BITAG Announces Next Technical Topic:
VoIP Impairment, Failure, and Restrictions

Denver, CO (May 1, 2014): The Broadband Internet Technical Advisory Group (BITAG) is pleased to announce a technical review focused on the topic of VoIP impairment, failure, and restrictions. This is a self-initiated topic of BITAG's technical working group (TWG). The review will result in a report with an anticipated publication date of June 2014.

A substantial portion of global voice communications are now carried over Internet Protocol (IP) and the Internet has become a fundamental medium supporting voice services. Voice over IP (VoIP) services allow users to make calls between IP-based endpoints, and to interconnect with the traditional public switched telephone network.

Impairment, failure, or restriction of VoIP services can create significant problems for users of those services, and can create problems for the operators of VoIP services, who may be required to troubleshoot or work around issues (where possible) to restore their users' connectivity. As VoIP services become more common around the world, incidences of VoIP impairment, failure, or restriction also have the potential to be construed as anti-competitive, discriminatory, or motivated by non-technical factors.

With this report BITAG will aim to clarify how VoIP may be impaired, fail, or be restricted in residential, mobile, application provider, and consumer networks and devices; the methods for mitigating VoIP impairments, failures, or restrictions; and recommendations concerning such.

Alissa Cooper, Distinguished Engineer at Cisco, will be the lead editor of the report on this topic. Douglas Sicker, Executive Director of BITAG, Chair of BITAG's Technical Working Group, Director of the Interdisciplinary Telecom Program and professor of computer science at the University of Colorado Boulder, will chair the review itself.

This will be BITAG's sixth technical review and report. BITAG's first two reports focused on IPv6 Whitelisting and Large Scale Network Address Translation. BITAG's third report was on best practices for mitigating SNMP DDoS Attacks, and the fourth report focused on Port Blocking best practices. BITAG's fifth report analyzed, and made best practice recommendations on the topic of Real-time Network Management of Internet Congestion. Copies of these technical reports can be found on the BITAG website at www.bitag.org.

BITAG welcomes any questions, comments or suggestions. Please contact our Deputy Director, Kaleb Sieh, at ksieh@bitag.org. Also, if you are interested in submitting a technical review request to BITAG, you can do so at http://www.bitag.org/tech_work_group.php?action=submission.

About BITAG. BITAG is a non-profit, multi-stakeholder organization focused on bringing together engineers and technologists in a Technical Working Group (TWG) to develop consensus on broadband network management practices and other related technical issues that can affect users' Internet experience, including the impact to and from applications, content and devices that utilize the Internet.

BITAG's mission includes: (a) educating policymakers on such technical issues; (b) addressing specific technical matters in an effort to minimize related policy disputes; and (c) serving as a sounding board for new ideas and network management practices. Specific TWG functions also may include: (i) identifying "best practices" by broadband providers and other entities; (ii) interpreting and applying "safe harbor" practices; (iii) otherwise providing technical guidance to industry and to the public; and/or (iv) issuing advisory opinions on the technical issues germane to the TWG's mission that may underlie disputes concerning broadband network management practices.

BITAG TWG reports focus primarily on technical issues, especially those with the potential to be construed as anti-competitive, discriminatory, or otherwise motivated by non-technical factors. While the reports may touch on a broad range of questions associated with a particular network management practice, the reports are not intended to address or analyze in a comprehensive fashion the economic, legal, regulatory or public policy issues that the practice may raise.

About BITAG's Technical Review Process. BITAG's core substantive work is performed through its Technical Working Group (TWG), which was formed with the core principles of being: technically driven, balanced, open, efficient, independent, and flexible. The TWG reviews technical issues brought to it through Review Requests submitted by both Members and non-Members, or through a majority weighted vote of the TWG engineers themselves. Each individual Review is taken up by a Committee of the TWG that is composed of engineers and other technical experts representing a broad cross section of the Internet ecosystem. TWG Committees generally operate on a consensus basis, with backstop weighted voting procedures so that when consensus cannot be achieved, each Member category has an equal say in the work product regardless of the composition of the Committee. Finally, BITAG was structured to work as expeditiously as possible, with each Committee operating under a 120-day "shot clock" to complete the respective Review and attendant technical report.