

# ANNUAL

# REPORT

# 2009-2010



**Available,  
accessible and  
affordable communications**



**Australian Communications  
Consumer Action Network**



AUSTRALIAN COMMUNICATIONS CONSUMER ACTION NETWORK LIMITED (ACCAN)  
ABN 42 133 719 678

Annual Financial Report

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For The Year Ended 30 June 2010

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# CONTENTS



About ACCAN .....	2
2009-10 Highlights.....	3
Chair Report.....	4
CEO Report.....	5
Policy and Campaigns.....	6
Consumer Awareness .....	8
Submissions and Publications .....	9
Committee Representation .....	11
Research & Grants Scheme .....	12
SACCA Report .....	14
SACDI Report.....	15
Members .....	16
Snapshots .....	18
Annual Financial Report.....	21

# ABOUT ACCAN

## Who we are

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) is the peak body that represents all consumers on communications issues including telecommunications, broadband and emerging new services. We provide a strong, unified voice to industry and government as we work towards availability, accessibility and affordability of communications services for all Australians. Consumers need ACCAN to promote better consumer protection outcomes ensuring speedy responses to complaints and issues.

We aim to empower consumers so that they are well informed and can make good choices about products and services. As a peak body, ACCAN will activate its broad and diverse membership base to campaign to get a better deal for all communications consumers.

ACCAN's 145 members are a diverse bunch. Our 80 organisational members include community legal centres, disability advocates, farmers' federations, financial counsellors, parents groups, regional groups, seniors' organisations and

research bodies. We are also grateful to have 60 or so individual members who support the work that we do.

ACCAN opened its doors on 1 July 2009, growing from an amalgamation of smaller groups including the Consumers Telecommunications Network and TEDICORE. We currently have 14 staff, a nine-person board of governance, and two nine-member consumer advisory bodies.

ACCAN also administers a Grant Scheme as part of its funding agreement with the Commonwealth Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy. The aims of the Scheme are to support consumer research and representation that is in line with ACCAN's strategic plan.

You can find out more about us via our website [www.accan.org.au](http://www.accan.org.au) or by calling 02 9288 4000 or writing to us via email [info@accan.org.au](mailto:info@accan.org.au) or writing to us co-: Suite 402, Level 4, 55 Mountain Street, Ultimo NSW, 2007.

The operation of ACCAN is made possible by funding provided by the Australian Government.



*ACCAN's National Conference & Consumer Summit*



*With thanks to our founding CEO, Allan Asher*

# 2009-10 HIGHLIGHTS

ACCAN has celebrated a number of successes in its first 12 months of operation, many of which are detailed in this report. Here is our shortlist of the things we are proud of achieving in 2009-2010.

- Our membership has grown from 30 foundation members, to 145 member organisations and individuals

## The establishment of a Grants Scheme, which awards \$250,000 per annum towards research projects that further our goal of affordable, available and accessible communications

- ACCAN demonstrated well balanced and responsible funds distribution with a strong focus on our policy and campaign activities. Our financial position is stronger than last year and we managed to increase total equity by \$201,714
- Making 23 submissions to government inquiries and publishing seven research reports
- Building a strong media profile for the organisation and establishing ourselves as a go-to place for reliable consumer advice and information

- Hosting our inaugural Annual Conference & Consumer Summit “Communications Are Changing, Are You?” at the State Library of Victoria, attended by 150 delegates
- Hosting two roundtable events at Parliament House, Canberra, with the Gov 2.0 Taskforce and a Cyber-security event as part of National E-security Awareness Week.
- Welcomed the commitment to WCAG 2.0 fully accessible government websites for people with disabilities
- Successfully lobbying for changes to the legislation on behalf of the four million people who signed up for the Do Not Call register, with registrations now extended from three to five years

## The coining of a new term, “iShock”, used to describe the explosion of very high excess data usage charges through the use of new devices like the iPad

- Pressuring Telstra to drop its \$2.20 “pay-to-pay” fees, which would have disadvantaged consumers who choose to pay their accounts in person at Australia Post, Telstra stores or by mail. CEO David Thodey reversed the pay-to-pay decision, acknowledging Telstra’s existing customer service woes and promising to put customers back at the centre of its business

# CHAIR REPORT

ACCAN was born out of a vision to give consumers a greater, stronger voice in the competitive converged communications environment. We advocate, in everything we do, for “available, accessible and affordable communications that enhance the lives of consumers”. It has been my privilege, in ACCAN’s first year, to head a board of people with a wide range of experience in both consumer issues and communications who are committed to this vision.

In July 2009, under the leadership of Allan Asher, we recruited a number of new staff in accordance with our organisational plan. Once we had a strong staff we worked on the development of a number of consumer-engagement campaigns. We’ve always wanted to ensure individual consumers who choose to can contribute to the work we do and they are doing so in increasing numbers. ACCAN acknowledges that our advocacy builds on, and is done in cooperation with, the work done by NGO consumer groups in previous years.

