



STRATEGIC PLAN JUNE 2021-24

accan

Australian Communications
Consumer Action Network

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Communications are a modern-day essential service. From accessing government services and telehealth, to job seeking and studying, every part of our lives now requires communications services that are trusted, inclusive and available for all. However, many barriers remain that mean that Australians are being left disconnected from the digital world.

The most recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows that 2.5 million

Australians are not online because of affordability issues, location, or lack of digital literacy. We must act to prevent Australians from becoming isolated and struggling in these circumstances due to barriers in accessing communications services and equipment.

There have been some significant steps forward for communications consumers in recent years. We have seen nbn Co invest \$50 million to help households with school-aged children to get connected during



the COVID-19 pandemic, with additional plans to explore a targeted service for low-income households. The continued growth of ACCAN's Accessible Telecoms website and call centre has also been a positive result for People with Disability across the nation who need to find communications products and services to meet their needs. Despite this progress, there is still much to be done to protect the rights of communications consumers in Australia.

I am proud to present the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network's response to this challenge in our three-year strategy for 2021-2024. This strategy focuses on how we will work to protect the interests of consumers in a growing and converged communications sector. It supports our long-term goal of ensuring that communications services are accessible and obtainable for all Australians.

This new strategy puts consumers at the heart of

everything we do at ACCAN. We will pursue consumer-centric outcomes from the communications sector and work to ensure that communications and consumer regulatory frameworks operate in the interests of end users. As the way that Australians communicate continues to evolve, ACCAN will broaden our impact to include a greater focus on digital platforms and emerging communications consumer issues.

As we undertake this new strategic direction, we are dedicated to maintaining the cultural integrity of ACCAN to effectively adapt to an evolving business landscape. We hope that our members are inspired to join our staff and Board on this exciting and meaningful journey together towards a future where communications consumers are guaranteed services that are trusted, inclusive and available for all.

*Deirdre O'Donnell -
ACCAN Chair*

WHO IS ACCAN?

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) has been the voice for communications consumers for over a decade. Since its foundation, ACCAN has built a strong reputation for providing trusted insights in the arena of communications policy, research and information while working collaboratively with the telecommunications industry, regulators and the Government.

ACCAN recognises that the way consumers communicate continues to evolve with the convergence of telecommunications, the internet, and broadcasting, as well as the growth in digital platforms. As such, ACCAN is dedicated to reflecting the changing needs and concerns of communications consumers across the nation in our work.



OUR CONTEXT

Vision

Communications services that are trusted, inclusive, accessible, and available for all.

Values

- Act with courage.
- Operate openly.
- Be inclusive.
- Build relationships.
- Value people.

Mission

- Represent consumers and the public interest, with particular attention to the needs of consumers for whom the market is not working;
- Inspire, inform, enable and equip consumers to act in their own interests; and
- Research emerging consumer communications issues to provide evidence-based policy advice.

OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS



**Expanding Influence in an
Evolving Communications
Environment**



**Leading Through
Change and Reform**



**Consumers at the Heart
of Everything We Do**



**Building Capability to
Continually Enhance
Our Impact**



Expanding Influence in an Evolving Communications Environment

Aim

We work to broaden our impact and continue to serve as the voice on communications issues.

Strategy

We do this by:

- being the consumer voice on communications issues including media and digital platforms;
- researching and defining communications consumer issues including emerging areas of detriment;
- effectively promoting communications consumer policy proposals, research and information; and
- being a leading provider of education materials for communications consumers.



Leading Through Change and Reform

Aim

We strive for effective policy and regulatory reform.

Strategy

We do this by:

- working to close the digital divide;
- holding communications suppliers accountable;
- promoting consumer rights, privacy protection, security and safety online; and
- advocating to industry and government to ensure communications and consumer regulatory frameworks deliver consumer-centric outcomes.





Consumers at the Heart of Everything We Do

Aim

We work with consumers to effectively identify and represent their interests to deliver significantly improved outcomes.

Strategy

We do this by:

- representing a diverse group of stakeholders on communications issues;
- anticipating the future challenges of modern Australia through consumer consultation;
- advocating for communications services to satisfy evolving consumer needs; and
- ensuring consumers are represented at the table for all important policy debates.



Building Capability to Continually Enhance Our Impact

Aim

We continue to strengthen our organisation to effectively adapt to meet future needs.

Strategy

We do this by:

- continually developing our people so they have the skills and competencies needed to deliver outcomes in an increasingly complex environment;
- supporting the participatory culture and upholding ACCAN's values;
- regularly engaging with a representative membership base to inform ACCAN activities; and
- obtaining necessary resources to respond to a broadening and emerging remit.



OUR PLAN FOR SUCCESS



Expanding Influence in an Evolving Communications Environment

We work to broaden our impact and continue to serve as the voice on communications issues by:

- being the consumer voice on communications issues including media and digital platforms;
- researching and defining communications consumer issues including emerging areas of detriment;
- effectively promoting communications consumer policy proposals, research and information; and
- being a leading provider of education materials for communications consumers.

Success Indicators 2024

- Year on year increase in publication of online consumer education materials.
- Year on year increase in engagement on media and digital platforms, resulting in better consumer outcomes.
- Consumer outcomes are directly correlated to ACCAN's research.
- ACCAN is recognised by media and the general public as the leading and authoritative source of information.



Leading Through Change and Reform

We strive for effective policy and regulatory reform by:

- working to close the digital divide;
- holding communications suppliers accountable;
- promoting consumer rights, privacy protection, security and safety online; and
- advocating to industry and government to ensure communications and consumer regulatory frameworks deliver consumer-centric outcomes.

