

Quarter 3, FY20-21

The summary below outlines ACCAN's activities from 1 December 2020 – 28 February 2021.

During this reporting period ACCAN continued to prosecute consumer policy positions across our key policy priority areas: Increased reliability; No Australian Left Offline – affordable telecommunications for all; A fairer telco market; Growing consumer confidence; Better infrastructure; and Improved Accessibility.

Significant activity through the period has included:

- 15 submissions to government and industry consultations.
- Conducted broad community consultation to inform ACCAN's submission to the Department of Social Services on the NDIS and NDS Outcomes Framework.
- Provided input to important issues including the Privacy Act Issues Paper and conditions for connection by Statutory Infrastructure Providers.

ACCAN's work through the period has resulted in some considerable positive consumer outcomes. These include:

- Recommendation for SBS to deliver audio description over the VAST television network.
- Standards Australia's adoption of ACCAN's recommendation for greater consumer representation in its governance committee.
- ACCAN's recommendation to the ACCC to continue to declare, and simplify the process of declaring, LBAS and SBAS networks has been adopted.

Four of the seven 2019 grant round projects are now complete and a further two are on schedule. 2020 grant round projects are continuing, and good gains are being made with this cohort around incorporating accessibility protocols into the design and planning of outputs. ACCAN has received several follow up requests for input/feedback on specific resources. The 2021 round was opened for Expressions of Interest 28 Jan – 25 Feb 2021. Priority themes were decided after consultation with selected stakeholders: Department, ACCC, ACMA, AMTA, Comms Alliance and TIO.

From 1 December 2020 – 28 February 2021 ACCAN published five news stories. These included ACCAN online video interviews with Labor's Michelle Rowland, Australian Greens, Senators Nick McKim and Jordon Steele-John, and Nationals MP Mark Coulton. Other news stories covered topics including the No Australian Left Offline - National Webinar and ACCAN's Still Waiting report.

ACCAN's total membership is 200. Organisational Membership is now at 107 organisations and 93 individuals. This reflects no change from the previous report but is pleasing to note that membership engagement remains extremely strong.

A series of 4 pre-recorded webinars with prominent keynote speakers, including Minister Fletcher and Shadow Minister Rowland, are now online.

ACCAN staff participated in 44 different outreach, consumer engagement events and member events and consultation discussions. With travel restrictions remaining in place throughout the period, all of these engagements were conducted remotely with no detriment to participant engagement. The ACCAN policy team has continued to work closely with members and consumer groups to ensure our policy work is representative.

ACCAN represented consumers at 7 committee meetings throughout the period, engaged with government and regulatory bodies on 20 different occasions and industry bodies on 22 occasions. ACCAN met with industry through the formal quarterly meeting framework as well as supplementary meetings as required. ACCAN representation on formal committees continues to be extensive and during this period we were actively working on 7 of the 33 committees on which we represent consumers.

With the current three year strategic plan due to expire in May 2021, ACCAN commenced development of the next three year plan during the reporting period. A series of interviews with key stakeholders was undertaken in January with the information obtained by these included in the Board's preparatory work. The Board met on 9 February for a facilitated workshop to start formulating the strategic plan.

ACCAN staff continued to work remotely for the majority of the period. In January the ACCAN office was reconfigured to an 'agile' working setup to enable staff to work from the office if they choose to do so. Further, as ACCAN's lease on the Mountain St premises is due to expire in June 2021, ACCAN will relocate to a serviced office facility in the Sydney CBD from May 2021.

This quarter, ACCAN generated 222 media hits across national print, online, TV and radio. This is an average of 74 items per month.

During this period, ACCAN responded to a total of seven media enquiries. These covered a range of topics including the Media Bargaining Code and impact of Facebook's news ban on small business, charities, and consumers; NBN roll-out, Kogan's ACMA fine for breaching the SPAM Act; and the Mobile Black Spots Program.

ACCAN proactively provided comments to the media on a range of other major issues including: digital platforms, ACCAN Grants Program, the Regional Tech Hub launch, and the ACMA's Reducing Scam Calls Code.