

ACNC to open doors at last

MEDIA RELEASE - 1 November 2012

PilchConnect welcomes the passage of ACNC legislation through Parliament today, including the incorporation of Senate amendments proposed by the Greens.

PilchConnect's director, Juanita Pope, said "we have been strong supporters of a national regulator for the not-for-profit sector, and we are so pleased that the ACNC will be up and running in 2012."

"The passage of the ACNC Bills and the commencement of the ACNC is a great first step towards simplifying the legal landscape in which not-for-profits operate. The amendments proposed by the Senate significantly enhance the Act, and we are glad to see these changes were made," said Ms Pope.

The Senate amendments ensure public consultation and scrutiny of governance standards which are yet to be drafted. They also formally incorporate the aim of reducing red tape into the Act, and provide greater protections for charities unfairly affected by information on the ACNC's public register.

"Now, we look forward to working with Government to ensure the next pieces of the ACNC regulatory framework – the governance and external conduct standards – are appropriately framed," said Ms Pope.

In its work with charities and not-for-profits, PilchConnect sees every day the impact that the complex regulatory landscape has on the day-to-day operation of organisations.

"The regulatory burden faced by charities and not-for-profits is immense, and puts unacceptable demands on resources that should be directed towards achieving outcomes, not meeting complex and inconsistent reporting obligations," said Ms Pope.

"An efficient and effective regulatory scheme for charities and not-for-profits benefits our community, because charities will be better run, more transparent, and will be able to direct their resources to getting on with the valuable work that they do," said Ms Pope.

"We have been impressed with the approach of the ACNC Taskforce lead by Susan Pascoe AM, and look forward to working with the ACNC to equip charities to deal with the new regulatory framework."

Through its submissions to Government and participation in parliamentary committee hearings, PilchConnect has provided a voice for small-medium not-for-profit organisations. PilchConnect will continue to advocate for appropriate regulation and reduction of red tape for the sector.

"We urge the States to follow South Australia's lead and work towards national streamlining of laws and reporting obligations for not-for-profits," said Ms Pope.

PilchConnect has contributed submissions to all public consultations on the ACNC since the Government announced its intention to establish a national regulator in May 2011. It also participated in a number of targeted roundtables and consultations.

Going forward, PilchConnect will work with the sector to assist its understanding and implementation of new obligations under the ACNC Act.

PilchConnect is a legal service for not-for-profits organisations.

For further information or comments contact Juanita Pope, Director of PilchConnect, on 0407 716 882 or Juanita.pope@pilch.org.au

For further information on PilchConnect, visit: www.pilchconnect.org.au