DFA and Ciena Shatter Fibre Capacity Records in World-First Trial in Partnership with Willcom

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Planned deployment of Ciena technology will future-proof DFA network and drive economic growth in South Africa

JOHANNESBURG & HANOVER, Md.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Aug. 27, 2025-- DFA, South Africa's premiere enterprise connectivity provider, and Ciena (NYSE: CIEN), a global leader in high-speed connectivity, have achieved a landmark breakthrough in fibre capacity - delivering more than 4 times the performance of previous trials.

In this world-first trial, using Ciena's innovative WaveRouter and WaveLogic 6 Extreme solutions, DFA successfully transmitted 1.6 Tbps (terabits per second) over a single wavelength – setting a new performance benchmark for IP/optical convergence.

The trial was conducted over a 40 km stretch between Isando and Midrand, using DFA's high-capacity core network. The route chosen replicates a previous trial that had demonstrated 400 Gbps capability.

"This greatly enhances the capability of DFA's existing network and gives us the confidence that we can meet the growing digital demands of our customers," said Andreas Uys, Chief Technology Officer at MAZIV, DFA's parent company. "We can seamlessly onboard next-generation connectivity services in selected regions before scaling them nationwide."

This achievement follows Phase 1 of DFA's ambitious R800 Million network upgrade, which included deploying Dry Underground Distribution Cabinets (DUDCs) in high-density areas to speed up service delivery.

"We were able deploy this groundbreaking technology because of the high quality of our newly upgraded fibre infrastructure and the robust design of our core network to handle the additional traffic," said Uys.

Powered by Ciena's WaveLogic capabilities and deployed by Ciena partner, Willcom, WaveRouter will allow DFA to deliver greater scalability, flexibility, and sustainability by integrating 400 Gbps, 800 Gbps, and 1.6 Tbps services within a single router.

"As the leading dark fibre provider in South Africa, DFA is taking bold steps to support the growing connectivity needs of its customers," said Virginie Hollebecque, Vice President, EMEA, Ciena. "With Ciena's optical and routing technologies, DFA is better positioned to deliver high-scale 400 Gbps aggregation today while preparing its network to scale up to 1.6 Tbps and beyond."

By combining Ciena's state-of-the-art optical and routing technologies in a unified, multi-layer architecture, DFA can fully harness the advantages of coherent routing to build a simpler, more robust network. Additionally, Ciena's Navigator Network Control Suite (Navigator NCS) provides DFA with one point of control to automate multi-layer network operations and scale wide area network (WAN) traffic, delivering capacity precisely when and where it's needed.

About Willcom
Willcom a leading system integrator and authorized partner of Ciena in South Africa, Willcom delivers end-to-end telecommunications solutions. Our commitment to excellence is anchored by a dedicated 24/7 Ciena-authorized support team and a strong in-house development team, allowing us to provide specialized expertise and reliable support to our customers.

About DFA
Dark Fibre Africa (DFA) is a leading South African wholesale, open-access fibre-infrastructure provider to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and other ICASA-licensed network operators, including telecommunications operators, data centres, and a wide range of other service providers. DFA is part of the MAZIV group, which also comprises Vuma, SADV, Rise Telecoms and other telecommunications brands. Since the company first began rollout in 2007, it has deployed fibre infrastructure across major metros, secondary cities, and towns across South Africa, making its world class fibre network accessible to more end users across the country. It offers 24/7 technical support to ensure the network and all related connectivity services continue to function without interruption. This has made DFA a preferred partner for businesses and service providers seeking reliable and high-speed connectivity solutions.

About Ciena
Ciena is the global leader in high-speed connectivity. We build the world's most adaptive networks to support exponential growth in bandwidth demand. By harnessing the power of our networking systems, components, automation software, and services, Ciena revolutionizes data transmission and network management. With unparalleled expertise and innovation, we empower our customers, partners, and communities to thrive in the AI era. For updates on Ciena, follow us on LinkedIn and X, or visit the Ciena Insights webpage and Ciena website.

Note to Ciena Investors
You are encouraged to review the Investors section of our website, where we routinely post press releases, SEC filings, recent news, financial results, and other announcements. From time to time we exclusively post material information to this website along with other disclosure channels that we use. This press release contains certain forward-looking statements that are based on our current expectations, forecasts, information and assumptions. These statements involve inherent risks and uncertainties. Actual results or outcomes may differ materially from those stated or implied, because of risks and uncertainties, including those detailed in our most recent annual and quarterly reports filed with the SEC. Forward-looking statements include statements regarding our expectations, beliefs, intentions or strategies and can be identified by words such as "anticipate," "believe," "could," "estimate," "expect," "intend," "may," "should," "will," and "would" or similar words. Ciena assumes no obligation to update the information included in this press release, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

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