In addition, ACCAN has given considerable attention to accessibility issues which are of particular concern to consumers with disabilities. We’ve argued that communications need to be an intrinsic part of the National Disability Strategy. Our argument is based on the rationale of communications as a human right, using the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a blueprint.

Another development this year has been the commencement of the Grants Scheme and the convening of an Independent Grants Panel. The Board has overseen the allocation of funds to a series of projects that enable research and consumer representation to be developed around issues which are traditionally neglected.

Three grant projects are due for completion this year, with seven projects due to be completed in the 2010-11 financial year. The Board sincerely thanks the Panel for their wise allocation of grant funding and to the Grant Scheme secretariat for enabling the timely commencement of projects. In addition ACCAN has allocated a proportion of its own funding to research which builds the evidence essential to pinpointing areas of industry irregularity and formulating our campaign strategies.

Two Standing Advisory Committees – one for Disability Issues (SACDI) and one for general Consumer Affairs (SACCA) have been convened. These have contributed collectively to ACCAN’s work, with individual members being a valuable resource for technical, legal and sector information. I thank the members of these Committees for their input.

In the final days of June, ACCAN held its inaugural Annual Conference & Consumer Summit. All players in the communications sector were given an opportunity to discuss fairer service delivery, in a responsive regulatory environment, with consumers as influential players in the marketplace.

This has been a year of intense activity and achievement with the communications environment in a state of rapid change. I thank the Board for their support during the year and the staff for their consistent, superlative input, and look forward to 2010-11.



Sue Salthouse  
Chair, ACCAN Board

# CEO REPORT

ACCAN started operating in July 2009 and since then, we've worked enthusiastically to launch a whole range of initiatives detailed in the pages that follow. One theme you'll find throughout is that all of our activities are centred on consumers. Improving consumer welfare is our chief goal and motivation.

Many people, including those from industry, were involved in a rigorous process of helping us establish our strategic plan in the first three months of our operations. ACCAN spent time listening to all stakeholders. Firstly we spoke to the 30 foundation members (we now have 145 members), then we canvassed industry groups and additional consumer groups. I am confident that our five-year strategy, which details the things that we want to achieve, covers issues that are deeply felt by key constituencies.

ACCAN's early successes are due as much as anything to the fact that we were able to tap into deep seated and strongly held views of various consumer and other constituencies. The first big goal that we set out to accomplish was to try and make the market work better for consumers. We've raised concerns about complaint handling systems, advertising and promotions and the responsiveness of companies when things go wrong. ACCAN has set about making the Ombudsman scheme more effective for consumers, and also waking up regulators whom we felt had become very sleepy.


One of the most encouraging things that occurred in the last year from my perspective is the way in which many in industry have recognised that their medium to long-term future is about finally establishing a franchise with customers based on quality of service and performance.

On the government policy side, ACCAN has had a lot to criticise the government about, especially in the absence of stronger measures in relation to consumers with disabilities. Yet there are positive signs too. The National Relay Service is now scheduled for a thorough review to make it fit for future purposes. Consumers with disabilities will soon be able to access emergency services via SMS for the first time, and that's a great big break-through.

None of those things are things are anywhere near concluded, but I can guarantee that over the next few years, as our anniversaries roll around, that the welfare of consumers will be increased annually as a result of the activities of ACCAN.

ACCAN consists of quite a few people and that includes the staff who actually do all of the work as well as the Board. And so, I'd like to say that that's where our thanks and encouragement should be going.

It's been a thoroughly constructive year for ACCAN and we remain, as always, ready, willing and able to work with anyone who wants to enhance consumer welfare, but equally ACCAN is also ready, willing and able to work against anyone who doesn't.



Allan Asher  
Chief Executive Officer  
ACCAN

# POLICY AND CAMPAIGNS

## *Pay-to-Pay campaign*

ACCAN's campaigning activities got off to a flying start when we successfully lobbied Telstra to drop its proposed \$2.20 charge for paying a bill in cash. When Telstra announced the charge in late July, ACCAN acted quickly to launch a campaign highlighting the unfairness of the charge, calling on Telstra to instead offer incentives for those paying by lower cost methods rather than penalising its traditional customer base.

By November 2009, Telstra CEO David Thodey had reversed his decision saying, "I have listened to the community debate and believe that the way we introduced the fee did not align with our commitment to put customers back at the heart of our business".

But ACCAN didn't stop there. On 21 December 2009 we launched our Christmas Card campaign supported by CHOICE and the Australian Financial Counselling and Credit Reform Association (AFCCRA), calling on the CEOs of other major telcos to drop their pay-to-pay fees. Hundreds of people supported the campaign by personally emailing our Christmas card to CEOs. ACCAN continues to fight for fair fees.

