

APPROVED ALTERNATIVE TESTING METHODOLOGIES: PRINCIPLES FOR HOW TO USE NUMERICAL SPEED INDICATIONS

This document sets out the TCF-Approved Alternative Testing Methodology (AATM) that can be used by Providers who use numerical speed indications in their marketing of broadband services.

A Provider must only use speed claims that the Provider has reasonable grounds to believe reflect the NPTAS expected for customers on that plan when measured from the service handover point e.g., modem/router.

If a Provider seeks to use alternative testing data to substantiate its speed representations, it can work with the Commerce Commission to include results for their services through alternative mechanisms into the MBNZ programme (except in the case of fibre inputs which are overclocked, as described below).

When MBNZ data is not available:

This alternative testing methodology can be used when the most recently published MBNZ Report does not include relevant Provider, technology-specific or regional-specific data. For avoidance of doubt, if MBNZ starts publishing relevant Provider, technology-specific or regional-specific data then the Provider must start referring to that MBNZ data, unless principles for using AATM data as outlined under 'When MBNZ data is available' section below are used.

Fibre inputs which are overclocked¹:

Where wholesale level fibre inputs are overclocked, a Provider does not need to contract the MBNZ test provider but instead can use the headline speed as the NPTAS provided they can be substantiated by the Provider. Fibre inputs that are overclocked do not alone guarantee that end-users will experience the headline speed. The actual speed experience will depend on various factors and may vary between Providers. If the headline speed cannot be substantiated, then the provider should use the methodology below.

Other technologies and fibre inputs which are not overclocked:

For other technologies and fibre inputs which are not overclocked, Providers must use the MBNZ test provider to substantiate their speed claims.

When MBNZ Data Is Available

If agreed by the Commerce Commission, a Provider may submit their AATM data for including in the MBNZ programme and use that data for marketing purposes. For example, a Provider may test a larger number of customer connections than tested by MBNZ volunteers to create a larger testing pool and a more statistically robust result. In this case, the Provider's results may be published by MBNZ to replace the volunteer measurement for that Provider's plan, or to provide results for plans not already reported on.

The AATM used must be published and the testing data must be provided to the Commerce Commission and/or MBNZ according to the agreed industry process once this has been developed.

Frequency of testing

- When using an alternative testing provider, sample measures should be taken and reported at least once every quarter.
- Providers must follow the principles for updating speed indications in marketing as set out in the TCF Broadband Marketing Code Section M 'Updating Speed Indications'.

¹ Overclocked wholesale fibre inputs have additional bandwidth for protocol encapsulation overheads and thereby increase the likelihood end-user customers can receive the headline speed at peak times.