

# Quarter 2, FY15-16

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The summary below outlines ACCAN's activities from 1 September to 30 November 2015. Of major note in this period was the award of the prestigious Charles Todd medal to the ACCAN CEO on 26 November. Each year the telecommunications industry recognises an individual for outstanding contributions to telecommunications and this was for her efforts representing consumer interests spanning some 20 years in the industry. In her speech of thanks, Teresa Corbin stressed the importance of addressing consumer interests in the marketplace and noted that the best outcomes were achieved when consumers and industry worked together constructively. This award was widely reported within the telecommunications industry media and represents a high mark in consumer representation.

## Consumer Representation and Research

ACCAN submitted three formal submissions to government and industry consultations from September to November. These submissions focus on issues such as the intellectual property, captioning and optical fibre services. ACCAN drew attention to the issue of incoherent online captions. A draft policy was formulated on consumer safeguards in areas currently covered by the Customer Service Guarantee (CSG) and Network Reliability Framework (NRF).

An occasional paper commissioned on the Universal Service Obligation was completed and launched. ACCAN also represented consumers on a number of issues including proposed changes to the Australian domain name system, revisions to the Telecommunications Consumer Protections (TCP) Code and calls to directory assistance numbers.

## Independent Grants Program

The 2015 round of grants projects have all progressed, with a number already producing tangible outputs this quarter. This quarter we also welcomed a new member to the Independent Grants Panel, Dr Lareen Newman, from Flinders University. An external review of ACCAN's Grants Scheme found it to continue to be a high quality, professional program, praising its independence, transparency and rigour.

## Consumer Information

During the quarter ACCAN published 15 news stories on its website. These covered a range of topics including: accessibility, shared mobile phone plans, technology-facilitated stalking and abuse and mobile data. These articles were promoted through ACCAN's weekly newsletter, WebNews, and through Twitter and Facebook. Our social media following on Twitter and Facebook has continued to grow during the quarter. An edition of the ACCAN Magazine titled *Communications Affordability – now and tomorrow* was produced and distributed at the 2015 ACCAN National Conference.

ACCAN's National Conference was held on 1-2 September. Once again, the event was a success, attracting 200 delegates from consumer organisations, Government, regulators and industry. The event had an engaging program with over 50 speakers and panellists participating this year.

## Stakeholder Engagement

ACCAN's membership is at 218 in total (110 organisation and 108 individual) representing a small decrease due to the expiry of non-renewing members. During the quarter the inaugural Disability Advisory Forum was held. We've had regular consultation with our members and attended events run by member organisations: ACOSS, Broadband for the Bush, Consumers Federation of Australia and the Australian Seniors Computing Clubs Association (ASCCA). We have had regular liaison with representatives from Communications Alliance, nbn<sup>TM</sup>, Telstra, Vodafone and Optus.

Our consumer representation on committees continued throughout the quarter. ACCAN represented consumers on eight committees including the ACCC Consumer Consultative Committee, ACMA Consumer Consultative Committee, TIO Board and others.

ACCAN's Deputy CEO participated in a number of sessions at the UN IGF in Brazil. A member of the ACCAN Policy team attended the Consumers International Conference which was also held in Brazil.

## Media

Between 1 September – 30 November 2015, ACCAN generated 183 media mentions across national print, online and radio, with an average of 61 items per month. This is higher than last quarter's total of 108 mentions and above our monthly KPI. Online articles made up the majority of the quarter's media coverage. A total of 13 media releases were issued throughout the quarter covering topics such as affordability, the Apps For All Challenge, real time data usage alerts and the launch of nbn<sup>TM</sup>'s Sky Muster satellite. Coverage of ACCAN's media releases and comments appeared in high profile publications including the Sydney Morning Herald, ZDNet, the Australian Financial Review and others.