

Samoa National Broadband Policy

Samoa

Inclusion

Definitions of Data:

N/A

Main Focus of Document:

Outline the Samoan Government's broadband plans

Target Beneficiaries or Sectors:

N/A

Key Elements:

6. National Broadband Targets and Plan 6.1 Economic and Social Priorities The 'Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2008-2012', while currently subject to revision, outlines the government's aspirational economic and social targets to be obtained over the current four-year timeframe. Broadly speaking, Samoa seeks to achieve:
- Sustained macroeconomic stability;
 - Private sector-led growth and employment creation;
 - Improved education outcomes;
 - Improved health outcomes;
 - Community development through improved economic and social well-being;
 - Improved governance; and
 - Environmental sustainability and disaster risk reduction.

There are a number of achievable priorities that are closely related broadband development and uptake, as detailed below:

6.2.1 Access Access to content via broadband connectivity vastly expands economic opportunities and the possibilities and scope of personal interaction. All Samoans stand to reap substantial benefits from being able to communicate and access content from any location. The government may consider expanding the scope of the universal service commitment to encompass access to broadband services if access to broadband services is not significantly enhanced in the short and medium term. It will also provide for broadband access in commercially non-viable areas. In addition, the ability for users to access government and private organisations via broadband services is accepted practice in developed nations and the government will take this fact into account.

6.2.2 Affordability Accessible but prohibitively expensive broadband services will not achieve national priorities. Ensuring broadband affordability is an important goal for the government. Affordability will only be obtained through an improved competitive framework that facilitates participation of a number of operators in Samoa's broadband market. Policies will be implemented that will facilitate and encourage private sector investment and participation. A technology neutral approach to broadband technology means that winners will not be picked and the local market will adopt the most efficient, practical services. Infrastructure sharing and co-location are other regulatory options which are to be encouraged. Sharing reduces the cost base and the need to duplicate infrastructure. It is therefore an important factor in ensuring improved affordability of broadband services.

6.2.3 Infrastructure Improved infrastructure is an essential priority for the government's desire to increase the penetration of broadband services. Absent direct intervention, this can be obtained through a variety of mechanisms such as public /private partnerships (PPPs), subsidies and tax breaks. The government will also explore the possibility of facilitating increased international connectivity. This may be necessary given the bandwidth requirements that would result from substantially increased wireless broadband penetration. Digicel will cooperate and assist the government in the negotiations for another submarine cable to provide more international capacity.

6.2.4 Utilisation Adequate access and infrastructure will not, of themselves, lead to acceptable broadband uptake in the absence of sufficient skills and capacity. The government is committed to providing extensive training and workshops for both the user and supplier sides of broadband technology. It also commits to participating in regional and global workshops. A comprehensive suite of e-government services, perhaps through a dedicated government network must be deployed so as to encourage broadband uptake and greatly enhance service delivery and transparency.

There are a number of other specific broadband targets to be achieved over the next five years, including:

- Community Access: communities over 200 people to have access to broadband services;
- Individual Access: 20% of Samoans are to have access to broadband of 256 Kbit/s, with 60% having access over 2 Mbit/s speeds;
- Community Broadband Centres: All Samoan communities with broadband access shall have the option to establish a Community Broadband Centre;
- School Access: 100% of schools to have broadband access (as part of the Schoolnet project); and
- Government Access: Increasing the proportion of transactions between citizens and the government that can be conducted online.

7.2 Facilitating Backhaul The Government will work with existing operators to encourage investment in higher speed backhaul transmission capacity to facilitate the deployment of wireless broadband services with a high quality of service and higher end-to-end speeds. Where possible, it will encourage and provide fast tracking for optical fibre construction as well as investment in fibre and microwave backhaul transmission facilities.

7.3 Possible establishment of a Samoan Internet Exchange (SIX). Currently, internet traffic of domestic origin must pass through the submarine cable to an external Internet Exchange (IX) where the data is stored and is subsequently sent downstream to Samoa. This is both costly and inefficient. The government will investigate the practicality of establishing a SIX with the support of international agencies. This would enable the local exchange of internet traffic which would normally require overseas conveyance. This would lead to a reduction in operating costs and help achieve the government’s objective of increasing the affordability of broadband services. An IX will benefit local content through the provision of cheaper, more efficient and lower latency paths between networks.

Broadband Data Data transfer or transmission Digital government Digital infrastructure Internet Optical fibre Private sector Public-private partnerships
Transparency Wireless

Policy/regulation mirrored:

Countries: