



Year in Review 2014/15



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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S SUMMARY

The last year has seen considerable change for the industry, and looking forward, there is more to come.

The invaluable work by the various working parties has continued during the year, and I have been impressed by the engagement and high level of contribution by a large number of people, to develop codes and guidelines. This work is an important aspect of the TCF's role and is a demonstration of the ability of the industry to put aside competition issues to resolve complex technical problems, ultimately for the benefit of consumers.

As the UFB roll-out continues to gain momentum, and uptake steadily increases, the industry finds itself increasingly dealing with technical issues relating to UFB that require collaborative solutions. Much of this work has been done under the auspices of the UFB Product Forum. This Forum, managed by the TCF, brings together representatives from Chorus, the Local Fibre Companies (LFCs), and the Retail Service Providers (RSPs). Also in attendance are MBIE and Crown Fibre Holdings. There is considerable cross-over between the work originating from this Forum, and TCF working parties. Pragmatism and efficiency are key drivers when considering how this work should be managed and where final decisions should be taken.

The UFB roll-out is expected to be completed by 2020 and will help create a very different telecommunications environment. In anticipation of this, the Government has commenced a review of the telecommunications regulatory regime with a view to implementing changes to the regime post 2020. It is not yet clear what sort of changes are being contemplated and whether UFB will be added to the current regime, or whether an entirely new model will be introduced. The TCF has been active in ensuring its members are well positioned to understand the existing New Zealand economic regulatory landscape and form views on what an appropriate regime might look like post 2020.

The success of the TCF is totally dependent on the willing contribution of individual specialists from its members on the various working parties. These working parties are generally characterized by professional debate, and cooperation with a clear understanding of the importance of the issues and the need to find a solution. It is these characteristics that result in the TCF having a very good reputation with our stakeholders.

Thank you to everyone who contributed so generously to the TCF work programme during the year.



Geoff Thorn
Chief Executive Officer
New Zealand Telecommunications Forum Incorporated



CODES & GUIDELINES AT A GLANCE

As at March 2015, below is a summary of the codes, standards and guidelines currently in effect.

DOCUMENT	PURPOSE	SUPPORTING CONSUMERS	SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT	SUPPORTING INDUSTRY
Broadband Product Disclosure Code	To allow consumers to more easily compare broadband plans between service providers.	◆		
Code Compliance Framework	To enhance our industry's ability to self-regulate, promote compliance with TCF codes and increase consumer confidence in the provision of Telecommunications Services.			◆
Community Engagement for New Wireless Telecommunications Facilities Guidelines	To improve engagement with people that are adjacent or near the location of new or upgraded wireless facilities.	◆		◆
Co-siting Code	To enable a cooperative approach to co-siting radio-communications equipment.			◆
Customer Complaints Code	To enable the prompt, effective resolution of customer complaints and to identify systemic issues arising from disputes and determinations.	◆		
Customer Transfer Code – Regulated	To facilitate a seamless transfer of a customer's telecommunications services between service providers that is consistent with the purpose and provisions of the Telecommunications Act.	◆		
Customer Transfer Code – Non-regulated	To facilitate a seamless transfer of a customer's telecommunications services between service providers that are not covered by provisions of the Telecommunications Act.	◆		
Disconnection Code	To provide fair and consistent disconnection policies to service provider's residential customers.	◆		
Emergency Calling Code	To specify call quality and customer information standards for voice calls to emergency services to improve the delivery of emergency calls and promote user confidence in emergency services calling.		◆	◆
IMEI Blacklisting Code	To discourage the theft and fraudulent acquisition of mobile handsets and disrupt the operation of illegal markets dependent on such activity.	◆		◆

