



18 May 2004

The Honourable Robert B. Zoellick
United States Trade Representative
600 17 Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Zoellick

In connection with the signing on this date of the Australia – United States Free Trade Agreement (the “Agreement”), I have the honour to confirm the following understanding reached by the Governments of Australia and the United States (the ‘Parties’) regarding a consultative process on communications and information technology issues.

The Parties recognise that the dynamic nature of the information technology and communications industries justifies an ongoing exchange of views on domestic market and regulatory developments and how they relate to trade commitments, including the Agreement.

The Parties shall endeavour to meet annually, or as otherwise mutually agreed, to review relevant developments in market access, market structure, technological innovation and standards development, domestic regulation, and international policy trends in telecommunications and information technology.

At these consultations, the Parties shall work to address and resolve specific issues. Both Parties recognise the value of including, as appropriate, private sector representatives from both or either Party at the consultations. Each Party will identify for the other the agency responsible for coordinating its participation in these consultations.

Current issues where the potential for rapid future change may justify discussion at the initial consultation include (but are not limited to): developments in market structure, convergence, technological innovation including in relation to advanced wireless services, Internet charging, voice over Internet protocol, broadband, number portability, and digital products.

I would be grateful if you would confirm that your Government shares this understanding.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Vaile'.

Mark Vaile
Minister for Trade

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20508

May 18, 2004

The Honorable Mark Vaile MP
Minister for Trade
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2660

Dear Minister Vaile:

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of this date, which reads as follows:

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