



House of Representatives  
Standing Committee on Communications

Chair: Ms Belinda Neal MP  
Deputy Chair: Mrs Kay Hull MP

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## Consumer watchdog to appear before Cyber Crime Inquiry

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), the agency responsible for protecting consumers from misleading and deceptive conduct and fraudulent online transactions, will appear at the federal parliamentary inquiry into Cyber Crime in Canberra tomorrow (18 November).

The ACCC will answer questions from the House of Representatives Communications Committee on how the commission protects consumers from online scams and the challenges for consumer protection in the online environment.

Committee Chair Belinda Neal said, "Online scams trick unsuspecting consumers out of their money for non-existent products or services, sometimes stripping people of retirement savings with devastating consequences. Cases often involve illegal spamming and other criminal activity, so it's important the ACCC works closely with the Australian Communications and Media Authority and Australian Federal Police".

"With the rapid growth of the Internet, consumer protection is now a global issue, and Australia has a strong interest in working with international partners to protect consumers from the misuse of e-commerce. The perpetrators of online scams are often located overseas, and it requires a serious commitment to cross border cooperation to catch offenders" she said.

The Committee's public hearing will be held on **Wednesday, 18 November 2009, 12.30 pm to 2 pm in Committee Room 1R4 Parliament House**. The hearing will be audio webcast on: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

Further information on the inquiry, including the terms of reference can be obtained from the Committee's web site: [www.aph.gov.au/coms](http://www.aph.gov.au/coms) or from the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4601.

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

**Media comment: please contact Committee Chair Ms Belinda Neal MP on (02) 6277 4971**

**Background: contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 2300**