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Media Release

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New enforcement powers a major win for telco consumers

ACCAN - Australia's peak national communications consumer body – has hailed the Federal Government's strengthening of enforcement powers a major win for telecommunications consumers.

ACCAN's CEO, Carol Bennett, said the reforms will promote increased accountability, transparency and compliance within the telecommunications industry, and contribute towards improving trust in telcos which has been eroding.

"This announcement by the Australian Government addresses longstanding calls from consumer advocates to improve accountability in the telecommunications sector and we applaud these critical reforms," she said.

"The government's announcement to boost the enforcement powers of the ACMA will ensure telcos face real and meaningful penalties if they breach their obligations to Australians. This is a critical step towards ensuring that the telco sector works in the interests of consumers."

"Granting the ACMA greater and more timely enforcement powers goes a long way towards addressing the persistent limitations of the ACMA's regulatory toolkit".

The changes will be part of expanded consumer protections under a suite of reforms to the *Telecommunications Act 1997 (Cth)*.

The changes will mean the regulator, ACMA, will now be able to take direct enforcement action against breaches of industry codes rather than first having to issue a formal direction to comply.

The reforms also provide for significant increases to maximum penalties for breaches of industry codes and standards, from \$250,000 to \$10 million, bringing the telco sector in line with other essential service sectors.

The Australian Government also announced that it will establish a Carriage Service Provider (CSP) registration scheme to increase the visibility of providers in the telecommunications market. A CSP registration scheme will support a telecommunications market that works efficiently for all participants and provide much needed oversight of the market by the ACMA.

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The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) is Australia's peak communication 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.

ACCAN is committed to reconciliation that acknowledges Australia's past and values the unique culture and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. [Read our RAP](#)