## *Do Not Call Register*

In early 2010 ACCAN became aware that without immediate legislative action, millions of people who were early registrants on the ACMA's Do Not Call Register were likely to start receiving unwanted telemarketing calls again. This was because a flaw in the scheme saw registrations expire after three years, and the scheme's May 2010 three-year anniversary was fast approaching. ACCAN launched a major campaign on 1 February 2010 calling for immediate legislative action to change the faulty rules. We argued that "the flood gates to intrusive and unwanted

telemarketing calls are about to open for millions of people who are unaware that their telephone number is about to be kicked off the Do Not Call Register" and called for the Senate Committee reviewing the Do Not Call Register to support the changes.

Just two months later, ACCAN succeeded in its advocacy for a last-minute reprieve when the Minister announced that he would introduce legislative amendments to extend the registration period for five years initially, while investigations into the feasibility of permanent registrations continue. ACCAN will continue to be the defender of the four million Australians who are currently signed up to the Do Not Call Register and will keep fighting for permanent registrations.

## *Time's up Telcos*

A major focus for ACCAN during 2009-2010 was getting a better deal for telco customers. But we had to start by getting all stakeholders to accept that there was a problem and things needed to change.

ACCAN was outraged in October 2009 when the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) 2008-09 annual report revealed complaint issues had reached an all-time high at 480,000. We argued that time was up for telcos' bad customer service and that a \$50 compensation payment to consumers should be introduced.

In April 2010, the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) announced it would conduct a major inquiry into customer service and complaint handling in the telecommunications industry. At the same time the Minister announced that he was prepared to legislate to introduce new mandatory consumer protection standards. ACCAN warmly welcomed both announcements.



In June 2010, at our inaugural Annual Conference and Consumer Summit, ACCAN released a member survey *Talking Back: ACCAN members speak out about telco customer service*, which identified members' main concerns and their support for new mandatory consumer protection standards. In June 2010, ACCAN also commenced working on the review of the Telecommunications Consumer Protection Code and commenced a major research project into the role of principles-based regulation in the industry.

### *Inclusive Communications and the National Disability Strategy*

During 2009 and 2010, the government was drafting its National Disability Strategy (NDS), which was designed to be a whole-of-government blueprint focused on meeting the needs of people with disabilities. ACCAN saw this as an opportunity to ensure information and communications technologies were high on the agenda. We worked with an independent consultant to identify the implications of Australia's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the communications policy area.

Many members and stakeholders participated in our consultations, which resulted in the publication of the research report *Connecting Us All: The Role of the National Disability Strategy*.

In February 2010, ACCAN welcomed the commitment to fully accessible web sites, which we believe will have open up avenues to connect to government, access information and fully participate in civic life.

### *SMS Emergency Access*

Advocates for deaf and hearing-impaired citizens have worked with consumer organisations over many years to ensure equitable access to emergency services. An ongoing frustration was the absence of a scheme that enabled people to use text messages from their mobile phone to

contact emergency services. Following a forum and roundtable discussion on access to emergency services hosted by Deaf Australia in 2008, it was agreed that "something is better than nothing" and the ACMA agreed to undertake a feasibility study into an SMS emergency scheme for Deaf, speech and hearing-impaired people. ACCAN worked closely with Deaf Australia and Deafness Forum to hold the Government to account on this vital issue. In April 2010 we welcomed an announcement from the Government that they would move to implement an SMS service on the 106 emergency number.

### *Our Broadband Future*

Another major focus for ACCAN during 2009 and 2010 was the development of the rules and regulations surrounding the development and implementation of a national broadband network. Our advocacy revolved around four key principles:

1. Broadband for all.
2. No consumer should be worse off during the transition and following implementation of the broadband network.
3. Robust consumer protection rules for services delivered over the network must be built in from the start.
4. Services need to be provided in a competitive and fair market.

These principles identified the great need for Telstra's market power to be addressed as part of any reforms and it is an issue that ACCAN continues to campaign relentlessly on. We also advocated for a new Universal Service Obligation (USO) to include a high quality, affordable and accessible broadband service, recognising that a land line telephony service is no longer sufficient in the context of a 21st century broadband-enabled society.

# CONSUMER AWARENESS

“Bill shock” stories are a perennial favourite with the media and this year provided plenty of fodder, including the South Australia state MP Russell Wortley whose son ran up a \$10,000 bill on his taxpayer-funded smartphone by downloading a football game. ACCAN commentary on bill shock featured in numerous national, metropolitan and local television, print, radio and online news stories throughout the year. We publicly criticised the telcos for their exorbitant excess data charges while pressuring them to offer their customers better data-monitoring tools and ‘capped’ products that really had caps. At the same time, we offered consumers information on how to avoid racking up enormous bills through a tip sheet on our web site.

With the release of the iPad in May 2010, we took our campaign further. ACCAN advised consumers to avoid “iShock” by buying a pre-paid 3G data plan for their new devices. The stories were featured heavily around the time of the release of this much-hyped product and we were pleased to see the telcos offering generous data allowances and competitive pricing for their pre-paid plans.

