

ACCAN Economic Regulation Quarterly Progress Report

Period: 1 July – 30 September 2025

All activities undertaken within this report represent ACCAN's actions to meet the objectives and intended outcomes of the Funding Agreement (**the Grant**) signed by the Minister for Communications on 5 November 2024. As stated in the Grant, the objectives and intended outcomes are to:

- provide funding to allow ACCAN to participate in Special Access Undertaking (**SAU**) activities including NBN Co's consultation on the company's Replacement Module Application (**RMA**).
- enable the SAU to support the long-term interests of end-users through the provision of consumer perspectives from ACCAN.

Specifically, ACCAN's activities are part of its efforts to ensure consumers are represented during the **post-RMA lodgement consultation and input** stage of the regulatory reset process. As part of this process, ACCAN has been engaging with ACCAN members, community sector stakeholders and direct end-user consultation to ensure consumer views are adequately represented in the decisions made by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (**ACCC**) in its Replacement Module Determination (**RMD**).

Activity 1 – Represent the views and interests of telecommunications consumers from a range of sectors.

Since the approval of the SAU Variation in October 2023, ACCAN has worked closely with our membership and sector stakeholders, as well as with the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts (**the Department**) to ensure that consumers are effectively represented throughout this regulatory reset process.

To this end, ACCAN has widely consulted with its membership base, sector stakeholders and end-users directly to inform our consumer representation in this post-lodgement period and ensure that NBN Co's expenditure proposals and work programmes are informed by consumer interest, with regard for low-income, First Nations, and regional, rural and remote (**RRR**) consumers, as well as consumers experiencing disability.

Over Q1, ACCAN undertook a significant consumer engagement programme, including:

- In-person consultation events in Melbourne, Hobart, the Tasman Peninsula, Canberra, Wollongong, and Western Sydney
- Online consultation with stakeholders in Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory
- Three independent focus groups with end-users, consulting with metropolitan, regional, and rural and remote consumers respectively.
- Hosting a Survey Monkey online poll to gauge the views of high-use consumers on Reddit and Whirlpool internet forums.
- A series of additional questions as part of ACCAN's Second Wave of our National Consumer Survey, a nationally representative survey conducted by Essential.

Activity 2 – Provide funding for representation projects and/or conduct research into social, economic, environmental or technological implications of developments relating to telecommunications.

ACCAN has continued to fund economic research and analysis as part of our engagement with the NBN Co's RMA and ACCC's consultation on the RMA proposal to inform their RMD. To this end, FTI Consulting has produced policy notes accompanying ACCAN's submission to the ACCC, including:

- FTI Report on NBN Co Demand Benchmarking
- FTI Report on Australian Broadband Retail Pricing
- FTI Report on NBN Co Prudency and Efficiency measures
- FTI Report on NBN Co WACCC
- FTI Report on NBN Co Capitalisation Policy
- FTI Report on NBN Co Headcount

FTI will continue undertaking further analytical work at ACCAN's direction to support consumer engagement with NBN Co's RMA, which ACCAN will publish alongside our comprehensive submission to the ACCC. ACCAN submitted its initial preliminary views to the ACCC on Friday 19 September, with a comprehensive, public-facing submission expected in mid-late October.

Activity 3 – Educate consumers and organisations on telecommunications issues.

ACCAN is committed to a regulatory reset process that meets the needs of all Australian consumers. As part of our engagement program, we took significant efforts to communicate and educate our members and non-member stakeholders and consumers more broadly about the details of NBN Co's RMA proposal and the issues raised in the consultation process.

ACCAN's stakeholder engagement programme was further supported by our community engagement consultants at Cred Consulting, who assisted ACCAN in designing and implementing a range of activities, including:

- Assisting the design of ACCAN's engagement programme.
- Developing engagement collateral, including public consultation posters.
- Organising and hosting three independent end-user focus groups.
- Assisting the development and publication of ACCAN's Survey Monkey online poll.
- Collating ACCAN's research and engagement notes into analysis.

Now the engagement programme has concluded, Cred will finalise its drafting of a final consumer engagement report to collate the above materials into a final publication which ACCAN will publish in Q2 FY25-26 as part of its comprehensive submission to the ACCC Consultation.

Activity 4 – Develop and maintain effective and productive relationships with stakeholders

ACCAN has continued to engage with NBN Co following the conclusion of the pre-lodgement period, being an active member of the Low Income and Digital Inclusion Forum and engaging regularly with NBN Co on operational matters and consultations through its Product Development Forum. ACCAN also continues to meet regularly with the Department, briefing the Broadband and Emerging Communications Branch on ACCAN participation on RMA activities as well as providing regular reporting updates. ACCAN further meets regularly with sector colleagues, including ex-RPF colleagues, as well as stakeholders with an interest in matters raised in the RMA process and the ACCC's consultations, many of whom were engaged with and contacted as part of our consumer engagement programme, detailed in Activity 1 and 3.

Activity 5 – Maintain sound governance and reporting arrangements

ACCAN has established appropriate internal governance arrangements to promote effective oversight of the economic regulation project. ACCAN's board has established a committee of economic regulation to provide expert advice and guidance on ad-hoc developments, ensuring that ACCAN staff deliver against their goal of effectively representing consumer interests in the economic regulation of NBN Co. ACCAN has further created an individual project budget in order to effectively monitor and administer the Australian Government's financial grant.

ACCAN has established appropriate reporting arrangements with the Department to promote transparency and accountability of our activities under the grant. ACCAN has established monthly meetings with Department officials to track the progress of the grant and report back on ACCAN consumer engagement activities. In addition, ACCAN has established quarterly financial reporting arrangements as per the agreement with the Department, to ensure effective oversight and the smooth operation of the grant. ACCAN will continue to upload quarterly reports of its activities to its website - <https://www.accan.org.au/accanconsumernbn> - to ensure that its activities are transparent and accessible by relevant stakeholders.

Activity 6 – Proactively and positively engaging with the media

ACCAN has promoted a range of our consumer engagement activities on social media, to promote engagement with our activities and ensure that consumers and stakeholders were aware of our activities within their area. ACCAN expects to actively promote our response once we have finalised our comprehensive submission to the ACCC in Q2.

Activity 7 – National Consumer Sentiment Survey

ACCAN's nationally representative consumer sentiment survey included questions on NBN Co's proposed RMA. As part of ACCAN's existing arrangement with Essential Media, core questions were designed to capture key aspects of the consumer experience with fixed internet services. Additional questions on the NBN, relating to issues raised in its RMA proposal, were also run as part of the second wave of the core consumer tracker, and will be featured as part of our public submission to the ACCC and published independently as part of our final consumer engagement report.