Success Indicators 2024

- Demonstrable growth in available, affordable, and accessible communications services year on year in Australia.
- Consumer safeguard measures are in place and delivering for consumers and small businesses.
- ACCAN's RAP and DAP are models for the sector and registered with RA and AHRC* respectively.
- All policy and advocacy positions are highly visible through ACCAN's industry engagement and events program.



Consumers at the Heart of Everything We Do

We work with consumers to effectively identify and represent their interests to deliver significantly improved outcomes by:

- representing a diverse group of stakeholders on communications issues;
- anticipating the future challenges of modern Australia through consumer consultation;
- advocating for communications services to satisfy evolving consumer needs; and
- ensuring consumers are represented at the table for all important policy debates.

Success Indicators 2024

- Engagement in an increasing number of policy issues informed by an effective consultation framework.
- Communications services acknowledged as an essential public utility.
- ACCAN's in-depth understanding of consumer needs demonstrated by an increasing number of supporters.
- More effective customer service and complaint handling is in place for all communications services.



Building Capability to Continually Enhance Our Impact

We continue to strengthen our organisation to effectively adapt to meet future needs by:

- continually developing our people so they have the skills and competencies needed to deliver outcomes in an increasingly complex environment;
- supporting the participatory culture and upholding ACCAN's values;
- regularly engaging with a representative membership base to inform ACCAN activities; and
- obtaining necessary resources to respond to a broadening and emerging remit.

Success Indicators 2024

- Fit for purpose model in place for funding all activities.
- Board and staff skills and competencies are commensurate with expanded remit.
- Organisational Development strategy ensures all ACCAN leaders are the custodians of our culture.
- ACCAN Membership base reflective of the diverse communities in Australia.



OUR MEMBERS

- 2508+Disconnected
- Able Australia
- AccessPlus WA Deaf
- Achieve Australia
- ACT Council of Social Service Inc
- Adult Learning Australia
- Association of Independent Retirees
- Australian Council of Social Service
- Australian Federation of Deaf Societies
- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
- Australian Privacy Foundation
- Australian Regional Business Development Specialists
- Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association
- Better Hearing Australia
- Better Internet for Rural, Regional & Remote Australia
- Blind Citizens Australia
- Broadband alliance Inc T/A Australian Smart Communities Assn
- Broadband for the Bush Alliance
- CARE Inc
- Central Land Council
- Centre For Accessibility Australia
- Centre for Appropriate Technology
- Centre for Inclusive Design
- CHOICE
- CITIES - Centre for Indigenous Technology Information and Engineering Solutions
- Collective of Self Help Groups
- Combined Pensioners & Superannuants Association of NSW Inc
- Communication Rights Australia
- Community Broadcasting Association of Australia
- Community Legal Centres NSW
- Consumer Action Law Centre
- Consumer Credit Legal Service WA
- Consumer Policy Research Centre
- Consumers' Association of South Australia
- Consumers' Federation of Australia
- Cotton Australia
- Council of Small Business Organisations of Australia
- Council on the Ageing (WA) Inc
- Council on the Ageing Australia
- Country Women's Association of Australia
- Deaf Australia
- Deaf Children Australia
- Deafblind Australia
- Deafness Forum of Australia
- Desert Knowledge Australia
- Differently Abled People Association Inc
- Digital Gap Initiative Ltd (DGI)
- Digital Tasmania
- Electronic Frontiers Australia
- Ethnic Communities Council of WA
- Expression Australia (Formerly Tasmanian Deaf Society)
- Family Drug Support
- Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia
- Financial Counselling Australia
- Financial Counselling Victoria Inc
- Financial Counsellors Association of Queensland
- Financial Counsellors Association of Western Australia
- Financial Rights Legal Centre
- Health Consumers of Rural & Remote Australia
- Hitnet

- HK Training & Consultancy P/L
- IDEAS NSW
- IEEE Society for the Social Implications of Technology (SSIT) - Australia Chapter
- Illawarra Legal Centre Inc
- Indigenous Consumer Assistance Network Ltd
- Indigenous Remote Communication T/A First Nations Media Australia
- Infexchange
- Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development
- Internet Australia
- Isolated Children's Parents' Association Australia
- Isolated Children's Parents' Association NT
- Isolated Children's Parents' Association of NSW
- Isolated Children's Parents' Association QLD
- Isolated Children's Parents' Association WA
- itControl
- Kaay Holdings Pty Ltd
- Leep NGO Inc
- MoneyMob Talkabout Ltd
- National Association of Community Legal Centres
- National Children's and Youth Law Centre
- National Council of Women of Australia
- National Ethnic Disability Alliance
- National Farmers Federation
- NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS)
- NSW Farmers Association
- People with Disabilities WA
- People with Disability Australia
- Physical Disability Australia
- Physical Disability Council of NSW
- Public Interest Advocacy Centre
- Queensland Consumers Association
- Queensland Council of Social Service Ltd
- Redfern Legal Centre
- Scope (Aust) Ltd
- South Australian Financial Counsellors Association
- Tasmanians with Disabilities Inc
- Tenants Queensland Inc/NATO
- The Benevolent Society
- Think+ DO Tank Foundation Ltd
- Uniting Care Wesley Bowden
- Vision Australia
- Wamboin Communications Action Group
- Westjustice
- Women with Disabilities Australia
- Women's Legal Service NSW
- Women's Legal Services Aust
- Youth Affairs Network of Queensland



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