Telco advertising remains a major problem for consumers and industry alike; with confusing and misleading offers trapping the unwary and running seriously close to the line for the regulator. In early June the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) initiated proceedings in the Federal Court against Singtel Optus, alleging the company misled and deceived consumers by advertising a number of products as “unlimited”, which were subsequently found to have... you guessed it, limits.

This was another major theme for ACCAN this year. We formally submitted six other advertisements that we also believe to be

potentially in breach of the Trade Practices Act 1974 and went public in The Australian’s Media section. ACCAN remains deeply concerned about the continuing race to the bottom being played out in the small print of telco advertising campaigns. If billing and customer service issues are to be addressed it must start with higher standards of advertising.

Our own and other news stories, government and industry information and a member event calendar are mailed out on a Tuesday via our free WebNews service, which now has 600 subscribers. You can sign up on our website [www.accan.org.au](http://www.accan.org.au).

We created our first video, The Digital Divide, which debuted at our conference in June and has since been viewed 250 times. The video is captioned and available on our site, along with the transcript. Thank you to the people who participated in the project: Laurence, of shortformvideo who created the video; Nan Bosler, President of Australian Seniors Computing Clubs; Dr Scott Hollier, Media Access Australia; Kevin, an advocate for homeless people; Chris Hartley from the Public Industry Advocacy Service; and Daniel Featherstone, on behalf of the Indigenous Remote Communications Association.



*Elissa Freeman and Allan Asher filming a segment for a current affairs program*

# SUBMISSIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Submission on Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2009 to the Australian Communications and Media Authority, 28 June 2010

Submission on Geographic Numbering Amendments to the Australian Communications and Media Authority, 1 June 2010

*Our Broadband Future: What consumers want*, Position statement, published June 2010

*Talking Back: ACCAN Members speak out about telco customer service*, Member survey, published May 2010

*Connecting us all: The Role of the National Disability Strategy*, research report, published May 2010

Submission on NBN Implementation Study to the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 31 May 2010

Submission to the Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety, 28 April 2010

Submission on Trade Practices Amendment (Australian Consumer Law) Bill (No. 2) 2010 to the Senate Economics Committee, 27 April 2010

Submission on Telecommunications Service Provider (MPS) Determination 2010 (no.2) to the Australian Communications and Media Authority, 16 April 2010

Submission on National Broadband Network Companies and Access Arrangements Bills to the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 30 March 2010

Submission on Transforming Life Outside Cities: The Potential of Broadband Services to the NSW Parliament Standing Committee on Broadband in Rural and Regional Services, 18 March 2010

Submission on Are you connected? Telecommunications availability in Rural and Regional Communities to the NSW Parliament, Standing Committee on Broadband in Rural and Regional Services, 18 March 2010

Submission on Digital Dividend Green Paper to the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 8 March 2010

Submission on Mandatory Internet Service (ISP) Filtering to the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 12 February 2010

Submission on Do Not Call Register Amendment Bill 2009 to the Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts, 22 January 2010

*Broadband Solutions for Consumers with Disabilities*, research report, January 2010

Submission on Gov 2.0 Taskforce to the Department of Finance and Deregulation, 16 November 2009

Submission on Draft E-Security Code to the Internet Industry Association, 10 November 2009

Submission on Do Not Call Register Statutory Review to the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, 3 November 2009

# SUBMISSIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Submission on Premium SMS/MMS Barring to the Australian Communications and Media Authority, 30 October 2009

Submission on PDF Accessibility Review to the Department of Finance and Deregulation, 19 October 2009

Submission on Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (Competition and Consumer Safeguards) Bill to the Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts, 13 October 2009

Australian Communications Consumer Action Network, Campaigning for Consumers in Communications, Consultation Paper, published September 2009

Submission on Cyber Crime to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, 17 August 2009

Submission on Consumer Voices: Sustaining Advocacy and Research to the Commonwealth Treasury, 10 August 2009

Submission on Information Accessibility Code to the Communications Alliance, 10 August 2009

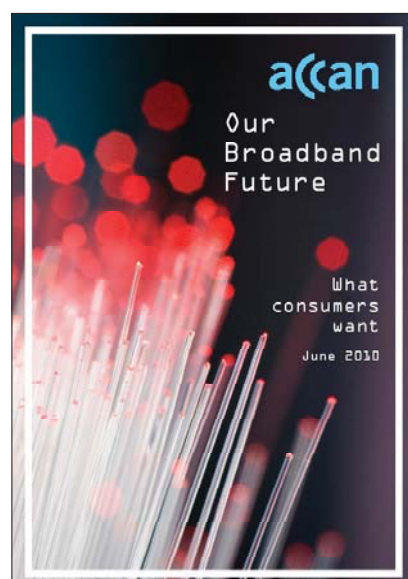
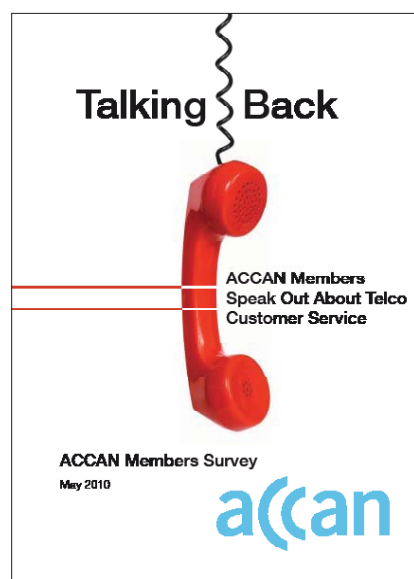
Submission on Review of Regulatory Burdens: Social and Economic Infrastructure Services to the Productivity Commission, 10 August 2009

