

## **ACCAN welcomes ACCC action over Premium Billing charges**

ACCAN welcomes the [ACCC's announcement](#) today that it has commenced proceedings against Telstra for misleading its customers about third party billing services.

ACCAN CEO Teresa Corbin said that consumers have been extremely frustrated by these unexpected charges on their telco bills and by the difficulties they experience in resolving them. An [ACCAN survey](#) last year found 12% of mobile customers had experienced unexpected third party charges on their mobile phone bills in the preceding 6 months.

'We've been calling for stronger consumer protections in this area for some time, including that all third party charging become opt-in, instead of the current opt-out arrangement', said Ms Corbin. 'Many people don't realise that their mobile phone account can effectively be used like a credit card to purchase third party content, like games credits'.

The ACCC has found that Telstra has earned about \$61.7m from commissions on third party premium direct billing.

'Telcos do well out of this industry, and they need to step up and resolve complaints about third party charges themselves, not send their customers off to third party providers for resolution. Our 2017 survey found this is what consumers want', said Ms Corbin.

'We urge all Telstra mobile customers to take the ACCC's advice – check your account, and if you've been billed for unauthorized third party charges, get in touch with Telstra to arrange a refund – customers can call on 13 22 00.'

All consumers should ask their telco to bar access to third party billing if they do not want to accrue these charges inadvertently. This bar will block direct carrier billing, mobile premium services and 190 voice services - so you can't get stung with these charges in future.'

For more information, contact Teresa Corbin on [media@accan.org.au](mailto:media@accan.org.au) or 0409 966 931.

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