

Media release

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ACCAN calls for affordable broadband for all Australians

Peak telecommunications consumer advocacy group the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network says regardless of which party wins the Federal Election on August 21, what consumers really want to know is how each party will deliver affordable, accessible broadband services that meet the requirements of Australians into the future.

ACCAN has issued a list of five communications questions that it wants the Labor, Liberal, Greens and National parties to answer concerning the affordability, availability and accessibility of communications services in Australia.

ACCAN CEO Allan Asher says much of the debate surrounding Labor's National Broadband Network or the Opposition's broadband policy is of a technical nature that goes over the heads of most consumers.

"Communications are increasingly essential to participation in society and neither party has so far said how they will make broadband affordable. We have concerns about whether people living in regional and rural areas will have access to the same quality of services of those living in metropolitan areas," said Mr Asher.

"What consumers really want to know is 'what sort of connection will be available at my home, what speeds will I get and how much will it cost me?'"

While both of the major political parties are in agreement that the future of broadband in Australia must be addressed, ACCAN says this can't be done effectively unless the market power of Telstra is dealt with.

"If the excessive power of Telstra isn't addressed it will mean more of the same expensive, poor service offerings and a continuation of the nightmare faced by consumers if they try to switch providers," said Mr Asher.

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About ACCAN

ACCAN (Australian Communications Consumer Action Network) is Australia's new peak communications consumer organisation. ACCAN's goal is available, accessible and affordable communications that enhances the lives of consumers. The operation of ACCAN is made possible by funding provided by the Australian government.