*Informed Consent*, Research Report, August 2009

*Customer Service*, Research Report, August 2009

*Future Consumer: Emerging Issues in Telecommunications and convergent communications and media*, Research Report, August 2009

Submission on Review of Shared Numbers to the Australian Communications and Media Authority, 3 July 2009



# COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION



ACCAN staff represented consumers on the following committees.

Australian Communications and Media Authority  
– Consumer Consultative Forum

Australian Communications and Media Authority  
– Emergency Call Service Advisory Committee

Australian Communications and Media Authority  
– ENUM Discussion Group

Australian Communications and Media Authority  
– Numbering Advisory Committee

Australian Communications and Media Authority  
– Technical Working Group

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission  
– Consumer Consultative Committee

Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA)  
– Electromagnetic Emissions Health Reference Group

Communications Alliance  
– Telecommunications Consumer Protection Code Steering Group

DBCDE Cyber Security Week  
– Stakeholder Forum

Deaf Australia  
– Video Relay Service Working Group

DBCDE Digital Switchover Taskforce  
– Consumer Expert Group

National Forum  
– Emergency Warnings to the Community

National Relay Service  
– Consumer Consultative Committee

COAG Online Communications Council  
– National Broadband Development Group

Optus  
– Consumer Liaison Forum

DBCDE  
– Stakeholder Reference Group on Fibre in Greenfields

Standards Australia  
– Council

Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman  
– Council

Telecommunications Information Services Standards  
– Council

Telstra  
– Disability Forum

# RESEARCH AND GRANTS SCHEME

## Research

### *Foundational reports*

In the first quarter of the financial year, ACCAN released three key pieces of research to help formulate its first strategic plan and work plan.

*Future Consumer: Emerging Consumer Issues in Telecommunications and Convergent Communications and Media* for the first time brought together consumer-focused case studies across telecommunications and mobiles, the internet, affordability, and broadcasting to sketch out the field of play for consumer advocacy.

The *Informed Consent* report presented a consumer perspective on informed consent in the communications industry, including advice on information that should be given to consumers and methods of conveying this information. The report also addressed the issue of obtaining informed consent from specific, vulnerable consumer groups.

The *Customer Service* report provided advice on mechanisms to enhance customer service in the communications sector, including the effectiveness of customer service charters, the effectiveness of existing codes, code development and code review processes.

### *Broadband Solutions for Consumers with Disabilities*

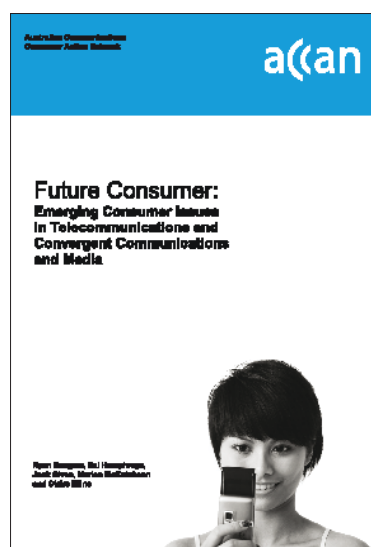
Released in February 2010, this international project reported on 16 high-speed broadband applications in Europe, the United States and Japan that can deliver potentially life-transforming services for people with disabilities.

### *Planning and profile*

In the second half of the year, with a full-time Research and Grants Coordinator on board, ACCAN began to further hone its research path, publishing our first Research Prospectus. The Prospectus described how ACCAN's research work would be targeted to help understand and illustrate key issues affecting consumers in order to advocate more powerfully. The body of work would be developed through partnerships, grants, and through the collation of diverse publically available existing research. At this point, ACCAN also began to consult with key research stakeholders to build an engaged ACCAN research network.

### *In the pipeline*

In the last quarter of the year ACCAN launched its research agenda. We formed partnerships with the Communications Law Centre at the University of Technology Sydney, the University of New South Wales Cyberspace Law and Policy Centre, and Australia Policy Online (a research and policy database and living guides). ACCAN also began developing a number of other projects, including our inaugural Research Linkage Forum, slated for late 2010.



## Grants Scheme

### *Establishment of the Independent Grants Panel*

ACCAN's Grants Scheme is administered as part of its funding agreement with the Commonwealth Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy. The aims of the Scheme are to support consumer research and representation that is aligned with ACCAN's strategic plan.

