



Media Release

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ACCAN congratulates ABC on Audio Described iview content

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network ([ACCAN](#)) would like to congratulate the ABC on the launch of its ABC [iview](#) Audio Description trial. Audio Description is additional verbal narration that describes visual elements shown on screen during pauses in dialogue. It can describe elements such as scenes, costumes and actions.

Consumers who are blind or have a vision impairment will be able to access approximately 14 hours of Audio Described content each week. The trial starts today and will run for 15 months. The content will also be useful to consumers with a learning disability as it will enhance their understanding of what is happening on screen.

The Audio Described content is available on the ABC iview iOS app and will eventually be rolled out to the Android app and the iview website as well. This is the first time a streaming service has introduced Audio Described content in Australia.

“Introducing Audio Described content on ABC iview is a great start to addressing issues of content accessibility for consumers who are blind or have a vision impairment,” said ACCAN Disability Policy Advisor, Wayne Hawkins. “ACCAN has been calling on the Australian TV networks to introduce Audio Described content for a number of years.”

While this is a positive step for improving accessibility for those who are blind or vision impaired, there is still a lack of Audio Described content on broadcast television in Australia. ABC and the free-to-air networks don’t offer Audio Described content on their broadcast TV channels.

ACCAN has also noticed a lack of Audio Described content available on the streaming services, Netflix, Stan and Presto. These services have given many Australians legal access to TV shows and movies, but have left out blind and vision impaired consumers.

“It would be great to see easy to access Audio Described content on broadcast television and on the streaming services sooner rather than later so that all Australians can have equal access to entertainment content,” added Mr. Hawkins.

In the US, Netflix has recently [drawn criticism](#) for its lack of Audio Described content following the launch of its new series, *Marvel’s Daredevil*, as its main character is a blind superhero.

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The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) is Australia’s peak communications consumer organisation. The operation of ACCAN is made possible by funding provided by the Commonwealth of Australia under section 593 of the Telecommunications Act 1997. This funding is recovered from charges on telecommunications carriers.

ACCAN encourages all consumers who could benefit from Audio Described content to download the ABC iview app or try out the content on when it's available on the [iview website](#). Consumers can get [more information](#) on the trial from ACCAN's website.

For more information, please contact Luke Sutton on 0409 966 931 or luke.sutton@accan.org.au.

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