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Approval of IEEE 802.16 Standard Sets Stage for Growth of Metropolitan Area Networks Using Fixed Broadband Wireless

Global Standard for 10-66 GHz Wireless Networks Fosters Economic Alternative for "Last Mile" Access

PISCATAWAY, N.J., Dec. 6, 2001 -- The board of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers Standards Association (IEEE-SA) formally approved IEEE Standard 802.16 ("Air Interface for Fixed Broadband Wireless Access Systems") today. The approval sets the stage for the widespread deployment of 10 to 66 GHz wireless metropolitan area networks as an economical method of high-speed "last-mile" connection to public networks..

The global IEEE 802.16 WirelessMAN™ air interface standard is the first broadband wireless standard from an accredited standards body. It will be published during the first quarter of 2002. Until then, the approved draft can be found in the IEEE catalog at <http://WirelessMAN.org/published.html>.

"The new WirelessMAN standard is a groundbreaking development that changes the landscape for providers and customers of high-speed networks.," said Roger Marks Chair of the 802.16 Working Group on Broadband Wireless Access. "The standard optimizes

broadband wireless. It makes highly efficient use of bandwidth and supports voice, video and data applications with the quality customers demand.

The 802.16 standard is a substantial achievement and creates a platform on which to build a broadband wireless industry for high-rate systems that install rapidly and without extensive metropolitan cable infrastructures. It was created in a two-year, open-consensus process that involved hundreds of engineers from the world s leading operators and vendors.

The standard enables interoperability among devices from multiple manufacturers. It includes a medium access control layer (MAC) that supports multiple physical layers. Also included is the WirelessMAN1™ standard physical layer, optimized for bands within the 10 to 66 GHz spectrum.

A companion “IEEE Recommended Practice for Local and Metropolitan Area Networks - Coexistence of Fixed Broadband Wireless Access Systems, document has already been completed and published by IEEE in September 2001. This document provides guidelines for system deployment and is expected to be a valuable source of planning information for operators wishing to deploy IEEE 802.16 systems.

The 802.16 Working Group continues to develop enhancements to the 802.16 standard. The group is currently extending it to support efficient licensed and license-exempt operation in 2 to 11 GHz bands. A draft is being balloted and is scheduled for completion in July 2002. Worldwide acceptance of the work was reinforced by a recent decision that it would form the baseline for a similar project underway in the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI).

About the IEEE 802.16 Working Group

The IEEE 802.16 Working Group on Broadband Wireless Access has 162 members and 62 official observers. It operates via an open process to develop accredited air interface standards and recommended practices for the global development and deployment of fixed broadband wireless access systems. It meets bimonthly and has a record of rapidly reaching technical consensus. The Group's standards provide for high-speed network access within the last mile of homes and enterprises. For more information on the IEEE 802.16 Working Group, visit http://WirelessMAN.org.

The working group is a unit of the IEEE 802 LAN/MAN Standards Committee, the premier transnational forum for wireless networking standardization. The new IEEE 802.16 standard joins the widely used family of Ethernet and wireless networking standards developed by the committee.

About the IEEE Standards Association

The IEEE Standards Association is an international membership organization serving today's industries with a complete portfolio of standards programs. The IEEE-SA is a major component of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, the world's largest technical professional society. IEEE-SA membership, through the IEEE, promotes the engineering process by creating, developing, integrating, sharing and applying knowledge about electro- and information technologies and sciences for the benefit of humanity and the profession. For more information on IEEE-SA, visit http://standards.ieee.org.

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