

NEW CODE TO HELP PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS

Ensures Access To Information About Equipment Features

People who need special features to help them use their telephones will be able to make better informed choices because of a new code developed by the Australian Communications Industry Forum (ACIF).

The Accessible Equipment Information Industry Code (C625:2005) and an accompanying industry guideline are designed to improve telecommunications access for people with particular communications needs.

The two main requirements are that:

Importers and manufacturers of customer equipment must provide information to service providers about whether or not their products have features that could enhance accessibility for people with a disability;

Customer equipment importers and manufacturers must respond to direct requests from consumers about the features of their equipment that can meet an individual's special communications needs.

The new code was developed by a special ACIF working committee with representation from consumer and disability groups. Once registered by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), the code will be enforceable and ACMA will be able to ensure that manufacturers, importers and service providers meet their obligations.

People with disabilities are especially dependant on their telephones, explained ACIF chief executive officer Anne Hurley. So they deserve as much assistance as possible in helping them choose equipment that meets their specific communications needs.

This new industry code and guideline should remove unnecessary barriers that sometimes frustrate people seeking information about the features they require in a telephone handset or keypad.

About ACIF

ACIF is a member-funded organisation established in 1997 to lead industry involvement in defining the regulatory 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 through self-regulatory processes, technical codes and standards.