

ACMA AND THE ACCC
RELEASE NEW REPORT

Communications infrastructure in Australia



ACMA and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) jointly released on 12 December the report *Communications Infrastructure and Services Availability in Australia 2008*, which examines the availability of broadband, fixed voice, mobile voice and mobile data services in Australia.

The report is part of a program of cooperation to minimise overlap between the two agencies in collecting industry information and reporting. 'I welcome the extensive cooperation between our two agencies which has resulted in the publication of this report,' said Chris Chapman, ACMA Chairman.

DSL is the primary broadband service, growth in broadband subscriptions has been driven by wireless broadband (47 per cent of new connections) and DSL in unbundled services (33 per cent of new connections), where internet service providers (ISPs) use their own infrastructure in telephone exchange buildings

Mobile services are evolving from second generation to third generation (3G) mobile;

3G offers many advanced services also available on broadband. There were 8.55 million 3G services in operation at June 2008, an increase of 88 per cent from June 2007.

Fixed voice remains a large part of consumer spending on communications services and the number of fixed-line services remained stable in the year to June 2008 at 11 million.

Alternatives to the standard telephone service for making fixed voice calls are slowly emerging. During the year to June 2008 voice over internet protocol (VoIP) became more widely available, although take-up is still relatively low. ISPs have stimulated VoIP take-up by offering a traditional handset, a local number and other features in conjunction with their VoIP services.

The report is available at
<www.acma.gov.au/webwr/>.

Growth in broadband subscriptions has been driven by wireless and DSL in unbundled services where ISPs use their own infrastructure in telephone exchange buildings to provide DSL.

Graeme Samuel, ACCC Chairman, said, 'This report provides a concise and objective account of communications infrastructure that is not readily available from other sources.'

Depending on their location, Australian consumers have access to a range of broadband services, including digital subscriber line (DSL), hybrid fibre coaxial, wireless broadband, fibre to the kerb, satellite and optical fibre. While

to provide DSL rather than reselling wholesale DSL. In the year to June 2008, active broadband subscribers increased by 1.1 million to reach 5.7 million.

Broadband connection speeds are also rising, with a 25 per cent increase in subscribers using a 1.5 Mbit/s service; this is largely a result of evolution from ADSL1 to ADSL2+ services, which offer much faster broadband speeds.