# Media release

## For immediate release Monday 9th May 2011

**Australia’s newest superhero wants a telco to provide Fair Calls For All**

**Number Woman won’t rest until calls from mobiles to 13 & 1800 numbers are affordable**

Australia’s newest superhero, Number Woman, has today written to the chief executives of the big three network providers, Telstra, Optus and Vodafone, appealing to them to become a consumer superhero by ending expensive, per-minute timed calls from mobiles to the 13, 1300 and 1800 numbers used by thousands
of government services and businesses.

Peak communications advocacy group, the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network, says calling 13 and 1800 numbers from mobiles can cost up to $1.78 a minute, which quickly adds up with time spent on hold and is hurting the people who can least afford it.

ACCAN says a 10-minute call for roadside assistance can cost up to $11, a 20-minute call to a helpline up to $18 and a 30-minute call to an 1800 number to report a stolen credit card, up to $27. Calls to these numbers from a landline are free or around 30c (untimed).

“Charges to 1800 and 13/1300 numbers were legislated in 1997 so that government and business could provide a number for clients and customers to contact them for free, or at a low rate from landlines,” said ACCAN spokeswoman Elise Davidson.

“Back then [1997] mobiles were relatively new and seen as a bit of a luxury. In 2011, there are more mobiles than people in Australia and the numbering system hasn’t kept pace with the way we are communicating – on the go and on our mobiles. More than ten per cent of people don’t have a landline anymore and this number is growing.”

“Number Woman is asking the big three network providers – Telstra, Optus and Vodafone – to become consumer superheroes by committing to a timetable that provides a solution that changes the charging system for 13/1300 & 1800 numbers because this issue impacts the most on the most vulnerable in our society. Number Woman is ready, willing and able to help the telcos attain superhero status by making calls fair.”

ACCAN is asking its 150 members groups and individuals and interested Australian telco consumers to sign up to support its **Fair Calls For All** campaign.

To download images of Number Woman for print or online, please click here: <http://bit.ly/kK5VCV>

Details of the campaign can be found at [www.accan.org.au/numberwoman](http://www.accan.org.au/numberwoman)

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See accompanying **Fact Sheet** for current call rates and key statistics

Follow us on Twitter for updates on the campaign: **@ACCAN\_AU** & **@Number\_Woman**