

Quarter 4, FY13-14

Summary of ACCAN's activities from 1 March to 31 May 2014.

Consumer representation and research

In the last quarter ACCAN produced 10 submissions, whilst effectively resourcing a range of educational and other key consumer engagement activities. We worked on 14 major issues including deregulation, one of our main focus areas. ACCAN joined the ACMA Communications Alliance Joint Customer Information Committee which has developed a new framework and will be overseeing its implementation in reducing red tape in industry codes of practice.

Stakeholder engagement

We attended the government's Deregulation Stakeholder Forum, presented to the Vertigan Review and ACCAN's CEO gave an address at the TIO 20th Anniversary celebrations. We were also very pleased to meet with the Minister for Communications in Canberra and that ACCAN's support of reform of Standard Form of Agreement Regulation was directly referenced in his Regulatory Repeal Day statement.

There were significant industry trends and developments during this time with the commencement of the switchover of the first 15 FSAMs from the Telstra copper network to the NBN fibre network; the collapse of Conec2 and the subsequent implications for 60,000 ONEseniors customers. Until this time we had seen a continued decrease in the number of complaints to the TIO and ACCAN worked to assist in providing timely and accurate information to consumers affected by these company closures. We informed our members on improvements to the interim satellite service announced by the Minister.

In addition to the on-going regular briefings and policy consultations with Telstra, Optus and Vodafone, the new Vodafone CEO met with ACCAN's management team for high level discussions. ACCAN also formally met with a representative from M2 Group. Google and ACCAN partnered to provide a paid internship. ACCAN's CEO was also invited by Telstra to be part of a field trip and cultural immersion program at a remote community in North East Arnhem Land.

ACCAN worked with the Indigenous Remote Communication Association (IRCA) and the Broadband for the Bush Alliance (BB4BA) to hold an Indigenous Focus Day as part of the BB4BA Conference in Alice Springs which was attended by Senator Nigel Scullion.

World Consumer Rights Day was co-ordinated internationally with a focus on Digital Consumers and we took part in the National Consumer Congress. The Financial Counselling Australia (FCA) conference was a chance to launch two pieces of work progressing the tools available to telcos in the area of financial hardship – the [Hardship Policies in Practice: A comparative study](#) report by FCA and supported under the ACCAN Grants Scheme and *Responding to customers in financial hardship* by the TIO to which ACCAN was a major contributor. Planning is now well underway for ACCAN's Annual Conference on 16-17th September and we are already promoting our joint Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) and ACCAN accessible app challenge. Winners will be announced at the conference.

The ACCAN Deputy CEO was invited to present on careers in ICT at an online telepresence event hosted across the Asia-Pacific region by Cisco Systems as part of the International Girls in ICT Day marked by the International Telecommunications Union. The event spanned some 35 locations with over 645 young women attending.

ACCAN Grants Scheme

For the 2014 Grants program, ACCAN created video and online resources in addition to the existing range of supporting materials. These were well received, with 211 views of the FAQ YouTube video and 80 informal consultations with prospective applicants. As a result, applications for ACCAN's Independent Grants Scheme again exceeded last year's number. Eighty-five applications were received from a broad range of community, commercial and research organisations, addressing a number of education, representation and research topics.