

1 May 2013

Senate Environment and
Communications Committee
ec.sen@aph.gov.au

RE: Exposure Draft of the Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (Consumer Protection) Bill 2013

ACCAN welcomes this package of amendments which strengthens enforcement of the Do Not Call Register, allows Codes registered under the Telecommunications Act to be varied without being replaced, and clarifies the standards expected from the TIO scheme. We believe this Bill should be passed by the Parliament.

Do Not Call Register

As long-standing advocates for a robust Do Not Call Register, ACCAN welcomes this amendment aimed at allowing the ACMA to perform more rigorous enforcement including where telemarketing calls are made by firms acting on behalf of clients.

Industry Code Variations

ACCAN welcomes measures which will improve the flexibility of Industry Codes and their responsiveness to new issues that arise. Allowing for variations to be made to Codes, instead of requiring whole of Code replacement, is a welcome move that will allow for faster incorporation of new consumer protection provisions and enable the consumer protection regime to be more responsive to new issues. We also acknowledge the requirement for consultation with consumers when a draft variation is being proposed.

TIO Scheme standards

ACCAN is pleased with these amendments as they improve the clarity around the TIO and its expected standards of operation.

ACCAN also welcomes a future ministerial determination made under the proposed additions to section 128 having regard to the DIST benchmarks for dispute resolution practices.¹

Sincerely,

Jonathan Gadir
Senior Adviser – Policy and Research

¹ Benchmarks for Industry-based Customer Dispute Resolution Schemes