

Protection against unauthorised transfer of telecommunications services increased



ACMA has registered a code of practice that increases the protection of customers against the unauthorised transfer of telecommunications services from one service provider to another. Registration of the code by ACMA makes it enforceable.

The new Customer Transfer Code was developed after a review of a code registered in 2001. It has strengthened the rules requiring that a transfer of a customer only occurs after authorisation has been obtained by appropriate means and with the

customer's informed consent. If a service is transferred without the account holder's consent, the transfer is unauthorised and can be reversed.

The code was initially developed to minimise unauthorised transfers. The new rules mean service providers must have appropriate verification procedures and take steps to confirm, document and notify the customer of the transfer. Rules have been included which provide protection for customers who do not wish to be subjected to repeated

unwanted marketing approaches by telecommunications service providers.

The *ACIF C546:2007 Customer Transfer Industry Code* was developed by the Australian Communications Industry Forum (a subsidiary of Communications Alliance). The code is on the Communications Alliance website at www.commsalliance.com.au. More information about industry codes is on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au.

New codes registered for subscription and narrowcasting TV and radio services

ACMA has registered new codes of practice for subscription and narrowcasting television and radio services.

The Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association (ASTRA) reviewed the codes for subscription broadcasting television, subscription narrowcasting television, open narrowcasting television and subscription narrowcasting radio services in 2006–07. At the same time, the Australian Narrowcast Radio Association (ANRA) reviewed the code for open narrowcasting radio services.

Public consultation on the draft codes took place during September and October 2006. In response to public comment, ASTRA and ANRA

amended the codes to extend the grounds for vilification to include transgender and HIV/AIDS status. The subscription broadcasting and narrowcasting television codes have also been updated to take into account new classification guidelines that came into effect in May 2005.

ASTRA also incorporated a requirement into the subscription broadcasting television code that advertisements must comply with the Australian Association of National Advertisers Code for Advertising to Children and the Australian Association of National Advertisers Food and Beverages Advertising and Marketing Communications Code. A comprehensive examination of food

and beverage advertising to children is currently being undertaken by ACMA as part of the review of the Children's Television Standards.

The registration of a new code for open narrowcasting television has been put on hold to allow ASTRA to consider a late submission from the National Indigenous Television Service, which was incorporated in December 2006 and plans to launch a new content service later this year.

Under section 123 of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*, industry groups representing the broadcasting industries develop and review their codes of practice in consultation with ACMA. Consultation takes place with the public and industry, which allows

community concerns to be identified and evaluated. At the end of the review process, ACMA includes a code in its Register of Codes of Practice if it meets the criteria specified in section 123(4) of the Broadcasting Services Act.

The codes of practice for subscription and narrowcasting services have been in place since 1997 and are reviewed every three years. ACMA receives very few complaints about these services.

The codes are on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au (go to For licensees & industry: Licensing & regulation > Legislation, codes & standards > Codes & standards > Broadcasting codes index).