



Consumer Consultation Framework and Members Advisory Forum Terms of Reference

Vision

The ACCAN Board, representatives of ACCAN's membership and staff developed the following vision statement for consumer stakeholder engagement at a joint planning workshop (held in November 2013):

"A meaningful and rewarding two-way relationship with consumer stakeholders that delivers results for communications consumers through leadership, agenda-setting and trusted advocacy".

Goals

The key goals identified for ACCAN's consultation framework are to:

1. Increase engagement with members, and give members more opportunity to engage with ACCAN
2. Open up the earlier formal engagement structures (SACCA & SACDI), by broadening our consultation base, maximising the usefulness of our work with members and through increasing flexibility
3. Ensure consultation is fit-for-purpose and recognises that different segments of the community will work with us effectively in different ways
4. Implement a structure that facilitates the use of innovative engagement models and to continuously improve how we talk with and listen to communications consumers
5. Valuing the contribution of informal consultation, collaboration and as needed interaction with subject-matter experts

Resources

Recent changes to ACCAN funding that will affect our resource levels into the future means we also need to ensure our consultation processes are within our new financial limitations.

Framework

Four Advisory Forums will be held annually to advise ACCAN on its policy priorities. A **Members Advisory Forum** is being established to focus across all the areas of ACCAN activity and policy work. This Forum will be larger than the previous advisory body known as the ACCAN Standing Advisory Committee on Consumer Affairs (SACCA).

The Members Advisory Forum will be complemented by three other specific sector forums to build capacity and understanding of issues in key focus areas: a **Disability Advisory Forum**, an **Indigenous Advisory Forum** and a **Small Business Advisory Forum**. These will be held annually and build on the success of SACCA and the Standing Advisory Committee on Disability issues (SACDI).

Additionally, where there are specific issues which require consultation, the ACCAN CEO may form **Expert Advisory Committees** as required. This was previously done with the Deregulation Expert Advisory Committee convened in 2012 to assist with policy development in this area.

Member Advisory Forum – Terms of Reference

ACCAN aims to ensure that it receives the best possible advice on issues affecting the interests of communications consumers. In order to build on its earlier consultative processes and as part of the new ACCAN Consultation Framework, a high level forum for communication with its members on its policy priorities is being established. The ACCAN Member Advisory Forum (MAF) will meet annually to help ACCAN identify consumer communications issues as well as inform ACCAN's strategic directions and activities.

1. Function

The function of the Member Advisory Forum is to:

- Provide advice to ACCAN on priority issues for communications consumers and suggest strategies to achieve positive outcomes.
- Discuss emerging technologies and policy developments in communications affecting consumers and identify potential relevance to ACCAN constituents.
- Discuss relevant research to assist in the development of coordinated and unified consumer positions supported by an evidence base.
- Act to bring information from consumers to the attention of ACCAN and to assist disseminate information from ACCAN to constituents.

2. Participation

Participants will include at least one ACCAN organisational member representative of each of the consumer sectors listed in the ACCAN Constitution (people with disabilities; people on low incomes; Indigenous communities and their representatives; culturally and linguistically diverse peoples; people from regional, rural and remote areas of Australia; people representing emerging technologies; women; youth; seniors; and general consumers). The ACCAN CEO will invite up to 12 attendees each year to participate.

3. Participant support from ACCAN

ACCAN will arrange and pay travel and any accommodation costs as per the ACCAN travel policy for invitees to attend the annual one face to face meeting.

Meetings may coincide with a specific relevant other event or the ACCAN Conference.

Accessibility support will be provided where required to ensure full participation at this forum.

4. Facilitation

The ACCAN Chairperson will facilitate the forum.



5. Secretariat Support

The Members Advisory Forum will operate with the expert input and support of the ACCAN policy team. The Director of Policy will attend all meetings in addition to other support staff.

ACCAN will develop an agenda, an environment scan briefing and a copy of the policy priorities with more specific briefing notes on emerging issues if necessary.

Participants will be asked to consider a short list of questions in the month leading up to the forum.

Meeting reports will be provided to the participants after the meeting to be used for their own reporting to their own constituents. The meeting report will also be provided to the ACCAN Board.