

# AUSTRALIAN COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY TO UNITE AS COMMUNICATIONS ALLIANCE

ACIF and SPAN coming together as a single industry voice

The Australian communications industry is poised for the creation of a new peak body – the Communications Alliance – which will lead it into the Next Generation Networks era.

The Australian Communications Industry Forum (ACIF) and Service Providers Association Inc (SPAN) today announced they were in the final stages of negotiating to merge under the new Communications Alliance banner.

The boards of both ACIF and SPAN have agreed to the merger, which will now be put to the membership for final approval. The timetable adopted will see the two organisations complete the transition to a new structure by 1 September this year.

ACIF CEO, Anne Hurley, has agreed to become CEO of the newly created Communications Alliance. Ms Hurley said the combined organisation would have the membership, resources and capabilities to speak and act on behalf of a broad cross-section of the communications industry as well as develop collaborative industry responses to emerging trends and issues. The Communications Alliance will engage in the full range of industry activity from exploration, investigation and discussion of emerging industry trends, through to critical discussion and debate of the regulatory and policy issues raised by these emerging trends, Ms Hurley said.

Ultimately this will lead to development of the practical industry-led guidelines needed to support the implementation framework for next generation networks.

SPAN's Chairman, John Kranenburg, noted that both SPAN and ACIF members will benefit by becoming part of an expanded industry body rather than maintaining their current separate entities.

The new Communications Alliance will build on the significant achievements of both ACIF and SPAN over the past decade, Mr Kranenburg said. The new organisations scope of activities and depth of member base will lift its leadership contribution to a new level in the industry. The members of both SPAN and ACIF will automatically enjoy rights to engage in and contribute to the full scope of Alliance activities.

The Alliance is committed to the continuation of the essential industry responsibilities and functions delivered by the separate entities. It will also benefit from the synergies and economies achieved by the amalgamation.

The Communications Alliance will place a strong emphasis on providing thought leadership on new trends and directions by fulfilling a strong advocacy role on behalf of the industry and its members, particularly in areas of competition and innovation. Its broad representation will allow it to provide balanced and comprehensive input to policy development and debate.

Unique services currently provided, such as the ACIF process for development of the documentary outputs – industry codes and technical standards which have regulatory status under the Telecommunications Act 1997 and the provision of SPAN's Alternative Dispute Resolution, which acts to solve disputes between parties within the industry, will continue to be key elements of the new Alliance.

## About ACIF

ACIF is a member-funded organisation established in 1997 to lead industry involvement in defining the communications environment.

ACIF provides a neutral forum in which all participants and end-users in the Australian communications industry can work together to foster an efficient, competitive environment. For further information see [www.acif.org.au](http://www.acif.org.au)

## About SPAN

The Service Providers Association Inc (SPAN), founded in 1993, is the national body representing service providers in established and emerging communications technologies, and related organisations, in Australia. SPAN corporate membership is open to all industry participants, including access providers and access seekers and provides an effective forum to work co-operatively together to develop the overall market to their mutual benefit.

SPAN's principal aim is to amplify the voice of members to maximise industry growth and release constraints to innovation and competition. For further information see [www.span.net.au](http://www.span.net.au)