



18 November 2016

ACCAN Review
Department of Communications and the Arts
GPO Box 2154
Canberra ACT 2601

To whom it may concern

RE: Submission: Consumer representation: Review of section 593 of the Telecommunications Act 1997 Issues paper

Standards Australia's members are organisations representing various sectors of industry, learned and professional institutions, federal and state, and other organisations with special interests or skills of value to Standards Australia.

ACCAN is one of these members, and plays an important role in ensuring Standards Australia maintains its relevance to consumers in light of the rapidly changing technology of today's modern world.

As a member of Standards Australia, ACCAN has been instrumental in ensuring there is a voice for consumers on telecommunications issues. The organisation has performed its role efficiently and effectively, and represents the interests of consumers in relation to telecommunications for a number of policy and technical committees at both the national and international level. These committees range from consumer policy and strategic directions for technological policy in standards development, through to ICT accessibility and complaints handling. In this role, ACCAN has adopted an appropriate balance between representation of general consumers and representation of those with particular needs.

Not only does ACCAN effectively engage with a broad range of stakeholders, including industry, government agencies and other consumer groups through its participation in Standards Australia's committees, it implements a number of other initiatives such as advocacy, providing consumer information, responding to submissions and conducting important research.

Given the growing impact of big data and the enormous importance of privacy in a highly connected world, it has never been more important for an independent consumer body to represent consumers on telecommunications issues. ACCAN performs such as role with success. It is our belief that the consumer telecommunications representation function could not be carried out by a general consumer body, as there would be numerous conflicting priorities that these other organisations would have to manage.

We would welcome the opportunity to expand on the above statements as necessary.

Yours sincerely

Alison Scotland
National Sector Manager, Standards Australia