ACCAN developed a robust and open grants governance framework in the spirit of the *Commonwealth Grant Guidelines*. This included developing a Grant Deed Pro Forma, Application Guidelines and Application Form, and a number of internal procedures including a Conflict of Interest Policy. ACCAN also became a member of the Australian Institute of Grants Management and has already planned a review of the Scheme's first year in late 2010.

Recommendations on funding to the ACCAN Board are made by the Independent Grants Panel comprising three external board-appointed experts. Members of the Panel were: Robin Banks, CEO of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre; Kate Cornick, Executive Director of the Institute for a Broadband Enabled Society at the University of Melbourne; and Tim Dwyer, postgraduate research coordinator for the Department of Media and Communications at the University of Sydney.

Two rounds of funding were conducted in the financial year to support projects in this and next financial year. The Scheme carried a budget of \$101,600 for Round One 2010 and a budget of \$250,000 for Round Two 2010. All the projects were scheduled for completion by 30 June 2011.

### *Round One 2010*

- A study of privacy complaint paths and outcomes by the Cyberspace Law and Policy Centre, University of New South Wales (\$30,000);

- *Internet Scams: how to protect yourself*, a consumer education initiative by the WA Deaf Society (\$49,600);
- An international literature review on Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communications consumers by the National Ethnic Disability Alliance (\$22,000).

### *Round Two 2010*

- Able Australia Services (\$14,750) for a consumer research and representation project titled, "Research and practical telecommunication solutions for deafblind Australians";
- Brotherhood of St Laurence (\$58,000) for a consumer research and representation project titled "Youth Advocates";
- Council in the Ageing WA (\$20,000) for a project titled, "Reducing the information divide: The impact of internet usage rates amongst female seniors on the provision of information and services;"
- Danielle Notara (\$12,500) for a consumer research project titled, "The Three E's – E-community, Enhanced service delivery and Equitable access for regional consumers under the NBN: a study of the Northern Rivers Region";
- Institute for Interactive Media and Learning – University of Technology Sydney (\$45,000) for a consumer research project titled, "Mind the Gap: refugees and communications technology literacy";
- Novita Children's Services (\$50,000) for a consumer research and representation project titled, "A community based website for individuals with complex communication needs (CCN) or severe communication impairment (SCI) and their supporters";
- Institute for Social Research, Swinburne University; the Centre for Appropriate Technology; and the Central Land Council (\$49,750) for a consumer research project titled, "The determinants for success for home internet for Indigenous consumers in remote Australia".

# SACCA REPORT

The Standing Advisory Committee on Consumer Affairs (SACCA) plays an important role in advising ACCAN on consumer issues in the communications industry. The committee held three face-to-face meetings in November, March and June, and a teleconference in February. At every meeting a rich array of issues were identified and discussed by the Committee. At the June meeting, SACCA had a presentation by staff from the ACMA about the *Reconnecting the Customer* inquiry. This was a fantastic opportunity for SACCA to provide early input to the ACMA. Between meetings SACCA members made themselves available to assist ACCAN staff in their areas of expertise and we thank them for both generously giving their time and inspiring us with their passion.

## SACCA Members

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| David Lawson       | – Australian Financial Counsellors & Credit Reform Association |
| Heather Wieland    | – Country Womens’ Association of Australia                     |
| Holly Raiche       | – Internet Society of Australia                                |
| Ian Butterworth    | – Telecommunications Consumer Group of South Australia         |
| Jo Benvenuti       | – Consumer Utilities Advocacy Centre                           |
| Paul Harrison      | – Deakin University  |
| Loretta Kreet      |  |
| Victoria Rubensohn |  |
| Nan Bosler         | – Chair, ACCAN Board Representative                            |



L to R: Paul Harrison, Elissa Freeman, Holly Raiche, Sarah Wilson, Kirisha Thanapalasuntheram, Ian Butterworth, Jo Benvenuti, Heather Wieland, Nan Bosler, David Lawson, Loretta Kreet



L to R: Heather Wieland, David Lawson, Holly Raiche, Loretta Kreet



# SACDI REPORT

The Standing Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (SACDI) did a great job in delivering on their brief to advise ACCAN on issues affecting people with a disability. The committee held three face-to-face meetings in November, March and June, as well as an initial meeting with disability representatives in August 2009. SACDI members provided critical guidance to our project investigating how the proposed National Disability Strategy could be utilised to accommodate communications issues. The Roundtable held as part of the June SACDI meeting was a huge success. ACCAN benefited from the opportunity to discuss issues that affected SACDI members and their constituents, as well as the potential solutions. Many SACDI members generously gave their time to participate in ACCAN's roundtable on Gov 2.0 and Cyber-Security issues for People with Disability. We thank SACDI members for their expertise and experience on disability issues.

