

Campaign Issue for 2008

The issue that ATUG will be campaigning on in 2008 is that of prices for international mobile roaming services – both voice and internet roaming.

When the ATUG Board discussed this issue a couple of weeks ago, the energy level in the room rose dramatically as example after example was given of staff traveling overseas coming home with bills for mobile services in the hundreds and thousands for just using the services they use at home.

Industry's promise is anywhere, anytime. ATUG's response is Yes, but not at any price.

Australia is actively engaged in international fora and agreements, World Trade, APECTEL, bilaterals, Free Trade Agreements. We are encouraging all businesses to develop export markets. Overseas travel is more and more an option for work, education, holidays.

The current options for end users are to STOP using their services when they leave Australia or FACE big bills when they come home. For consumers, local SIM cards and phone cards might be an answer but it's not answer for business and the Europeans have recently decided it's no answer for European consumers. The time has come to stop the excess pricing for mobile services while traveling.

We now know the cost of terminating mobile calls – in Australia, in Europe through recent decisions from the European Commission. In the US prices are now .07 of 1 US cent and minutes of use have skyrocketed unsurprisingly. Even in China and Indonesia regulators have taken action in the absence of market led outcomes to get cost based pricing for domestic roaming calls on mobiles.

The time has come for action to be taken in the international arena – ATUG's campaign is the Roam Fair campaign and I am pleased to launch it here at ATUG 2008. ATUG will be working with INTUG during 2008 on this issue.