



OFCOM URGES BROADBAND FORUM TO LEAD SPECIFICATION DEVELOPMENT FOR COMPETITIVE SUPER-FAST BROADBAND NETWORKS

Chinyelu Onwurah addresses members on the eve of major Ofcom announcement

(March 6, 2009, London, UK) Super-fast Broadband networks – with speeds above 25 Mbps to the home – can be provided in a way that embraces competition, and the Broadband Forum has the opportunity to play a vital role in defining the specifications needed by the industry.

That was the message delivered to the first quarter meeting of the Forum in New Orleans this week, by Chinyelu Onwurah, Head of Telecoms Technology at Ofcom, the UK regulator of telecommunications. Ms Onwurah was speaking on the eve of a major announcement by Ofcom in the UK concerning the provision of super-fast broadband.

"The Broadband Forum has played a highly significant role in getting the world to where it is today in terms of broadband usage and we would urge you to place yourselves at the centre of competitive next generation broadband access," she told her audience of more than 150 broadband specification experts from around the world.

Ms Onwurah highlighted examples of nearly 50 super-fast broadband deployment schemes planned or already active in the UK and stressed that in Ofcom's view, wholesale access was essential to enable competition.

"There is a wide range of potential standards and challenging technical requirements so international technical solutions that are needed," she said. "Moving next generation access standards along now would mean the availability of a standardised wholesale access product sooner, rather than later, which would give easier access to fibre communities."

Ms. Onwurah said the road to standardisation covered many areas already within the remit and experience of the Broadband Forum and summarised by highlighting several existing Broadband Forum technical reports, such as TR-156 and TR-101, which already provide much of the technical foundation needed for super-fast competitive broadband. Ofcom requirements are based around five characteristics: security enablement, QoS enablement, multicast enablement, support for flexible customer premises equipment (CPE), and support for flexible interconnection.

"In the last ten years alone, broadband usage has rocketed from around 60,000 to over 400 million, noted Robin Mersh, COO of the Broadband Forum." "With the dawn of next generation networks, our specifications are fundamental to empower open access solutions, enabling initiatives such as ALA."

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About the Broadband Forum

The Broadband Forum mission is to develop the full potential of broadband. Focused on home-to-core network and management solutions, our standards empower providers to achieve more with their broadband deployment. Established in 1994 as the ADSL Forum and later as the DSL Forum, the Broadband Forum has seen its work over the past 15 years evolve from addressing physical layer ADSL transport specifications to advanced transport and management specifications for all forms of broadband. The Broadband Forum's formal BroadbandSuite™ Release Program and all technical reports are publicly available at www.broadband-forum.org