

## **SUPERNET SHARED VPN - VIDEOCONFERENCE PROTOCOL STANDARD**

**Category:** Network  
**Effective Date:** September 2004  
**Review Date:** January 2007

### **Summary:**

To enable interconnectivity of videoconference equipment between sites, one protocol standard must be used.

### **Specification:**

International Telecommunications Union (ITU) H.323 Version 5 will be the standard protocol used.

### **Rationale:**

- This standard is aligned with the Government of Alberta SuperNet standard to ensure interconnectivity among Government, Learning, Health, Library, and Municipality (GLHLM) sectors.
- To ensure international alignment, a standard protocol approved by the ITU was chosen.
- H.323 was approved by the ITU in 1996 to promote compatibility in videoconference transmissions over IP networks and includes standards for call signalling and control, audio codecs, video codecs, and H.323 annexes.
- The H.323 standard is the most widely used network standard for real-time voice and video transmission over an IP-based network.
- Production solutions are available from major manufacturers that support the full suites of H.320 and H.323 protocols.
- H.323 is considered to be the standard for interoperability in audio, video, and data transmissions, as well as Internet phone and Voice over IP (VoIP) because it addresses call control and management for point-to-point and multipoint conferences as well as gateway administration of media traffic, bandwidth, and user participation.
- H.323 describes how multimedia communications occur between terminals, network equipment, and services, and is part of a larger group of ITU recommendations for multimedia interoperability called H.3x.

### **Timeline:**

This standard becomes effective immediately and must be implemented at the same time that each learning site is connected to the Alberta SuperNet.

### **Notes:**

- This standard will be reviewed if a major industry protocol change takes place.
- It is recognized that a new version of this protocol will require an equipment update to the appropriate software level to ensure cross-sector compatibility. The Technology Standards Office will provide notification in this instance.
- A guideline to assist users in the selection of compatible systems is being published.

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