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

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

PISCATAWAY, N.J., Dec. 6, 2001 – The Standards 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 access standard from an accredited standards body. It will be published by January 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 IEEE 802.16 Working Group on Broadband Wireless Access. "The standard makes highly efficient use of bandwidth and supports voice, video and data applications with the quality that customers demand."

The IEEE 802.16 standard creates a platform on which to build a broadband wireless industry using high-rate systems that install rapidly 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 layer specifications. The physical layer is optimized for bands from 10 to 66 GHz. Extensions to the 2

to 11 GHz bands are expected to be completed next summer in the Working Group's 802.16a amendment.

The companion IEEE Standard 802.16.2 ("IEEE Recommended Practice for Local and Metropolitan Area Networks — Coexistence of Fixed Broadband Wireless Access Systems") was 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.

About the IEEE 802.16 Working Group

The IEEE 802.16 Working Group on Broadband Wireless Access has 178 members and 52 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 to 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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