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MSF Completes Phase 1 Performance Management Reporting Testing
Devices Supporting Network Interfaces Tested for Priority Traffic
Handling Under Congestion Loads

Fremont, CA, February 10, 2011 - The MultiService Forum (MSF) today released a Performance Management Reporting White Paper outlining findings from its end-to-end Performance Interoperability Test Event (P-IOT), held November 8 – 19, 2010. The P-IOT 2010 Event was conducted in the U.S. Government's National Communications System's (NCS) eXperimental Testbed Environment laboratory, a contracted facility in Chantilly, Virginia. The P-IOT 2010 Event evaluated the ability of Session Border Gateways (SBGs) to correctly handle priority traffic and report performance management metrics at both the User-to-Network interface and the Network-to-Network interface (NNI). The metrics were analysed to determine if the information accurately predicted the quality of the end-to-end connection, and if the metrics could be used to isolate network faults.

"The ability to reliably provide quality of service is important for all communications, but it is especially crucial for priority and emergency services" said Frank Suraci, the NCS Program Manager for GETS and WPS. Emphasizing the importance the Government is now placing on sharing critical information with the communications sector, Suraci noted that testing enables the NCS "to evaluate management reporting interfaces under varying load conditions for voice, video, and data sessions. Testing also allows us to evaluate the behavior of SBGs under load conditions and to specifically investigate the handling of priority and non-priority/normal sessions."

"The importance of interoperability testing is widely recognized by the Industry" said Jim McEachern, MSF President. "The IP-NNI in particular is emerging as a key area to enable circuit-to-packet network transformation. The MSF interoperability testing will help vendors improve products, allow Service Providers to accelerate service deployment, and the MSF to identify standards shortfalls and communicate them to the appropriate Standards Development Organizations."

Performance management interoperability testing is important because Service Providers deploying Next Generation Networks must ensure these networks are resistant to failures, Denial of Service attacks and congestion. The ability to accurately monitor and report network performance and to prioritize various traffic classes (e.g., a normal voice call versus a priority Emergency Telecommunications Services voice call), are important capabilities to make these networks usable during emergencies.

The P-IOT 2010 Event evaluated SBG functionality and performance management reporting within a single network domain (consisting of an originating access network, an IMS core, and a terminating access network) and across two domains (consisting of an originating access network, originating IMS core, terminating IMS core and terminating access network). The metrics provided by the SBGs were used to calculate the QoS Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as defined by the i3 Forum (www.i3forum.org) to see if the information provided by one SBG could be used to verify Service Level Agreements between carriers at the SBG's NNI. The metrics captured during testing identified a number of issues that make the current approach impractical.

"We were delighted to participate in this important interoperability event" said Natasha Tamaskar, Vice President of Product Marketing, GENBAND "The opportunity to conduct interoperability tests with the SBGs in the NCS labs provided unique insights into performance management at the NNI."

The P-IOT was the first of a series of MSF interoperability events designed to evaluate NNI specifications and the ability to determine end-to-end QoS based on metrics at the NNI. The MSF's 2011 work program includes preparation for a second P-IOT event later in 2011 or early in 2012, an IPTV interoperability test scheduled for 2Q 2011, a second LTE interoperability test scheduled for 3Q 2011, and preparation for a content delivery interoperability test in 2012.

To find out more about this unique event, go to www.msforum.org for a free download of the white paper "MSF Performance Management – Performance Management IOT Event".

About the MSF

The MultiService Forum (www.msforum.org) is a global association of service providers, system suppliers and test equipment vendors committed to developing and promoting open-architecture, multiservice Next Generation Networks. Founded in 1998, the MSF is an open-membership organization comprised of the world's leading telecommunications companies. The MSF's activities include developing Implementation Agreements, promoting worldwide compatibility and interoperability of network elements, and encouraging input to appropriate national and international standards bodies.