## ACCAN Policy priorities for 2016-17

Our policy priorities are broad subject areas where ACCAN will develop proactive policy responses that will shape our engagement with stakeholders. ACCAN's mission is to represent consumers and the public interest, with particular emphasis on the needs of consumers for whom the market is not working.

Our policy priorities were developed in close consultation with ACCAN members, and informed by an 'environment scan' of the communications market and market trends.

***Better communications for poorly served areas***

*We will work closely with communities for improvements in existing services and mobile expansion, and for a smooth transition to nbn broadband.*

Our focus will be on interim solutions to improve broadband in areas that are currently underserved, and that are not prioritized in the NBN rollout, and on equivalence of regional/metro longer term NBN services. We will support policies that deliver greater mobile coverage and wider choice of provider.

***Improved consumer safeguards and better regulation***

*We will advance consumer protections needed for the delivery of essential communications services.*

Our focus will be ensuring safeguards are reformed so they are relevant to the needs of todays’ consumers. We will engage in reform of universal services, the Federal Government’s consumer safeguards review, and reviews of industry codes and guidelines.

***Improved consumer decision making***

*We will support a competitive market by giving consumers the tools they need to participate.*

Our focus will be the introduction of easy to use independent broadband performance benchmarking information; and secure consumer access to own data to guide better purchasing decisions. We will provide timely and useful product information to support better consumer choices.

***Digital literacy and digital government***

*We will support community capacity building to enable consumers to engage with digital government. We 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.*

Our focus will be to work on measures that remove barriers to consumer online engagement with essential government services, informed by international best practice. We will promote delivery of ACCAN’s digital literacy training material, and support the work of member organisations delivering digital education programs.

***Affordable communications***

*We will strive to eliminate cost barriers for low income consumers, and promote better value for all.*

Our focus will be to work with industry and government in developing informed and targeted responses that are suited to consumer need. We will support reforms to the Centrelink Telecommunications Allowance, improved hardship arrangements, and advocate for better deals for low income Australians.

**Improved accessibility**

*We will partner with our members to call for the removal of discriminatory barriers to access.*

Our focus will be the adoption of a government purchasing policy for accessible ICT products and services; the local introduction of Real Time Text to align with international developments; the introduction of a National Disability Telecommunications Service. We will advocate for accessible online services and web video content, and for audio description and improved live captions on broadcast television. We will ensure consumer needs are central in reviews of NRS services, and monitor innovations that deliver improved accessibility.

***Privacy and cyber security***

*We will ensure that consumer privacy is maintained in interactions with government and business, and that consumers are empowered and informed.*

Our focus will be to ensure that digital national identity works in the best interests of consumers, and the security of personal data. We will work for an improved Do Not Call Register, and for the introduction of data breach notifications.

***Competition and market structures***

*We will advocate for competition and transparency between ISPs and content providers, to ensure the internet works for the best interests of consumers.*

Our focus will be to identify and respond to prioritisation of online network traffic, and to ensure that consumer interests are taken into account in commercial arrangements to deliver online content. We will monitor the effect of market changes on service delivery for consumers.

***In Addition***

We will consult with our members and provide well researched, evidence based input into government and industry consultations to represent and maintain consumer interests at the core of policy developments and industry initiatives.

We will actively monitor and engage with government, nbn and industry to ensure consumer interests shape the roll out of the superfast broadband network.

We will engage as consumer experts with industry and government on proposals for better regulation.

We will represent the consumer voice on government, industry and international committees.

We will monitor the consumer implications of emerging technologies including the application of Internet of Things.