

## Consumers need clear information about broadband speeds

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network ([ACCAN](#)) believes that consumers need more information on broadband speeds and that this information should be clear and presented upfront. Broadband performance issues are the highest growing area of consumer complaints to the [Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman](#), and ACCAN is regularly contacted by consumers about unusable broadband services.

[ACCAN's submission](#) to the ACCC's consultation on [broadband speed claims](#) highlights that information provided to consumers about broadband speeds is often confusing and can also be misleading as claimed speeds frequently don't match reality.

"Broadband speed claims are often confusing or misleading for consumers with the use of terms like 'speeds up to'," said ACCAN CEO, Teresa Corbin. "We fully support the ACCC's investigation into this issue and urge the Commission to implement guidelines and other measures that will result in clearer information for consumers."

Greater information around broadband performance is needed to help consumers:

1. Compare products and choose the service that best suits their needs. Descriptions such as 'fast', or 'up to', do not provide the tools for consumers to compare actual likely performance and match their usage needs in a rational way. Greater information will help inform decision making, especially when considering switching providers to get better services.
2. Diagnose faults more accurately, and identify whether a fault is systemic to the home, access or upstream network.
3. To seek recourse when the service does not meet expected standards.

One of the issues that ACCAN identified is that the term 'speed' is simplistically used to describe the performance of a service. A number of issues that consumers encounter are often described as 'speed' issues, the solution to which is often presented as faster speeds. This approach misses other factors that affect service performance.

"ACCAN asserts that consumers should have access to information which helps them compare services and describes how the service will work for them," said Ms Corbin.

"The proposed Broadband Performance Monitoring and Reporting Program, which aims to test service performance, would also help to support and verify the speed claims made by RSPs. Information on any prioritisation over the network that occurs should also be presented to consumers."

For more information, contact Luke Sutton on [luke.sutton@accan.org.au](mailto:luke.sutton@accan.org.au) or 0409 966 931. For the latest updates, follow ACCAN on [Twitter](#) or like us on [Facebook](#).

**FYI** – ACCAN’s 2016 National Conference, [ACCANect: Equipping consumers to stay connected](#), is coming up – it will be held in Sydney on 14-15 September. We have an [exciting program planned](#). The event will focus on how to empower consumers to get and stay connected to the phone and broadband services they need. Get in touch with us to arrange a media pass.

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## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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