



Snapshot

AMTA's weekly update

**Australian
Mobile Telecommunications
Association**

Friday 12 May 2006

[This week in Federal Parliament](#)

Obviously the Budget was the big ticket item in Federal Politics this week. The Treasurer revealed a free spending affair against a backdrop of another substantial surplus (for details see AMTA's Budget Brief).

Telecommunications was not a major feature this time around, however, the event itself always provides an opportunity for briefing politicians on industry issues. AMTA held meetings with senior advisors in offices of Philip Ruddock (Attorney-General) and Nick Minchin (Minister for Finance and Administration), as well as discussions with Gary Nairn (Special Minister of State), Helen Coonan (Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts), Fran Bailey (Minister for Small Business and Tourism), Paul Neville (Chair of Government Communications Committee), and Stephen Conroy (Shadow Communications Minister). Key messages covered new technology, health and safety issues, recycling and changes in telecommunications law enforcement legislation.

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[Base station safety](#)

The international consensus of expert bodies and health authorities, including the World Health Organisation (WHO), is that there is no evidence of adverse health effects from living and working near a mobile phone base station. This week media reports from Melbourne have suggested a link between a mobile phone base station and the incidence of brain cancer at the RMIT business school where the top two floors of a building have been closed. AMTA and the MCF have responded to the issues raised by confirming that mobile phone base stations are designed, built and tested to comply with strict science-based guidelines which are recognised by national and international health agencies. In addition WHO says "*None of the recent reviews have concluded that exposure to the RF (radio frequency) fields from mobile phones and their base stations cause any adverse health consequences*".

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['Smart' Jammer to be Lab Tested by Telstra](#)

The Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Senator Helen Coonan, yesterday announced that Telstra will undertake a laboratory test of a mobile phone 'smart' jammer. ACMA has given approval for the device to be imported into Australia to test the device in a closed laboratory environment. The Minister said advances in jamming technology may result in less interference to other mobile phone users. Jamming

technology may be useful in a national security context eg by blocking mobile phone signals in high security prisons.

(To view the Minister's press release click here)

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[Companies offer choice to their customers](#)

AMTA finds it hard to believe a survey this week that claimed the mobile telephone companies are not helping confused customers. AMTA CEO Chris Althaus said the Australian mobile phone market is very competitive with carriers competing fiercely for customers. If they don't satisfy their customers they risk losing vital market share. The survey by Global Reviews said customers found the array of choices confusing. Mr Althaus said carriers offered a wide choice because customers' needs differed. He said the carriers and AMTA offered customers simple step-by-step guides in choosing a mobile phone plan to suit their needs. Customers can go to www.amta.org.au to view tips on buying a mobile. AMTA's tips help customers to identify their budget needs and likely usage patterns, what types of plans are available, the call rates within each plan, what features are required in a handset and help customers to evaluate the options.

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[Road safety committee report expected in September](#)

The Victorian Parliamentary Road Safety Committee inquiry into driver distraction is not expected to report until late August or early September. It was expected to hand down its report at the end of June. AMTA will write to the committee to reiterate its opposition to any moves to ban all mobile phones for P-Plate drivers. AMTA CEO Chris Althaus said a ban on hands-free mobiles for young drivers would be unenforceable and the industry was concerned that it could lead to young drivers taking more risks to avoid detection. He said mobiles are only one of many distractions faced by drivers and they should not be singled out. Education rather than legislation is the key to increasing the responsible use of mobile phones and AMTA has offered its support in helping to introduce materials on driving distractions to driver education programs in Victoria.

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[Technology Showcase June 14](#)

The Board of AMTA is hosting a Technology Showcase at Parliament House in Canberra on June 14. The Showcase will demonstrate to MPs and Senators the products and services offered by 3G technology as well as profiling AMTA's programs. It will feature hands-on displays giving MPs the opportunity to see the latest 3G technology in action. AMTA CEO Chris Althaus said the Showcase would provide an opportunity for the industry to discuss its self-regulatory measures to provide robust and workable consumer protections while encouraging the ongoing vitality, growth and development of our industry.

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[dotMobi sunrise period extended for AMTA members](#)

AMTA have been successful in gaining an extension of the deadline for the limited industry sunrise period for the dotMobi domain name registration. The new deadline is COB 18th May 2006. Please contact AMTA to register your expressions of interest.

[ACMA releases safety guide for mobile chat providers](#)

The Australian Communications and Media Authority this week launched a guide for mobile chat providers on how to make their services safer for children. The *Guide to the Implementation of Safety Measures in Mobile Services* recognises the benefits that mobile chat services can bring for communications and social networking, but also provides information on the small but real risk of mobile chat services being used to facilitate illegal contact between children and adults. (To view ACMA's media release click [here](#)).

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[Proposal stopped for .xxx domain name](#)

The Minister for Communications, Technology and the Arts yesterday welcomed the decision by the international Internet domain name body, ICANN, to block the establishment of a .xxx domain for adult content. Minister Helen Coonan said the outcome was positive and had prevented the creation of a domain that could have acted as a haven for illegal and offensive content. (To view the Minister's press release click [here](#))

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[AMTA's Annual Mobile Telecommunications Conference 2006](#)

AMTA's Annual Telecommunications Conference 2006 will be held on 20-21 September at the Sydney Convention Centre, Darling Harbour. This year's Conference will again feature the highly successful carrier CEO roundtable where the industry leaders will discuss a range of issues facing the mobile telecommunications industry. Please stay tuned for further details regarding the program for the Conference.

In conjunction with Association and Communication Events (ACE), AMTA is finalising an extensive sponsorship package which will be initially offered to AMTA members to participate.

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