

## Media release

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### **Landmark legislation heralds a new era in telecommunications**

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network says the passing of landmark legislation in the House of Representatives heralds a new era in telecommunications that will benefit telco consumers through improved competition and consumer protection measures.

The peak body says the *Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (Competition and Consumer Safeguards) Bill 2010*, which provides for the structural separation of Telstra, will have a positive impact on the communications marketplace before, during and after the rollout of the National Broadband Network.

“For twenty long years, there has been an uneven playing field between Telstra and every other provider. This Bill is an important reform that will pave the way for a more competitive Australian telecommunications market,” said ACCAN Chief Executive, Teresa Corbin.

“ACCAN would like to congratulate Senator Stephen Conroy and the Government for successfully navigating this significant piece of legislation through both houses of Parliament,” Ms Corbin said.

“It will lead to a more effective rollout of the National Broadband Network and offers certainty for Telstra, its shareholders and the rest of the industry. Most importantly, consumers will benefit in the long term from the healthier competition and improved protections for consumers in the communications marketplace.”

ACCAN says the Bill will also allow the Minister to direct the ACMA to determine an industry standard where industry codes are not adequately protecting consumers.

The peak body welcomes the provisions on the expansion of the ACMA’s record keeping powers to allow it to obtain regular reports about carriers’ and service providers’ compliance with their obligations, which ACCAN says it hopes will be used to improve customer service and complaint handling right across the industry.

“ACCAN is looking forward to the ACMA using its new powers to put an end to poor customer service and help shape a better communications marketplace for all Australians.”

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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.