DOCUMENT	PURPOSE	SUPPORTING CONSUMERS	SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT	SUPPORTING INDUSTRY
Interception Guidelines	To assist Network Operators and Service Providers in complying with the Telecommunications (Interception Capability) Act in an efficient, timely and cost effective manner.			◆
Interconnection Technical Standards for Voice over Internet Protocol	To provide a baseline Network-to-Network Interconnection standard that enables New Zealand network operators to interconnect IP networks, primarily for the carriage of Voice over Internet Protocol calls.			◆
International Mobile Roaming Code	To help raise awareness of consumers of IMR services about tariffs and likely costs for mobile roaming.	◆		
Internet Service Providers Spam Code of Practice	To establish practices to reduce spam volumes, increasing customer satisfaction and improving operational efficiency.	◆		◆
Mobile Messaging Services Code	Encourage the responsible delivery of Messaging Services that are compliant with legal and regulatory obligations.	◆		
Multi-Unit Complexes Dispute Resolution Code	To provide an effective disputes resolution scheme to support the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's Code for Access to Multi-Unit Complexes.		◆	◆
Premises Wiring Code	To provide recommendations for installers involved in providing generic or structured cabling (including fibre optic) for telecommunications services in residential, multi-dwelling units and small office premises.	◆		
Principles for Telecommunications Infrastructure for new Subdivisions	To provide Territorial Authorities with guidelines for minimum standards for telecommunications infrastructure for new subdivisions.		◆	
Product Stewardship Scheme	To provide an avenue for anyone in New Zealand to donate unwanted mobile phones for re-use or recycling.	◆		
Unauthorised Use of Mobile Phones in Prisons	To provide an agreed basis upon which the unauthorised use of mobile phones in prisons can be controlled through the use of interference generating transmitters or "jammers".		◆	

PROJECTS COMPLETED

TCF Working Parties have completed a number of key projects this year.

Broadband Product Disclosure – Testing Methodology Developed

During 2014 the TCF Broadband Product Disclosure Working Party developed a methodology for measuring and reporting on broadband performance to support the Broadband Product Disclosure Code. A project to trial this broadband testing methodology, and to assess other measurement approaches is underway and due for completion in June 2015.

Emergency Services Code Revised

The Code for Emergency Voice Calling Services has been updated and revised to, provide for an accompanying operations and support manual to inform Voice Service Providers (VSPs) on how best to comply with the code.

It has also been revised to better align with the TCF Broadband Product Disclosure Code and provides clarity on the use of alternative emergency numbers (such as "112" "911" "999").

This was a scheduled review of the code, which occurs every two years.



Mobile Messaging Services Code Revised

This code was endorsed in September 2014. The revised version is an amalgamation of the Mobile Messaging Services Code and the Mobile Content Code. The updated code incorporates the Code Compliance framework and includes a number of changes to align requirements with current mobile messaging business practice.

Product Stewardship Scheme – RE:MOBILE

In July 2014, Minister for the Environment Amy Adams approved the TCF's RE:MOBILE mobile phone recycling programme as an accredited Product Stewardship Scheme.

To gain accreditation, the TCF has agreed to key targets to reduce the number of mobile phones going to landfill and to further encourage consumers to drop their old phones into their nearest store to ensure they get recycled.

Scheme participants include mobile phone operators - 2degrees, Spark and Vodafone; as well as e-waste recycling partners led by Swapkit. An operational working party provides oversight for the Scheme.

UFB OSS/BSS Iteration Three Complete

Ultra-Fast Broadband (UFB) continued to be a major focus for the industry with publication of Iteration 3 of the UFB Business Support Systems and Operational Support Systems (BSS/OSS) in August 2014.

Iteration 3 delivered the Assure component – Service Outage, Diagnostics – product instance state and fibre-to-fibre transfers.

The purpose of this framework is to enable the retail service providers to interact with the LFCs (Chorus, Enable Networks, Northpower Fibre and Ultrafast Fibre) in a consistent manner, enabling the industry to design and automate operational processes (B2B interfaces) for the management of UFB services nationwide.

VoIP Interoperability Project

The VoIP Interoperability Working Party has completed a standard for SIP Analog Telephone Adaptor (ATA) Voice for LFC

Wholesale Service (Loose Coupling). This New Zealand standard for the build and design of ATA Voice (Loose Coupling) can be picked up and used by any RSP for any LFC.

This standard will also benefit those manufacturers and suppliers of devices, such as alarms or medical aids, as they can see at a glance which standards and functionality the ATA Voice service will support, nationwide. This allows those suppliers (or the users of the products) to upgrade any out of date technology which will not function in a fibre world as many existing products are manufactured specifically for copper based technology.

The standard was endorsed in March 2015.

THE YEAR AHEAD

Work in Progress – At a Glance

Communications Working Group

The TCF has established a working party to focus on projects and initiatives that educate and inform New Zealand about our telecommunications industry and raise awareness of the social and economic benefits telecommunications delivers for the economy. The first key piece of work to be undertaken is an independent report on the status and performance of the New Zealand telecommunications sector.



