as long as boundary conditions (interference to other users are met)
 - In practice, the spectrum allocated determines the standard e.g for cellular mobile systems GSM in 900 & 1800 MHz, CDMA2000 in 800 MHz

This is normal practice in our region, where European and North American standards work side-by-side

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Mobile Issues (1)

- Current mobile spectrum usage across Australia is
 - 800 MHz CDMA-One technology
One national licence
One regional licence in use
One regional licence allocated
 - 900 MHz GSM/GPRS technology
Three national licences
 - 1800 MHz GSM/GPRS technology
Three national licences (paired with 900 MHz licences)
One regional licence in use,
one regional licence previously used

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Intelligent Transportation Systems

ITS Implementation for Electronic Tolling is well advanced in Australia, with a single system in use in major cities on Australia's East Coast. "All-Electronic" tolling systems are in use in one major road, and planned for several new roads under construction.

Further work on ITS in Australia is being undertaken by a committee of Standards Australia (IT-023 Transport Information and Control Systems)

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Digital Television

Australia introduced digital television, starting on from 1 January 2001, and the process is now well advanced

- **Digital service is now provided in all major metropolitan areas and being introduced in other areas. Broadcasters have been provide additional spectrum to simulcast programs in digital and analogue modes for at least 8 years from the commencement of digital transmissions (at which time analogue services are planned to cease).**

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Digital Television (2)

Programme Material

- Broadcasters are primarily offering programmes in standard definition digital (SDTV) with 16:9 format.
- A number of popular prime-time programs are broadcast in high definition, with a regulatory requirement of 1040 hours per year.
- There are currently some regulatory restrictions on multi-channelling

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Digital Television (3)

Technical Standards

- The Australian technical standards for digital tv are based on DVB-T standards, with 7 MHz channel spacing and Dolby AC3 sound capability
- Standards AS 4599-1999 and AS4933.1-2000 (from Standards Australia) provide a detailed technical specification of broadcasting and receiver requirements
- There has been agreement to use the Multimedia Home Platform (MHP) standards for EPG and STB.

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Digital Television (3)

Market Acceptance

- Initial sales of digital customer equipment were slow, with little additional digital content to drive change and an analogue system generally giving good technical quality.
- The parallel introduction of mass-market DVD equipment and 16:9 TV sets is helping increase growth in digital usage.

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Public Protection and Disaster Relief

- A companion paper updates Australian work in this area

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ACIF Strategic Directions (1)

- **The major tasks identified for ACIF are**
 - **Prioritising deliverables (Standards, Codes and Guidelines)**
 - **Enhancing document development capabilities and productivity**
 - **Successfully launching, managing and promoting an ACIF Compliance Mark**
 - **Identifying industry issues and facilitating their timely resolution**

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ACIF Strategic Directions (2)

- **Retaining existing members and expanding membership in both traditional and new sectors**
- **Reinforcing ACIF's relationships with Governments, Regulators and other industry bodies**
- **Achieving and maintaining appropriate and cost-effective consumer input into ACIF processes and activities**
- **Promoting awareness of ACIF and its achievements and enhancing ACIF's image and reputation**

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Prioritising Deliverables

- **Actions include working to**
 - Reiterate commitment to current core functions/deliverables
 - Dedicate appropriate resources to the introduction of the ACIF Compliance Mark
 - Reiterate commitment to the “*Next Generation Networks*” and “*Any-to-any Text Connectivity*” initiatives and dedicate appropriate resources to these and other forward-looking areas of work
 - Continue to assess/review the ACIF deliverables to ensure they remain appropriate as the environment changes

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Identifying Industry Issues

- **Actions include working to:**
 - Ensure an appropriate framework/mechanism for identifying emerging issues
 - Ensure an effective framework/mechanism for identifying new technologies and international developments
 - Ensure ACIF has resources qualified to assist in the resolution of industry issues

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Industry Facilitation

- **Much of the work from the ACIF NGN Project and the Any-to-Any text Connectivity will continue within ACIF Reference Panels**
- **ACIF will establish a new group covering “*Future Networks, Applications and Services*” (FANS) to cover broader issues not passed to Reference Panels in July 2004, as the other work finishes.**

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