May 28, 2004


To: Harald Alvestrand (Cisco Systems), IETF Chair
        Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) Chair

Dear Harald:

The Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions—ATIS, is a technical planning and standards development organization whose membership includes more than 200 global service providers, manufacturers, software developers, and providers of operations support.  The ATIS member companies support the work of ATIS' 21 standards committees with over 1100 subject matter experts participating in the development of technical and operations standards for the communications and related information technologies industry.  Our goal is to produce interoperable, implementable, end-to-end standards and solutions that define frameworks for service and performance requirements, interfaces and physical characteristics for technologies, systems, and business processes, and ensure interoperability.
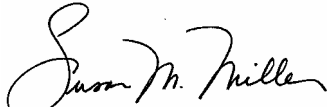
In 2003, ATIS released its list of the top sixteen technical and operational priorities for the communications industry, as determined by its Technology and Operations (TOPS) Council. The TOPS Council represents the senior most executives from the communications industry. It further identified five of these priorities as critical to the industry:  VoIP, Wide Area Ethernet, Mobile Wireless Services, Security, and Data Interchange. To advance these critical priorities, the TOPS Council established five Focus Groups consisting of mid to senior-level management experts from ATIS member companies to thoroughly examine these areas and, where appropriate, expand on the identified issues to encompass all aspects of the priority areas.  The Focus Groups developed work plans for each priority to facilitate the coordination of standards initiatives and activities, both internal to ATIS and its committees as well as across those identified standards organizations, to support the creation of implementable standards for the defined priorities.

The detailed work plans for VoIP and Security have been completed, and it is in this regard that I am contacting you today.  ATIS recognizes IETF as the leading organization engaged in the development of Internet standard specifications and as such, is seeking its assistance in accomplishing some very specific and significant standards work to support the completion of much needed end-to-end, implementable standards for carrier grade VoIP.  Likewise, in the area of Security, we are seeking the IETF's cooperation with a myriad of network security issues specific to Application, Transport and overall security management.  ATIS is also looking to the expertise of the IETF to research existing and/or incipient attacks on network infrastructure and propose methods that might help mitigate such attacks based on its findings.

These collaborative efforts will be critical to the successful advancement of these industry-identified priorities, and as such it is very important to have a clear understanding of our work effort.  I understand that you have already had an initial contact by Art Reilly of Cisco Systems to facilitate our scheduling timely and productive discussions, in the early June time frame, of possible IETF work in the above areas. I will be calling you shortly to discuss this further, and confirm a meeting date to review the work plans and a relationship with IETF in support of this work in greater detail. Art has been making arrangements to have others, on the ATIS Board or in the ATIS Focus Groups, participate in the meeting with you and other appropriate IETF leaders. This should help us describe the process and issues, and increase the productivity of the meeting.

I look forward to speaking with you on this important industry initiative. Should you like to contact me directly, I can be reached at (202) 434-8828/smiller@atis.org.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Miller
President and CEO

cc: Charlie Giancarlo, Senior Vice President, Product Development, Cisco – ATIS Board Member
    William Smith, CTO, BellSouth – ATIS Board Chair
    Asok Chatterjee, Vice President, Public Affairs, Ericsson – ATIS First Vice Chair
    P.J. Aduskevicz, Network Vice President, Network Standards & Disaster Recovery, AT&T
        – ATIS Second Vice Chair
    Paul Lacouture, President, Network Services Group, Verizon – ATIS Treasurer
    Art Reilly, Senior Director, Office of the CSO, Cisco Systems


Attachment:  ATIS Board of Directors List