

Fact Sheet on the Wireless Access Providers' Association September 2007



Introduction

The Wireless Access Providers' Association (**WAPA**) is an association that strives to ensure the sustainability of the **Wireless Access** services industry. We represent our members who are **Wireless Network Access Providers, WISPs** and **Equipment Vendors**.

Objectives

WAPA was formed in **2006** as an industry association with the following objectives:

- To increase the profile of members and the industry as a whole to:
 - the general public
 - the Regulator
 - other licensed operators
- To minimise potential for radio interference through
 - policing of the supplier network for type approval compliance
 - enforcement of a code of conduct on unlicensed band usage.
- To facilitate access to information about other operators for:
 - interference mitigation discussions
 - interaction with the regulator
 - the expedition of **WAPA** inspection processes
- To enforce a code of conduct of good practices, to assist the Regulator and ensure compliance with regulations.

Benefits of WAPA membership

Aside from the usual benefits of belonging to a community of like-minded entities **WAPA** also offers its members up-to-date technical and regulatory advice. **WAPA** members further enjoy:

- augmented legitimacy
- close liaison with equipment vendors
- technical knowledge sharing
- client leads passed on from other members.

Joining WAPA

Applicants must show that:

- they are in possession of a valid telecommunications service licence or that they have applied for one (in which case they may be admitted as a probationary member until such time as the application has been granted)
- demonstrate a commitment to abide by the Constitution and Code of Conduct of the Association
- agree to participate in the activities of the Association, including regular census surveys.

A non-refundable administrative fee of **R2 000** is payable on application and monthly fees for all members (other than honorary members such as NGOs and non-profit entities) are set at **R500** per month. No distinction is currently made on the basis of the relative size of members.

Interaction with ICASA

WAPA has held formal meetings with representatives of **ICASA's** Council and has made a formal submission to Council in respect of possible co-operation between the **Regulator** and **WAPA**.

Industry Representative Body

WAPA has applied to the **Department of Communications** for recognition as an **Industry Representative Body (IRB)** under **Chapter 11 of the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act** and hopes soon to offer its members the safe-harbour benefits of membership of a recognised **IRB** in the (very) near future.

WAPA & ISPA

Many **WAPA** members are also members of **ISPA** and see no conflict in belonging to both organisations. While some of **WAPA's** members are not ISPs (e.g. municipalities and equipment vendors) those that do derive additional benefit from **WAPA's** focus on the provision of access through wireless means and the particular regulatory regime applicable thereto.

Conclusion

WAPA doesn't profess to have answers to all questions relating to wireless access provision in **South Africa**, but it is a collection of many of the major players in the industry who share a collective goal, of ensuring sustainable business opportunities in Wireless Access, particularly in "un-licensed" bands.

Further information

If you wish to take up membership of **WAPA** or simply wish to find out more information please e-mail info@wapa.org.za or visit www.wapa.org.za.