



Media Release

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ACCAN CEO highlights consumer issues at CommsDay Summit

ACCAN CEO, Teresa Corbin, discussed a range of telecommunications consumer issues in a speech today at the CommsDay Sydney Summit. In particular, Ms Corbin outlined issues related to the ACCC inquiry into the Wholesale Service Standard and the consumer perspective on the ACMA new rules currently out for consultation.

Ms Corbin said “Currently, NBN’s wholesale service standard levels are set out in commercial agreements negotiated by NBN co with retail service providers (NBN’s Wholesale Broadband Agreement) but do not always lead to good outcomes for customers when it comes to connection times, fault repairs, appointment keeping and network reliability’.

The NBN environment is quite complex with a wholesaler, retail service provider and sometimes an aggregator as well involved in providing services to consumers. The ACCC inquiry on “whether NBN wholesale service standard levels are appropriate is strongly supported by consumer groups who believe that regulation is necessary to improve customer experiences.

Ms Corbin’s presentation also focused on the [ACMA’s announcements](#) and new rules announced by the [Minister for Communications’](#) in December last year. Ms Corbin maintains this is a huge win for consumers but she says “of course the devil will as always be in the details which are now being carved out”.

The ACMA’s analysis of issues relating to NBN migration confirms what we already know and highlighted some very concerning complaint trends. The ACMA’s report showed that there needs to be better protection to ensure that consumers have access to a working service; that they are given accurate and consistent information and there is an improvement in complaints handling to ensure quicker resolution of faults and connection problems”.

“The implementation of these new standards has to ensure that no one is left without essential communications services. Once in place, these new rules will also ensure that the regulator has better tools to ensure practices of telco providers improve and there will be a stronger mandate for the regulator to act when necessary”.

Now that we have the first drafts for consultation of the Complaint Handling Standard and the Record Keeping Rule we have identified the following concerns:

New Industry Complaint Handling Standards should:

- Where appropriate align with benchmarks set in AS10002

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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.

- Ensure customers are informed about the TIO at all appropriate points in the process
- Ensure timeframes support speedy responses from RSPs
- Facilitate industry identification of systemic issues and rectify these across all customers affected

ACCAN believes that the new ACMA Record Keeping Rule (RKR) is of vital importance to its ongoing monitoring of compliance and enforcement role.

ACCAN's initial comments on the RKR are that it:

- Should apply to all complaints not just those related to NBN
- Should cover all providers not just those with 30,000 customers or more
- Should require reporting on more than just the top three issues

For more information, contact Martin James on martin.james@accan.org.au or 0409 966 931. For the latest updates, follow ACCAN on [Twitter](#) or like us on [Facebook](#).