



Media Release

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ACCAN launches 2016-17 policy priorities

In a speech at the CommsDay Melbourne Congress 2016, [ACCAN](#) CEO, Teresa Corbin, outlined [eight major priority areas](#) for ACCAN in 2016-17. The consumer centred priorities relate to ACCAN's core focus area of achieving affordable, available and accessible communications products and services for all Australians.

As an organisation, ACCAN represents all residential consumers and small businesses, including not-for-profit organisations. Each policy priority aims to address a segment of the market that is not working for a group or groups within Australia.

ACCAN's 2016-17 policy priorities are:

- Better communications for poorly served areas - ACCAN will work closely with communities for improvements in existing services and mobile expansion, and for a smooth transition to nbn broadband.
- Improved consumer safeguards and better regulation - ACCAN will advance consumer protections needed for the delivery of essential communications services.
- Improved consumer decision making - ACCAN will support a competitive market by giving consumers the tools they need to participate.
- Digital literacy and digital government – ACCAN will support community capacity building to enable consumers to engage with digital government. ACCAN will advocate for inclusive digital transformation by government to ensure citizens and small businesses are not left behind as services are transitioned to online delivery.
- Affordable communications – ACCAN will strive to eliminate cost barriers for low income consumers, and promote better value for all.
- Improved accessibility – ACCAN will partner with its members to call for the removal of discriminatory barriers to access.
- Privacy and cyber security – ACCAN will ensure that consumer privacy is maintained in interactions with government and business, and that consumers are empowered and informed.
- Competition and market structures – ACCAN will advocate for competition and transparency between ISPs and content providers, to ensure the internet works for the best interests of consumers.

"We've worked with our member base and stakeholders to ensure that our priorities match the needs and wants of Australian communications consumers," said Ms Corbin. "Many of these are a continuation of last year's priorities."

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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.

We will continue to work to ensure that communications services are accessible, affordable and available for all consumers.”

In her speech, Ms Corbin highlighted the recently launched [Get Connected resource](#) under the better communications for poorly served areas priority. This includes an ADSL availability map and helpful information about alternative services for consumers frustrated by poor services while waiting for NBN to roll out. She also mentioned ACCAN commissioned research, [Confident, but Confounded](#). Conducted by Dr Paul Harrison, of Deakin University, this will inform many areas of ACCAN’s work, including in the priority area of improved consumer decision making. The research found that many consumers do not understand their telecommunications contracts, and points to the need for simple, easy to understand products and product information. Useful guides to help consumers navigate the complexities of NBN services, similar to ACCAN’s [Sky Muster satellite guide](#), will be a focus for ACCAN in the coming year.

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

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