

## ACCAN media release

For immediate release: 24 February 2010

### “Accessible government web sites will have significant positive impact for consumers with disabilities”

ACCAN, the national peak communications consumer organisation commends today's Federal Government's decision to make all government web sites compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 to its second highest AA level by 2015.

“Accessible government web sites will have a significant impact on the experience of consumers with disabilities by opening up avenues for them to connect to government online, access information and fully participate in civic life,” Allan Asher, CEO of ACCAN said.

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 is an internationally recognised standard in the accessibility of web sites for people with disabilities. It contains 12 guidelines in the functionality and design of web site content.

ACCAN called on the private sector to follow the lead of the government and implement WCAG 2.0 standards for their web sites.

“With 4 million people or 20 per cent of the population having a disability in Australia, the private sector must recognise that they are potentially excluding a large part of their customer base,” Mr Asher said.

“As information, communication and Web 2.0 generation technologies become part of daily life for more Australians the risk is that people with disabilities will get left on the sidelines of society.”

Mr Asher said improving web site accessibility gave consumers with disabilities the opportunity to be equal participants in the digital information age and also created a more socially inclusive society.

ACCAN has been active in calling for measures to improve accessibility of technology for people with disabilities. Last month ACCAN released international research [Broadband Solutions for Consumers with Disabilities](#), outlining 16 innovative broadband applications for consumers with disabilities. In November last year, ACCAN held a Gov 2.0 Roundtable on Accessibility for People with Disabilities where up-to-date web accessibility was a key factor in the debate.

ACCAN continues to work to improve accessibility and availability to the online world for consumers with disabilities.

View the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0](#).

**Media contact:** Joan Dharamdas, Tel: 02 9288-4000 or Mobile: 0409 966 931  
Email: [media@accan.org.au](mailto:media@accan.org.au) Website: [www.accan.org.au](http://www.accan.org.au)

---

#### 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.