



Our Ref: OMI/2006 / EOG/16/7221

Australian Consumer Law Review Secretariat  
[ACLreview@treasury.gov.au](mailto:ACLreview@treasury.gov.au)

To whom it may concern

**SUBJECT: CONSUMER LAW REVIEW—INTERIM REPORT**

Thank you for the invitation to respond to the Australian Consumer Law (ACL) Review—Interim Report, following the Office of Multicultural Interests' (OMI) submission to the first stage of the review process. I note that a number of issues relevant to culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities feature in the Interim Report, including the:

- importance of equitable access to information and whether the ACL and guidance material could be more accessible, and tailored to specific audiences, including consumers and business owners from CaLD backgrounds
- variable degrees of vulnerability of different consumers, including those newly arrived in Australia, with low levels of English or literacy skills, particularly with regard to their awareness of their consumer rights, and the likelihood that they would assert them if needed
- importance of equitable access to complaints and dispute resolution processes, noting that the adversarial nature of the tribunal system, differences in social structures, interactions and cultural protocols can affect access and engagement by consumers and business owners from CaLD backgrounds.

OMI supports the suggestion made in the Interim Report that guidance be issued in a variety of formats to accommodate the specific needs of vulnerable consumers, including consumers and business owners from CaLD backgrounds.

I note that the report seeks suggestions of enhancements that could be made to existing communication channels, and other recommendations to enhance the accessibility of the ACL and related guidance material<sup>1</sup>. Suggestions for consideration include:

- engaging with ethnic media, particularly radio and print, to convey information
- partnering with ethnic community organisations and networks, local governments, State or Commonwealth government agencies and non-government agencies (including local multicultural service delivery agencies) to assist with information dissemination
- using plain English and graphics such as international signs and symbols, to assist people with low literacy skills
- connecting with ethnic community groups and multicultural service delivery organisations for opportunities to provide information face-to-face.

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<sup>1</sup> 3.1.3 Barriers to accessing information, pp.158-162.

I trust this information will support the achievement of the desired improvements to the ACL. Should further information be required, please contact Claire White, Strategy and Planning Officer, by telephone (08) 6552 1533 or email [claire.white@omi.wa.gov.au](mailto:claire.white@omi.wa.gov.au).

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca Ball', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Rebecca Ball

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

13 December 2016