## SACDI Members

Denise Wood	– University South Australia
Leah Hobson	– Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
Lynnden Beaumont	– Deafness Forum Aust.
Nick Rushworth	– Brain Injury Australia
Scott Hollier	– Media Access Australia
Zel Iscel	– National Ethnic Disability Alliance (resigned 2010)
Andrew Wiltshire	(resigned June 2010)
Jan Ashford	– Deaf Australia (Appointed June 2010)
David Parker	– Chair, ACCAN Board Representative
Sue Salthouse	

## Representatives at the Disability Consultation Group meeting, August 2009

Rob Garrett	– Novita Tech
Andrew Stewart	– Deafness Forum
Frank Nowlan	– Blind Citizens Australia
Barry Dingle	



*L to R: Zel Iscel, Wayne Hawkins, David Parker, Dani Fried, Nick Rushworth, Leah Hobson, Scott Hollier, Sue Salthouse*



*Wayne Hawkins, ACCAN Disability Policy Officer*

# MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

Achieve Foundation	Community Broadcasting Association of Australia	National Council of Women of Australia
ACT for Kids	Connecting Up Australia	Northern Territory Isolated Children's Parents' Assoc
Australia For All Alliance Inc	Consumer Action Law Centre	Novita Children's Services Inc
Australian Communications Exchange (Associate Member)	Consumer Credit Legal Centre NSW	NSW Council of Social Service
Australian Council of Social Service	Consumer's Federation of Australia	NSW Farmers Association
Australian Federation of Deaf Societies	Consumers Association of South Australia (Consumers SA)	Physical Disability Council of Australia
Australian Federation of Disability Organisations	Council on the Ageing Australia	People with Disability Australia Incorporated
Australian Financial Counselling and Credit Reform Association	Country Women's Association of Australia	People with Disabilities WA
The Australia Institute	Cyberspace Law and Policy Centre	Physical Disabilities Council of NSW
Australian Library and Information Association	Deaf Australia	Public Interest Advocacy Centre
Australian Pensioners & Superannuants' League QLD	Deaf Can Do	Queensland Consumers Association
Australian Pensioners and Superannuants Federation	Deaf Children Australia	Queensland Council of Social Service
Australian Privacy Foundation	Deaf NT	Redfern Legal Centre
Australian Rehabilitation & Assistive Technology Association	Deaf Society of NSW	South Australian Financial Counsellors Association
Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association	Deafness Forum	Spastic Centre of NSW
Australian Telecommunications User Group	Diversicare	Sydney Trade Point
Better Hearing Australia	Electronic Frontiers Australia Inc	Tasmanian Deaf Society
Blind Citizens Australia	Ethnic Communities Council of WA	Tasmanians with Disabilities Inc.
BuildersNet Pty Ltd	Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia	Telecommunications Consumer Group SA Inc.
Business & Professional Women Australia	Gateway Community Inc	Tenants Union of Queensland Inc.
Central Land Council	Indigenous Consumer Assistance Network Ltd	The Settlement Neighbourhood Centre
Centre for Appropriate Technologies	Inner Sydney Regional Council	Victorian Farmers' Federation
CHOICE	Internet Society of Australia	Western Australian Deaf Society Inc.
Collective of Self Help Groups	Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Australia Inc.	Women in Agriculture NSW
Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association of Victoria	Isolated Children's Parents' Association of NSW	Women with Disabilities Australia
Communications Law Centre	Isolated Children's Parents' Association WA	Yirrkala Homelands Schools/ Laynhapuy Schools
Communications Rights Australia	Lifeline Australia	Youth Affairs Council of Victoria
	Media Access Australia	
	National Children's and Youth Law Centre	

# INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Aaron Davis  
Alex Varley  
Andrew Stewart  
Ann Waterford  
Annie McCall  
Becky Walker  
Arthur Marsh  
Carolyn Deane  
Catriona Lowe  
Cecily Gilson  
Cheryl Langdon-Orr  
Chris Dodds  
Christina Spurgeon  
Colin Brokenshire  
Damien Lacey  
David Lieberman  
Denise Wood  
Des Kennedy  
Duncan Gray  
Frank Nowlan  
Gary Gromb  
Gerard Goggin  
Hank (John) Wyllie  
Harold Hartfield  
Holly Raiche  
Ian Binnie  
Ian Butterworth  
Ian Johnston  
Ingrid Francis

Jack Crosby  
Johanna Plante  
John Faulkner  
Katina Michael  
Kyle Miers  
Lawrence Sheumack  
Len Bytheway  
Liz Evans  
Liz Fell  
Malcolm Moore  
Margaret Hess  
Nan Bosler  
Narelle Clay  
Nicholas Agocs  
Nigel Waters  
Pam Marsh  
Pamela J Coutts  
Reg Coutts  
Richard Joseph  
Robin Wilkinson  
Rosemary Sinclair  
Ross Kelso  
Stan Batson  
Su Robertson  
Sue Salthouse  
Tim Young  
Trevor Barr  
William Tibben

# SNAPSHOTS



*Communications Minister Stephen Conroy at our National Cyber-Security Week event*



*Greens Senator and Communications Spokesman Scott Ludlam addresses our National Conference*



