

Quarter 1, FY18-19

The summary below outlines ACCAN's activities from 1 June – 31 August 2018.

During the last three months, the ACCAN policy team has continued to engage with issues that are significant to telecommunications consumers.

The ACCAN policy team has submitted to 13 government and industry consultations in the reporting period and, for non-confidential consultations, has worked closely with our member organisations and independent experts to develop considered, evidence based policy positions to ensure that our contribution is substantial. Three major consultations have dominated – the Communications Alliance's TCP Code public consultation; the first Department of Communications' Consumer Safeguards Review consultation on Redress and Complaints Handling; and the Regional Telecommunications Review (RTR).

Importantly, the work undertaken continues to have impact. ACCAN's policy team have had positive momentum with our positions, including having some support acknowledged by the TCP Code Working Committee in the public comment draft of the Code and by the ACCC in their submission; the government has taken on board our input into the Round 4 Mobile Black Spot Guidelines; the ACMA incorporated our comments on limiting charging for interim services in the Service Migration Determination; and we have been invited by NBN Co to engage further on the affordability challenges that are preventing consumers for switching to the network.

All nine grants projects have now commenced, with one, Hutt St, in its final stages. The ACCAN Grants team has begun preparing for the 2019 round, including a re-shaping of how grants are awarded.

Prof. Gerard Goggin's three-year term on the Independent Grants Panel has now finished. Preparations have begun to recruit a new Panel member later in 2018 (expected October 2018).

The ACCAN Grants team continued to work with the ACCAN Board working group in planning for 2019 – 2022. Three key aims had been identified for the Independent Grants Program, with a new structure to the Program being suggested to better meet these goals. This included introducing a two-stage application process (Expressions of Interest, followed by full application), and a division of funds into two streams – *Research* and *Education & Representation*, based on project and applicant type. This modelling was proposed to DoCA who provided in-principle support late August.

ACCAN staff participated in more than 22 different outreach, consumer engagement events and member consultation discussions. The ACCAN policy team has continued to work closely with members and consumer groups to ensure our policy work is representative. ACCAN has represented consumers at 10 committee meetings. ACCAN engaged with government and regulatory bodies on 33 different occasions and industry on 24 including a meeting with the Vodafone CEO.

During this period ACCAN also completed our policy priorities and meeting notes from our four Advisory Forums in Sydney.

Between 1st June - 31st August 2018, ACCAN generated 452 media mentions across national print, online, TV and radio. This is an average of 150 items per month. The majority of coverage secured during this quarter was as a result of ACCAN's 'Can You Hear Me' report. This coverage accounted for nearly 80% of media mentions.

In addition to the 'Can You Hear Me' report, other major issues covered in media included the TPG/Vodafone merger, Mitch Fifield's reappointment to Minister of Communications and the Arts, proposed changes to the TIO, Telstra job cuts and network outages.