



Media Release

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ACCAN supports ACCC draft decision to not declare domestic mobile roaming

The [Australian Communications Consumer Action Network](#) (ACCAN) welcomes the ACCC's draft decision to [not declare a wholesale domestic mobile roaming service](#). In [its submission](#) to the ACCC Inquiry, ACCAN questioned whether regulated domestic roaming would result in better mobile coverage and improved competition in regional, rural and remote areas. ACCAN notes the ACCC's finding that there is insufficient evidence that declaring domestic mobile roaming would lower prices for rural and regional consumers.

"ACCAN is a strong advocate for better mobile coverage and improved competition in regional and rural areas," said ACCAN CEO, Teresa Corbin. "Consumers and small businesses in regional, rural and remote areas want additional coverage where they live, work and travel. It's unclear whether declaring domestic mobile roaming would achieve this.

"The existing mobile networks need to be upgraded to improve capacity and reduce congestion. Enhancements to mobile networks would go a long way in improving the daily lives of non-metro consumers and ensuring access to emergency services. Improving and extending mobile coverage in regional and rural areas needs to be a priority for the Government and the mobile network operators. We call on the Federal Government to commit to funding further rounds of the Mobile Black Spot Program to extend coverage much further."

ACCAN's submission to the Inquiry suggested alternative ways of improving competition in the regional mobile market that will also support badly needed ongoing network improvements. These include:

- More emphasis on open access by competing networks in future publically funded projects such as Mobile Black Spot Program Round 3.
- Closer examination of how effective existing mechanisms are promoting competition. For example, regulated access to domestic transmission backhaul, and rules for network operators around sharing facilities.

ACCAN also identified areas where there are information gaps which don't support a competitive market. For example, public information about the mobile footprint of each network is a guesstimate only, and of limited practical use for consumers. Likewise there should be greater transparency around the coverage footprint offered by Mobile Virtual Network Operators (MVNOs) so that consumers understand better what services they will receive.

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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.

“Greater transparency around the coverage footprints of the network operators and MVNOs will allow consumers to make more informed choices when deciding on a mobile provider that will give them adequate mobile coverage in the areas where they live, work and travel,” added Ms Corbin.

ACCAN will be actively engaged in the next stage of the ACCC’s consultation on domestic mobile roaming.

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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