JULIE McCROSSIN: Lucky door prizes are critical for the future of consumers and telecommunications.

Anybody not got a number? Can you just wave at me? Ladies and gentlemen, good morning, my name is Julie McCrossin and it is my genuine pleasure to be your MC today and tomorrow. We have an amazing couple of days of very senior people giving you briefings on every aspect of key developments in relation to telecommunications and consumers in this country and also, I think looking beyond to international developments. Could you put your mobiles into some mode in which it can be totally active and yet it won't make a noise? This audience will probably know how to do that better than me. I'm hoping you will tweet like mad, #ACCANect2019 is the hashtag address and you can see it, it's up on the board there behind me. You can tell I've got a teacher background! Do you want to clap just because we're here and starting almost exactly on time? (APPLAUSE) I will require rhythmic clapping during the day, because we have to stay alert in a room with not a lot of visual connection with the outside world. We're essentially celebrating 10 years of ACCAN. It's about communications and consumers for the past 10 years, celebrating what's occurred, but also looking forward to the next 10 years. As well as the expert briefings, there'll be endless opportunities for questions and comments as I hurtle amongst you holding the microphone to your mouth. I haven't let it go since 1967. If there's time I'll tell you why, but if you speak up, I'll hold it near your mouth. Our formats are varied. We have panel sessions as well as speakers and a lot of time for questions and comments and we'll climax with networking drinks this evening which are kind of like a birthday party. I'd like to acknowledge our Auslan interpreters, Kerry, Siobhan and Rhonda and also our real-time captioning people. Tina, known as "Tina Sparkle", during her period with the ABC. At any point she could turn into some form of fairy and this would be welcome, and her husband Dean is with us, as well. I've handed out lucky door prizes. At the beginning of each session, we pull a number and if your number comes up, you win truly gourmet and excellent chocolates. This is a behaviour management program designed to have you starting on time. I'm famous for finishing early, so if you work with the bell, you'll finish not on time, but a little early. Just before we begin, Uncle Allen Madden is waiting for us, I just want to say there is a gentleman here... where's Bruce? This gentleman is from Western Australia and in the last three weeks he's won two lucky door prizes. He won at the Father's Day raffle and his local amateur theatre company and I'm interested to see if Bruce wins again. Is he on some form of roll? The bathrooms are out to the door and down to the right. It gives me great pleasure now to formally commence our day and to welcome cultural representative from the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, Uncle Allen Madden to formally open proceedings. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

ALLEN MADDEN: Thank you, Julie. Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Uncle Allen Madden, Gadigal Elder. For my first song... no! Only kidding. And, the door prizes are not rigged, they'll be won by NSW patrons only. Two apologies for the terrible weather we're having outside at the moment. Sorry. We're forbidden to talk our language a long time ago. As with all welcomes to countries, I'd like to acknowledge our Aboriginal Elders, all Elders past and present and pay my respects to all our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters from whatever Aboriginal island nation you may have come from, welcome to Gadigal and to all our non-Indigenous brothers and sisters here today, a very warm and sincere welcome to you to Gadigal. No matter where you've come from, whether it be across the seas, across the State, or across town, once again, a very warm and sincere welcome to you to Gadigal. As I've mentioned many times before, was, is and always will be Aboriginal land. Only three things surer than that -coming, taxation and going. It's a pleasure to be here to welcome one and all to Gadigal. Gadigal is one of 29 clans of the Eora Nation. The Eora Nation is bounded by nature's own, the Hawkesbury River to the north, mobs up that way call it the "Derrubbin", and the river to the south Kiama and in between those three mighty rivers there's the Eora Nation and in that nation, there are 29 clans and the clan's land we're on today is Gadigal. On behalf of members of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council and of the Gadigal mob, once again, a very warm and sincere welcome to you to Gadigal. As you travel across these traditional lands and waters, may the spirits of our ancestors guide, look over you and keep you safe. So once again, on behalf of Land Council and of the Gadigal mob, welcome, welcome, welcome. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

JULIE McCROSSIN: Thank you so much, Allen and I'd just like to let Allen know and all of us know that later today we will be hearing a report back from a gathering between First Nations Media people and ACCAN in Alice Springs in June and hearing about the work done there. Thank you so much. Could you please thank Allen again? (APPLAUSE) I'd now like to welcome the chair of the ACCAN Board, Deidre O'Donnell who was originally a teacher of English and French. I was originally a teacher of primary school and tomfoolery in a theatrical sense. Deidre grew up in country Victoria, the town of Alexandra beyond Maryville in north central Victoria. She's had an extensive career in telecommunications and not-for-profit governance and regulation and she's currently having retired, returned again to be a part-time commissioner of the Victorian

Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation which is a kind of coming home, because her family ran a licenced grocery. I'll tell you more about our marriage later, but please welcome Deidre O'Donnell. (APPLAUSE)