*Guests at our National Conference dinner, State Library of Victoria*



*The Cyber-Security Roundtable for People with Disabilities, Parliament House, Canberra*



*Tracey Annear and Nigel Waters took part in our World Café Twitter event*



*ACCAN CEO Allan Asher with Communications Minister Stephen Conroy*



*Dani Fried, ACCAN Disability Policy Officer with Stan Batson*



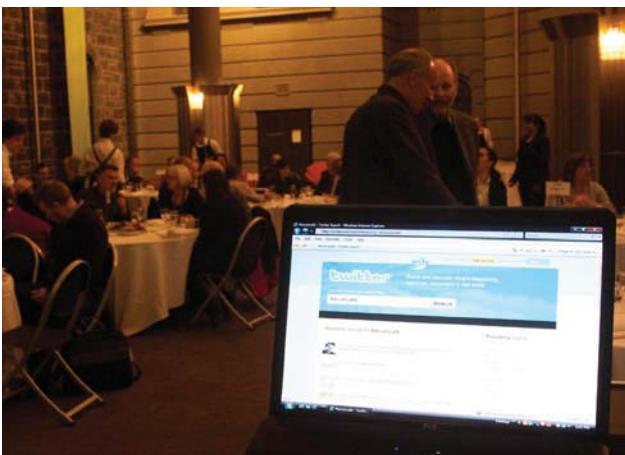
*Nan Bosler at our Hearing Awareness Week event*



*ACCAN's Sarah Wilson & Elissa Freeman at the National Conference & Consumer Summit*



*Stan Batson takes part in the Video Relay Service trial using an Auslan interpreter over Skype*



*Our World Café Twitter event*



*Deputy CEO Teresa Corbin, Senator Stephen Conroy and CEO Allan Asher*

# ACCAN TEAM

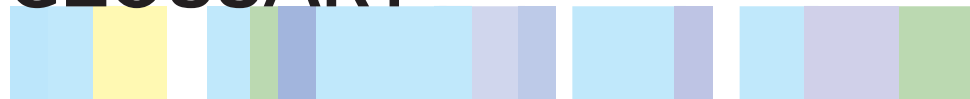


ACCAN Board (L to R): Kyle Miers, Len Bytheway, Su Robertson, Sue Salthouse, Heron Loban, Nan Bosler, Kate Obermayer, Michael Fraser, Ross Kelso



ACCAN Staff (L to R): Elise Davidson, Jonathan Gadir, Ebony Thomas, Allan Asher, Maria Chetcuti, Sarah Wilson, Dani Fried, Teresa Corbin, Wayne Hawkins (with Harrison), Elissa Freeman and Janene Collins. Staff not pictured: Ryan Sengara, Gunela Astbrink, Joan Dharamdas, Michael Frommer, Lizbeth Duke, Kirisha Thanapalasuretheram

# GLOSSARY



3G	Third Generation (Mobiles)
4G	Fourth Generation (Mobiles)
ADSL	Asymmetric (directional data speed) Digital Subscriber Line – a CAN technology
ADSL 2+	As above but twice the frequency band (to 2.2 MHz) & downstream data (to 24 Mbits/s)
CAN	Customer Access Network (includes: Local Loop, ADSL, ISDN, HFC, Mobile etc.)
CLI	Calling Line Identification
CND	Calling Number Display
CSG	Customer Service Guarantee
CSS	Communications Service Standard
DEP	Disability Equipment Program
DSL	Digital Subscriber Line (or Loop) – a CAN technology
EMS	Enhanced Messaging System
FTTH	Fibre To The Home or premises (GPON or EPON) – a CAN technology
FTTN	Fibre To The Node (ADSL2+) – a CAN technology
IM	Instant Messaging (pop-up screen messages over the Internet)
IP	Internet Protocol
IPTV	Internet Protocol Television
IVR	Interactive Voice Responder (a menu directed telephone answering machine)
kb/s	kilo bits per second (sometimes written as kbps)
LNP	Local Number Portability
Local Loop	A CAN technology using copper wire as a physical pair
Mb/s	Mega bits per second (sometimes written as Mbps)
MMS	Multimedia Message Service (images on mobiles) (also called PXT on Vodafone)
NGN	Next Generation Network
NRS	National Relay Service
NTP	Network Termination Point - physical service connection point
PGS	Pair Gain System (CAN-based technology to increase existing voice service capabilities but unusable for DSL internet services)
POP	Point of Presence – a network connection point between competitive telecommunications infrastructure providers
POTS	Plain Old Telephone Service (Fixed telephone service with Operator and Pulse Dialling)
PSTN	Public Switched Telephone Network
QOS	Quality Of Service – a Network Performance measurement
STS	Standard Telephone Service
TTY	Telephone typewriter (for communications by those with hearing and/or speech disabilities)
ULL	Unconditioned Local Loop (physical pair in the CAN without any PGS)
USO	Universal Service Obligation
USP	Universal Service Provider
VoIP	Voice over Internet Protocol (voice calls over the Internet)

