

The lives of your customers may be at stake. So it is absolutely critical that you allocate the correct CLI and ABC codes as well as ensure that you provide the necessary information to the Integrated Public Number Database.

By taking these actions you will be making emergency calls over the Internet a much safer option for your customers.

For further information, feel free to call Communications Alliance on 02-9959 9111.

#### **An overview of the regulatory regime**

The communications industry in Australia has an effective system of protection for its customers. Protective measures exist on a number of levels and all service providers should be aware of their obligations. These measures are the responsibility of the following bodies:

#### **Communications Alliance Ltd**

The Communications Alliance was formed in 2006 to provide a unified voice for the Australian communications industry and to lead it into the next generation of converging networks, technologies and services. The Communications Alliance has its genesis in the merger of ACIF and SPAN.

#### **Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)**

The ACCC promotes competition and fair trade in the market place to benefit consumers, business and the community. It also regulates national infrastructure services. Its primary responsibility is to ensure that individuals and businesses comply with the Commonwealth competition, fair trading and consumer protection laws.

#### **Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)**

The ACMA licenses telecommunications carriers, ensures compliance with carrier licence conditions and service provider rules, and monitors service performance and quality. The ACMA also administers legislative provisions relating to powers and immunities of carriers in the construction of telecommunications facilities, and protection of consumers through safeguards and service guarantees.

#### **Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman**

The Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) is a free and independent alternative dispute resolution scheme for small business and residential consumers in Australia who have a complaint about their telephone or Internet service.

We encourage you to visit the Communications Alliance website [www.commsalliance.com.au](http://www.commsalliance.com.au) or call us on 02-9959 9111 to understand your obligations under ACIF\* Codes or just to discuss the information you should provide to your customers.

\* ACIF is a division of Communications Alliance Ltd

# Access to emergency services for users of VoIP and Internet Telephony

## Your obligations as a service provider



COMMUNICATIONS  
ALLIANCE LTD

Level 9, 32 Walker Street  
North Sydney  
NSW 2060 Australia

T 61 2 9959 9111  
F 61 2 9954 6136  
TTY 61 2 9923 1911

Correspondence:  
P.O.Box 444  
Milsons Point NSW 1565

E [info@commsalliance.com.au](mailto:info@commsalliance.com.au)  
[www.commsalliance.com.au](http://www.commsalliance.com.au)  
ABN 56 078 026 507

**Being able to use the phone to get help in an emergency is one of the most important benefits of modern communications.**

**That's why, as a provider of VoIP or Internet Telephony services, you have a number of obligations that are of vital importance in helping your customers to rely on their phone in emergencies.**

In fact, if the service you are offering is considered to be a Standard Telephone Service (check this with the Australian Communications and Media Authority), it is mandatory that you provide access to emergency services through 000 and 106.

The reasons why it is so critical for you to meet these requirements are mainly related to the fact that phone calls made over the Internet are not as easily pinpointed as traditional fixed line calls or even mobile phone calls.

So emergency call persons and the emergency services need extra help in locating the source of a VoIP call to ensure a correct connection and guarantee a timely response.

## How emergency calls are handled

In Australia, emergency call-taking is a two-stage process. All calls to 000 are routed to one of two dedicated Telstra emergency call centres, and for 106 calls they are routed to one of two Australian Communication Exchange emergency call centres.

From these centres, each call is then transferred to the appropriate emergency service organisation (police, fire, or ambulance) in the relevant state.

The key to the success of this process is that calls are transferred to the correct service location as soon as possible.

For fixed services, the decision on where to transfer the call relies on the 000/106 emergency call centres having the correct location of the caller.

This is achieved by using the incoming calling number and the registered address of the phone service, and then mapping this information to the corresponding emergency service organisation for connection.

However, the connection may be made incorrectly because the service address of a VoIP caller may not accurately reflect the location of the caller.

To avoid this occurring, the call centre operators for 000/106 need to have a way of knowing that the call is being made over the Internet.

There has to be a "trigger" indicating to the 000/106 call centre operator that the caller must be asked to verify the location of the emergency. This will ensure correct connection of the call.

## How you can help locate emergencies

To help emergency services locate the source of incoming VoIP calls, service providers need to do a number of things.

### ABC Codes

Firstly, you have to make sure that when your customers make emergency calls, the correct CLI and the correct 3 digit ABC code are attached.

This alerts the 000/106 call centre operator that it is a VoIP call and that they must verbally request from the caller their location to ensure a correct connection to an emergency service organisation.

If you are unfamiliar with the ACIF\* ABC Codes (typically in the form '98x' for VoIP), visit the Communications Alliance website and click on the following link:

[http://www.commsalliance.com.au/ACIF\\_documents/guidelines/G557](http://www.commsalliance.com.au/ACIF_documents/guidelines/G557)

In addition, the VoIP Location Indicator signaling specification is available at

[http://www.commsalliance.com.au/ACIF\\_documents/specifications/G629](http://www.commsalliance.com.au/ACIF_documents/specifications/G629)

### IPND Data

Secondly, you must provide information to the Integrated Public Number Database (IPND) which can further assist the 000/106 call centres in connecting calls correctly.

This information will include your Carriage Service Provider Code as well as an Alternate Address Flag, to indicate to the emergency services that the calling address may not reflect the physical location of the caller.

The data you provide to the IPND is explained in G619:2005 IPND Data Guideline available at

[http://www.commsalliance.com.au/ACIF\\_documents/guidelines/G619](http://www.commsalliance.com.au/ACIF_documents/guidelines/G619)

Specifically, you should look at Section 6.8 for information about your Carriage Service Provider Code and Section 6.9 regarding the Alternate Address Flag.