



---

## Media Release

For immediate release 14 September, 2016

### ACCANect Conference explores the tools consumers need to get connected

ACCAN's 2016 National Conference, [ACCANect: Equipping Consumers to Stay Connected](#), kicks off this morning with a focus on empowering consumers to get and stay connected to the phone and broadband services they need. Over two days the event will cover a range of topics including digital inclusion, affordability and digital government.

"We're looking forward to exploring the issues that consumers face in getting connected particularly as our reliance on broadband to access services, education and employment opportunities grows," said ACCAN CEO, Teresa Corbin. "Over the two days we'll hear from experts about new research into digital inclusion and affordability. Sessions at the event will feature panel discussions on how we bridge the divide and get everyone connected and will examine barriers to getting connected."

At the Conference, Professor Julian Thomas from Swinburne University will present on the recently launched [Australian Digital Inclusion Index](#) which measures the extent of digital inclusion across the country. Dr Greg Ogle, Senior Policy & Research Analyst, South Australian Council of Social Service (SACOSS), will speak about the recent [ACCAN funded research](#) into the affordability of telecommunications services for Centrelink beneficiaries, while Dr Paul Harrison from Deakin University will present on research about [consumer decision making](#). Dr Harrison's research looks into how consumers apply the vitally important information given to them when they purchase telecommunications products.

Further sessions will look at practical tools to help consumers get and stay connected. Making an effective complaint will be explored in the Resolutions and Recourse session; issues specific to getting small businesses connected will be covered in a presentation by the new Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, Kate Carnell, while the new Disability Commissioner, Alastair McEwin, will discuss connection as a human right.

"The digital world can be very complex and challenging for consumers to navigate and at the ACCANect Conference we will look at the experience from a range of consumer groups," added Ms Corbin. "This is an opportunity for consumer groups, industry and government to come together to hear first-hand accounts on the realities consumers face and to consider future consumer needs to get and stay connected."

This year our keynote speaker is [Consumer NZ CEO](#), Sue Chetwin. Sue has worked for Consumer NZ for nine years and previously worked in print journalism for more than 25 years. Her presentation will focus on the consumer experience of broadband and telco services across the Tasman and initiatives that have been used to equip consumers with the tools they need to get and stay connected to communications services.

---

#### MEDIA CONTACT

Luke Sutton  
Mobile: 0409 966 931  
[luke.sutton@accan.org.au](mailto:luke.sutton@accan.org.au)  
Phone: 02 9288 4017  
TTY: 02 9281 5322

*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.*

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](#). Join the conversation using the #ACCANect hashtag.

---

## **MEDIA CONTACT**

*Luke Sutton*  
*Mobile: 0409 966 931*  
*luke.sutton@accan.org.au*  
*Phone: 02 9288 4017*  
*TTY: 02 9281 5322*

*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.*