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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Fixed Mobile Convergence Alliance and Wireless Broadband Alliance announce the successful completion of trials of industry-wide initiative to enhance the customer experience for Wi-Fi network access and global roaming**

Members from the Fixed Mobile Convergence Alliance (FMCA) and the Wireless Broadband Alliance (WBA) have joined forces and initiated a global trial to encourage the adoption of the IEEE standard 802.1x and prove the benefits offered by the Extensible Authentication Protocol (EAP). This joint work by the FMCA and WBA, who together represent over 800 million customers around the world, is the result of growing customer demand for an enhanced public Wi-Fi access experience, on any device.

Over the past few years, we have witnessed an explosion in Wi-Fi usage and this trend is set to continue. Users are already able to benefit from Wi-Fi access not only in their homes and offices, but also while out and about through the deployment of public Wi-Fi hotspots and even Wi-Fi cities. However, the Wi-Fi connection and log-on experience still remain complicated. The FMCA and WBA have therefore launched an initiative involving 15 operators and three hub providers to trial technology that can remove this complexity for end users. A leading SIM card vendor has been supporting the trial by supplying innovative secured credential solutions for Wi-Fi network authentications.

“WBA has over the years worked to make internet roaming across various technologies a key focus area. In line with this objective the trial was conducted over the WBA’s award winning WRIX (Wireless Roaming Intermediary Exchange) platform and members from both FMCA and WBA signed bilateral agreements demonstrating the importance of collaboration among organisations to drive to a common goal. Through the participation of so many industry players in this project, we hope handset vendors and device manufacturers will further enhance their product features to enable an improved end user experience over public Wi-Fi networks,” said Mr. Tiago Rodrigues, Telecom Portugal Wi-Fi Service Manager and WBA project lead.

The advantages of using 802.1x networks with EAP enabled devices are well known and to date there has been sporadic use in the industry, particularly in enterprise networks. However, 802.1x/EAP has not yet been widely adopted for public Wi-Fi networks.

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“Our trials have proven that it is possible to make big improvements to the customer experience when using Wi-Fi devices. But to date there has not been any cohesive effort by industry to address the issues across the whole Wi-Fi eco-system, which includes the networks, devices and applications, as well as changing user patterns. The FMCA and WBA have therefore jointly spearheaded this programme to drive the adoption of standards to deliver a seamless user experience through global trials with both network operators and vendors,” said Andrew Haworth, Managing Director of the FMCA.

As valued output from the trial, FMCA members have produced an EAP Settings Guideline document. This document specifies to industry vendors the required end-user experience as well as handset behaviour when performing network auto log-on. The Guidelines also cover the required steps during the initial credential provisioning and network profile configuration process. ***The FMCA/WBA whitepaper ‘The road to enhancing the public Wi-Fi access experience’ and the FMCA EAP Settings Guideline document are available for download at [www.thefmca.com](http://www.thefmca.com) or [www.wballiance.net](http://www.wballiance.net)***

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Enquiries about this press release should be made to the FMCA Programme office on 0771 8800695 or e-mail [alison.bunyan@thefmca.com](mailto:alison.bunyan@thefmca.com).

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### **About the Fixed-Mobile Convergence Alliance (FMCA)**

The Fixed-Mobile Convergence Alliance (FMCA) is a global, not-for-profit organisation, working with its members to provide a mutual learning platform to accelerate the development and availability of seamless, easy to use, convergence products and services.

Representing a global base of over 700 million customers, our objective is to work closely with industry to ensure that all devices, access points, applications and underlying networks, operate seamlessly to deliver a superior user experience. We also contribute to, and promote, the adoption of global industry standards.

Our mission is to be the voice of the customer for the continued evolution of wireless broadband and convergence, providing them with access to information, how, when and where they want it.



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**PRESS RELEASE****About the Wireless Broadband Alliance**

The Wireless Broadband Alliance (“WBA”) was founded in 2003 by leading telecom operators. Its goal is to drive wireless broadband adoption globally by developing common commercial and technical frameworks for interoperability across networks, technologies and devices. It helps its members to deliver quality services with consistent customer experience and reliability to the users worldwide.

The WBA members have successfully implemented commercial Wi-Fi roaming globally using WBA WRIX (Wireless Roaming Intermediary Exchange), an award winning modularised standard service specification developed by WBA. The WBA WRIX makes it easier to implement roaming between WBA members and reduces time to market for new operators interested in expanding global roaming footprint. The WBA is also collaborating with other industry forums to further enhance WRIX and help harmonize wireless broadband roaming standards including support for Dual Mode devices and WIMAX roaming.

The WBA include pioneers in the wireless broadband field and its 39 members include leading operators offering wireless services across Wi-Fi, WiMAX and Mobile broadband networks and roaming providers. Collectively, the WBA members operate over 90,000 Wi-Fi hotspots worldwide and have a pool of more than 230 million subscribers across Europe, Asia Pacific and Americas. For more information, please visit [www.wballiance.net](http://www.wballiance.net).