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ACCC *update*

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The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission operates nationally at the forefront of administration and enforcement of competition and consumer protection law.

Legislative changes have given the Commission new regulatory roles in many sectors — such as the electricity, gas and telecommunications industries.

The cover story on pages 1 to 5 gives an insight into its telecommunications role and the latest developments in the industry.

The Commission is now well into preparing for its New Tax System price monitoring and anti price-exploitation role that it will be undertaking during the phase in transition period of 9 July 1999 to 30 June 2002. Check pages 6 and 7 for what is happening.

The Commission co-hosted three conferences in October and November: one domestic for the health care industry; and two international — the 6th Asian and Oceanic Antimonopoly Conference and the Incentive Regulation and Overseas Developments Conference. Pages 11 and 12 carry those details.

The Trade Practices Act covers all businesses in Australia, including government enterprises and many thousands of previously exempt unincorporated firms such as professional practices.

The continuing growth in responsibilities imposes new and wider obligations on the Commission to inform the public about its activities. It is important that businesses, and their customers, be well informed about rights and obligations under the law.

ACCC update is published to give the wider community general information about the Commission's work and responsibilities.

Much more detailed information is available in the wide range of ACCC publications (available from all the offices listed at the back) or from the Commission's regularly updated website at <http://www.accc.gov.au>.