

## ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL FOR TERMINAL ATTACHMENTS (ACTA)

MEETING DATE: December 8, 2005

TITLE: Report from Working Group on ACTA Participation and Interest Segment Representation

SOURCE\*: John Bipes with the assistance of Working Group members Cliff Chamney and Roger Hunt, and contributions from Roland Gubisch

PURPOSE: Informative/Decision

DISTRIBUTION TO: Segment Representatives, Sponsors

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### ABSTRACT

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The Working Group on ACTA Participation and Interest Segment Representation, chaired by John Bipes, OIP, met on October 17, 2005. The outcome of the meeting was to draft letters from the ACTA Chair to members of the Interest Segments, in particular the vacant NEM segment, in order to inquire the possibility of increased participation and filling of vacant council seats, and to provide feedback on the pertinence of the six defined interest segments to the current telecommunications industry. The Working Group offers the attached letter for approval by the Council for correspondence to the registered members of the ACTA.

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**(Draft)** Letter from the ACTA to ATIS / TIA Members:

In the interest of deregulation/privatization and at the request of and the commitment of support by the wireline telecom industry, the *Administrative Council for Terminal Attachments* (ACTA) was created by the *Federal Communications Commission* (FCC) in 2000, <http://www.part68.org>. Since its inception the ACTA has been overseeing the adoption of state-of-the-art technical standards for approvals of wireline terminal equipment (TE), and maintaining a database listing of approved TE. The ACTA functions as a quasi-governmental independent council in amiable cooperation with ATIS – the *Alliance for Telecom Industry Solutions* (the ACTA-chosen secretariat) and the TIA – the *Telecommunications Industry Association*, the ACTA’s cosponsors.

To provide broad-based and balanced industry representation with the wireline telecom industry of the time, the Commission mandated that the ACTA be composed of five identifiable, specific and *active* industry segments of the era (and a sixth ‘other’):

✚	LEC	Local Exchange Carriers	2/2
✚	IXC	Interexchange Carriers	1/2
✚	NEM	Network Equipment Manufacturers	0/2
✚	TEM	Terminal Equipment Manufacturers	1/2
✚	LAB	Laboratories	1/2
✚	OIP	Other Interested Parties	2/2

The LEC segment has two of two primary seats occupied, 2/2; the IXC segment one of two, 1/2; <http://www.part68.org/leadership.aspx>. Only seven of twelve, less than 60%, of the primary seats on the ACTA are occupied. The NEM segment is without any ACTA representation. (Although only the primary seats are detailed above, each segment should also be accompanied by *an alternate representative – five of the six seats of which are vacant.*)

Because of a lack of industry support the ACTA Executive Committee has seen a reduction in the participation of scheduled ACTA meetings and proceedings. The Committee understands that current market and the industry’s evolution may be part of the cause, and it is making an effort to determine if the open positions are still necessary in today’s industry. As such, the Council is encouraging feedback from companies in each industry segment to determine the level of interest and necessity of continuing participation from each respective segment:

✚ LEC (Local Exchange Carriers) **Text needed from LEC segment.**

✚ IXC (Interexchange Carriers ) may have the impression that, since they generally connect to customers via LECs, those facilities provide sufficient isolation to prevent harm to IXC networks from telephone terminal equipment. However, even with LEC or fiber electrical isolation, or when using VoIP technology, the harms of billing system interference and degradation of service to those not in

communication with telephone terminal equipment are still possible. Where IXCs connect directly to customers via copper facilities, the harms of injury to personnel and damage to equipment are also possible. IXCs are encouraged to consider joining the ACTA segment membership list and appointing a representative to stand for election to a leadership position in the ACTA.

- ✚ NEM (Network Equipment Manufacturers) segment is wholly unrepresented on the ACTA. **Additional text needed from NEM segment.**

- ✚ TEM (Terminal Equipment Manufacturers) is represented by a single member from a vast field of manufacturers and suppliers. This segment covers the “end user” link in the nation’s telecommunications telecommunications system, and needs input from a diversified view to reach the highest standard of service to the public, while maintaining relationships within the TEM segment and the other ACTA segments.

- ✚ LAB (Laboratories) segment represents the test labs that are responsible for determining terminal equipment compliance to the ACTA-adopted technical requirements where the manufacturer either does not have suitable test facilities, or chooses to use an outside resource. Many Part 68 test laboratories are also TCBs, certifying compliance to the technical requirements. The ACTA LAB segment thus bridges the viewpoints of the industry and the regulator. Because most technical standards under Part 68 are developed in TIA committees and not in ACTA, candidate test labs may have the impression that their participation is most essential at the TIA committee level. Nevertheless, the ACTA remains the gatekeeper for the connection of terminal equipment ; it relies upon laboratory feedback to meet its obligations in a balanced way.

- ✚ OIP Other Interested Parties **Text needed from OIP segment.**

The ACTA provides an important function in maintaining the integrity of the PSTN and all the connected equipment, and uses the input from all the industry segments in establishing its policies and actions to assure this integrity is maintained.

The opinions and expertise of all the industry segments is crucial to maintaining this integrity. The ACTA Executive Committee is encouraging all companies that are listed as ACTA member companies to contact their industry segment representative (as listed in the ACTA website at <http://www.part68.org>) to aid in determining the direction of the ACTA for the future. We invite your industry segment’s participation on the ACTA!

Based upon your response to this invitation directly from the ACTA, and encouragements from cosponsors ATIS and TIA, the ACTA will make recommendations to FCC in 2006 for reallocation – including possible deletion or addition – of industry segment seats on the Administrative Council.