

**CANTO REGULATORY & EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES COMMITTEE MEETING**

**BOARD REPORT**

**JULY 14, 2013**

 **Terms of Reference**

1. To keep abreast of developments in member countries
2. To priortise issues and concerns of members related to regulatory developments and emerging technologies
3. Develop CANTO’s position on emerging issues for approval by the Board
4. Identify areas for capacity development

**Broadband and Spectrum Focus**

For the last two (2) years the Committee has been focusing on spectrum and broadband because these are the priority areas for our members. Broadband is offered by operators using mobile, wireless and fixed infrastructure and the operators are concerned about having spectrum released in sufficient quantities and at affordable prices to support broadband rollout.

In this regard in May 2013, the Board approved the Paper submitted by the Committee titled ‘*Incentivising Investment in Broadband in the Caribbean’*. As a reminder, the industry requested:

* Import Duty Relief
* Consumption Tax Relief and Tax Credits
* Reduced Licence Fees or Licence Fee Waivers for a specific period
* Use of Universal Service Funds
* Resourcing
* More Government Services Online

The Committee is pleased to have delivered this Policy Position as requested by the Ministers at CANTO 2012. The Secretary General has advised that the Paper has been circulated to all Ministers who are attending CANTO 2013.

While it is foundational for CANTO to have approved the Paper the Committee recognizes that it must translate the Policy into an Action Plan in order to deliver benefits to its member. It was agreed at the Meeting of May 24, 2013 that such an Action Plan is needed. A preliminary Action Plan has been circulated to the Committee for discussion in the face to face meeting at CANTO 2013. The Action Plan proposes that a small, multi company group engage policymakers with regards to arriving at agreement on implementation of the incentives and that this group be supported at the highest level in each Company.

In executing the elements of the Action Plan that could be more immediately achieved, the Committee:

1. will be addressed by Minister Darcy Boyce of Barbados who has graciously accepted the invitation to discuss how the industry and governments can have a meeting of minds on how to achieve the broadband objectives.
2. Requested Raphael Marin of Belize Telemedia (BTL) and a Committee Member to present at CANTO 2013 on BTL as a case study for the success of incentives for increasing broadband penetration in Belize.

CANTO has also requested that the Committee support the BIIPAC project with regards to the similar objective of incentivizing investment in broadband. The Committee agreed.

The Action Plan will be presented to the Board for approval when complete.

**Transparency of Regulator’s Budget**

Further to the Board’s comments at the AGM, the captioned Paper has been revised and will be recirculated to the Committee members very soon.

**Active Committee Members**

Active Committee members are:

ATNI – Delreo Newman

BTL – Raphael Marin

Digicel – Andrew Gorton; Julian Wilkins

Flow – Opal Lawton

LIME – Melesia Sutherland Campbell (Chair)

TSTT – Ed Duke