Customer Transfer Code (Non-Regulated)

The Customer Transfer Working Party worked closely with the UFB OSS/BSS Working Party during 2014 to define a process for fibre-to-fibre transfers. The required OSS/BSS process specifications are included in the UFB Business Interaction Framework Iteration 3 published in August 2014. Since then, the Customer Transfer Working Party has been re-drafting the revised Non-regulated Customer Transfer Code to support the new fibre-to-fibre transfer process.

E-Waste Working Party Established

The E-Waste Working Party has been established to ensure a unified and effective telecommunications industry voice in response to consultation on electrical and electronic waste (e-waste); and to develop an

appropriate, collective approach to industry management of e-waste

The Working Party aims to investigate telecommunications e-waste streams that could benefit from a collaborative approach, specifically modems and other customer premises equipment; and network waste.

The Working Party expects to have a recommendation on how to proceed by July 2015.

Ethernet Access Standard Review

The UFB Working Party has been reestablished to review the TCF UFB Ethernet Access Service Standard. This document sets out the minimum requirements that the industry should meet when delivering both point-to-point Ethernet Line Access (ELA) services and point-to-multipoint Ethernet Multicast Access (EMA) services, which are the Layer 2 services provided under CFH's UFB initiative. It is a timely review as the industry is well into its build phase and the specifications for Layer 2 services have developed further since the original standard was drafted in 2010.

International Revenue Share Fraud

Work on a Trans-Tasman code for the early identification and prevention of international revenue share fraud progressed in 2014 between the TCF and the Communications Alliance – the primary telecommunications industry body in Australia. Most of the focus of the draft code is on customer education; and the TCF is now considering whether to release the information as industry guidelines.

Premises Wiring Code

A review of the code, including its purpose, intended audience and compliance arrangements, commenced in June 2014. The working party has agreed to publish two documents; a Cable Installers Guideline and a

Consumer/Homeowners Guideline, instead of an industry code. The reasoning behind this is to provide more relevant information to the target audiences. The aim is to help guide installers and property owners through the complex issues of premises wiring for telecommunications services.

Regulatory Review of the Industry

The TCF has established a Policy Committee to consider the issues arising from the Government's review of the telecommunications regulatory regime post 2020.

Workshops will be held to provide the opportunity for members to engage in discussion and debate about the current regulatory models being used in New Zealand. These discussions will then inform the TCF response to the Government at the appropriate time.



TDR Scheme Review

The Customer Complaints Code and the Telecommunications Disputes Resolution Scheme Terms of Reference are collectively referred to as the "TDR Scheme".

The Customer Complaints Code was last reviewed in 2013, and is now due to be reviewed again as part of the TCF's standard review cycle. For practical reasons, the Scheme Terms of Reference will be reviewed at the same time.

The working party undertaking the review have been asked to consider the development of an appeals mechanism for Scheme Members, amongst other things. Work on this item is expected to continue through 2015.



UCLL VDSL Band Plan Review

The TCF Board supported an industry request to review New Zealand's current 997 VDSL band plan as we are one of the few countries still using 997 rather than the 998 VDSL Band Plan. Changing to 998 could give the average user a much improved downstream speed and a reduced upstream stream (but still much better than ADSL).

A working party was established to carry out this review and reported back to the TCF Board at the end of 2014. It recommended to transition from the existing Band Plan to the 998 VDSL Band Plan, subject to testing and migration plans being supported by those parties providing VDSL services. The working party is now progressing to the testing phase of the review. Pending these test results, a final decision to transition to the 998 VDSL Band Plan will be made. If successful, a detailed migration plan will then be developed to minimise any impact and risk to the end user consumer, whose migration should be a seamless transition with no impacts to their existing services.

UFB Product Forum

The UFB Product Forum is administered by the TCF and is an industry-wide Forum that aims to provide a platform for technical and operational level discussions relating to UFB services and products.

Members of the UFB Product Forum are the four LFCs, RSPs who have signed a UFB Wholesale Services Agreement with an LFC and observers (MBIE, Crown Fibre Holdings and Commerce Commission).

Over the past year the Forum has addressed several key areas of concern around third party consenting and fibre installation, and recently endorsed the 'UFB Consent Process Best Practice Guidelines' which sets out key recommendations agreed by the industry when seeking consent from an end user. Consultation between LFCs and RSPs continues in 2015 via the UFB Product Forum on a number of issues as the industry continues the UFB roll out throughout New Zealand.

More information on these projects and other current workstreams is available on the TCF website.

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