DEIDRE O'DONNELL: It's very dangerous to speak to Julie out in the foyer when you're feeling good friends and in confidence here, so I did a bit too much oversharing there! It's such an honour to be able to give the welcome address here today on a very, very, very special day in the life of ACCAN. I want to especially thank our wonderful welcome. To set the scene in that way, to make us feel so very, very welcome by the traditional owners of the land, it anchors us in the connection which is going to follow for the next two days. So, I'd like to start myself by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation and their Elders past and present and represented here today. We have some distinguished guests, so I know from the ACMA, I saw Judi Jones walk in from the TIO and if there are others, forgive my poor eyesight and welcome. To set the welcome off, the Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts and the Member for Bradfield, the Honourable Paul Fletcher, the Shadow Minister for Communications, the Member for Greenway, the Honourable Michelle Rowland and Senator Jordon Steele-John have sent us their apologies due to the parliamentary session they won't be able to join us in person, but will be joining us virtually through video messages. On behalf of ACCAN, I want to welcome you all to our 10th annual conference ACCANect. In 2019 our theme is communications and consumers -the next 10 years. This year, we will focus on the progress that has been achieved for telecommunications consumers over the past 10 years and look forward towards 2030 for future trends and challenges that might come our way. In particular, we want to discuss the ongoing role that consumer advocacy can play in delivering more inclusive trusted communication services for all Australians. So, ACCAN welcomes back Julian Thomas, a very special friend of our conference as our MC for the two days. We're in the best of hands. Our keynote speaker is a well-known crusader for consumer rights and a very highly regarded journalist, Helen Wellings. As you've seen we have a full program of presenters and we're extremely pleased that in recognition of our anniversary we will be joined by the CEOs of Telstra, Optus and Vocus. Later today, we will be acknowledging some of the milestones that ACCAN has achieved in 10 years of consumer representation. None of this would have been possible without the courageous steps our predecessor organisations CTN and Tedecorp took laying the foundations for ACCAN to emerge and flourish and I must say, those people must be so proud of what they did and the courage that they showed a decade ago. So, nowadays in addition to all the volunteers who give time to consumer advocacy in communications, we also have a highly-skilled, multidisciplinary team employed to assist and bolster our efforts. Now, ACCAN positions, as I'm sure you well know, are based on robust evidence gained from our consultation with consumers and experts and supported by our own consumer-led research. We depend on the dedication and participation of our members and many of them are represented here today and it's your participation that empowers us to be the voice for Australian communications consumers. So, we're really proud that ACCAN is a consumer-centred organisation. It's also a good time to acknowledge some of the improvements we've seen, many of which are a direct result of our engagement with industry and with the government. So, while there are still improvements we would like to see and we will continue to work for, we want to highlight that our concerns have been heard on many issues. Now, this is a little list here that I'm particularly enjoying because in the decade that ACCAN has been so active, it's really quite staggering the impact of the change of our industry. Again, you know this better than me. Ten years ago, we didn't have free calls to 1800 numbers from mobiles, there were no 1300 friendly plans, there were no usage alerts sent to consumers to help them avoid bill shock, and now some telcos even have real-time alerts. International roaming... we'll all sigh collectively here, was an even bigger issue with no data packages available, no standard requiring information about charges. There were no captioning standards or quotas for free-to-air television, there were no accessible, set-top boxes until we advocated for their introduction in the digital switchover task force. Now, we also have an accessible ICT procurement standard. Deaf, hearing and speech-impaired consumers couldn't send an SMS to get Emergency Services and there was no video relay service for Auslan users. We were just starting our nbn journey, there was no mobile blackspots program, remote consumers were struggling with the congested satellite that couldn't provide adequate Internet services. Internet access, I beg your pardon. There were improvements required for the Do Not Call registration. There was no complaint handling industry standard and no transparency about the real level of complaints to phone companies. Wow. Admittedly, we're always striving for even better outcomes, but it's definitely time to take stock and celebrate. In your magazine there's an article outlining a bit more detail on some of these momentous outcomes. In the annual report, which we will publish tomorrow, we list some of the actual numbers in a great info graphic, so in 10 years, ACCAN has participated in -and here the staff should be particularly proud -over 50 reviews of industry codes, standards and guidelines, sat on over 100 committees, completed over 90 research projects, funded 63 grant recipients after processing 863 applications. Held 60 consumer consultations and hosted over 50 events with over 4,500 participants. We've produced 370 formal submissions and have had 7,735 media mentions, so I think we should give ourselves a collective pat on the back for such an enormous contribution in the public interest. (APPLAUSE) This is a very tiny organisation we're talking about here. These people are champions of champions. So, over the next two days we're going to examine the important issues affecting consumers now and look to the future. So, this ACCAN event gives consumers a chance to voice concerns with decisionmakers and gives representatives from government, telcos and regulators and content producers the chance to hear consumer experiences first-hand. ACCAN conferences are all about connection and they provide an opportunity for everybody to come together and discuss ideas in an open forum. So, I look forward to some fascinating and possibly even surprising sessions in the next few days. Finally, I want to thank our sponsors, Telstra, NBN Co, the ACMA, Google, Optus, Vodafone, Maddocks Lawyers and Aussie Broadband for their support of ACCANect. Without our sponsors, this conference wouldn't be possible. I hope you enjoy the sessions, and the networking in the breaks over the next two days. I look forward to catching up with you, as well. Thank you for your ongoing support and welcome to ACCANect 2019. Thank you.

JULIE McCROSSIN: Thank you very much, Deidre. I must say, I would like that list. I don't know if we can publish that in some way, but that was an amazing list of achievements and no doubt they'll be mentioned again as we go today.