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# New rules to improve telco complaint handling

ACCAN welcomes the [ACMA’s announcement today](https://www.acma.gov.au/Citizen/Internet/Complaints/Internet-service-complaints/acma-moves-on-new-telco-complaints-handling-rules) of a consultation on proposed new rules that cover telco complaints handling processes and monitoring. This announcement is especially timely given that 15 March is [World Consumer Rights Day](http://www.consumersinternational.org/what-we-do/world-consumer-rights-day/) – a day to raise awareness about consumer rights and needs. Today’s announcement follows the launch of the [ACMA’s analysis](https://www.acma.gov.au/theACMA/acma-imposes-new-rules-to-better-protect-consumers-migrating-to-the-national-broadband-network) of the consumer experience moving to the NBN late last year and [an announcement](http://mitchfifield.com/Media/MediaReleases/tabid/70/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/1495/Boost-to-broadband-consumer-protections.aspx) of new telco rules from the Minister of Communications and the Arts.

“The experience of migrating to the NBN has shone a light on the inadequacies of the current regulatory framework to support the delivery of essential telecommunications services,” ACCAN CEO, Teresa Corbin said. “Once in place these new rules will ensure that the regulator has better tools to ensure practices of telco providers improve.

“We congratulated the Minister last year for using his powers, and taking these steps to protect consumers. This consultation on complaints handling and monitoring is the first step in implementing these new rules which we hope will greatly benefit consumers.

“Better consumer protections is what the community needs to have confidence in future telecommunications services. [New research](http://socap.org.au/resources/return-on-investment-of-effective-complaints-management/) from SOCAP Australia and the University of Newcastle also launched today shows that every dollar invested in complaints handling has potential returns of investment of up to $10 for a business. This indicates to ACCAN that not only is it in the interest of consumers to have improved complaints handling processes, but it will also be of benefit to telcos.

“We are eager to work with the ACMA and the Minister on the development of these new rules to improve complaint handling, especially given that complaints to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman had risen sharply in 2016-17.

“We will also consult closely with our members on the new draft standards and rules released today,” Ms Corbin added.

For more information, contact Luke Sutton on [luke.sutton@accan.org.au](mailto:luke.sutton@accan.org.au) or 0409 966 931. For the latest updates, follow ACCAN on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/ACCAN_AU) or like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/accanau).