

ACCAN media release

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'ACCAN welcomes overdue reforms'

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) has welcomed the announcement today, that the long awaited plans for the reform of competition arrangements in the telecommunications industry are to be supplemented by changes to the consumer protection regime as well.

ACCAN Chief Executive Officer, Mr Allan Asher said "the past assumption that retail competition will guarantee high levels of customer service has proved false. The new provisions for minimum performance benchmarks and the powers which enable ACMA to issue infringement notices are overdue but welcome".

At present, operators are failing consumers and the self regulatory code system is just not working according to Mr Asher.

"The structural separation implicit in the government's proposals, plus improvements to the consumer protection regime may at last provide for vigorous competition in fair and informed markets. That was the intention of the 1997 legislation but consumers did not benefit as the reforms were half hearted and regulators were ill equipped for the task."

About ACCAN

ACCAN (Australian Communications Consumer Action Network) is Australia's new communications consumer watchdog. The purpose of ACCAN is to improve consumer advocacy, undertake research and analysis from a consumer perspective and to make the market work for communications consumers.

The operation of ACCAN (the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network) is made possible by funding provided by the Australian government

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