



Consumer
Policy Research
Centre

FAIRNESSES SAFETY INCLUSION

2019/20
Annual
Report



ABOUT CONSUMER POLICY RESEARCH CENTRE (CPRC)

CPRC is an independent, non-profit, consumer think-tank established with seed funding by the Victorian Government in 2016.

At CPRC we're committed to doing things differently through our research. We listen to the expectations, hopes and experiences of consumers around Victoria and Australia. We amplify the bright ideas of consumers, leading thinkers, and bold advocates. We analyse public policy and business practices to identify the gaps, the leading practices, and opportunities for change.

Most importantly, we facilitate conversations that matter to build a stronger shared understanding across government, industry and the community sector about ways to improve the lives and welfare of consumers.

To find out more visit www.cprc.org.au.

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Chair's Address

Catherine Wolthuizen

COVID-19 has uncovered the frailties within our markets and across the community. We face both an economic and a human crisis, and one that has so far disproportionately impacted the Victorian community. As a Victorian-based consumer research organisation I'm proud that CPRC has rapidly reoriented our research program to ensure we are providing the most meaningful and accurate insights for policymakers, industry and the community sector as to the current consumer experiences of COVID-19 in Victoria and beyond.

Consumer trust and confidence will be central to rebuilding our markets and economies. I believe this presents us all with an opportunity to rethink the way markets operate, putting consumers at the centre, designing policies and programs that improve wellbeing.

Vulnerabilities across the community are being amplified and new ones are emerging. In a report prepared for the Australian Energy Regulator exploring regulatory approaches to vulnerability, CPRC sets out a framework for all consumer regulators striving to support consumers during this difficult time. This work has proven to be necessary and timely, already informing the AER's COVID-19 response, setting standards for fair treatment of consumers impacted by the crisis. With a community never more vulnerable, now is an important time to be collaborating across the sectors and turning these recommendations into action.

The importance of a solid evidence base to inform policy and program design in economic recovery cannot be emphasised enough. The big challenges that faced Australia pre-COVID remain.

The need for effective protections to prevent unfair treatment, unsafe products reaching our homes, or consumers being excluded from support have never been more urgent. And in such a fast-moving environment, where the stakes for consumer welfare are so high, the margin for error is vanishingly small.

CPRC's research centres on some of those big challenges that face consumers today and in the future. Our work in FY20 as an interconnector globally on data and digital economy research and policy development was a feature of our Data R(E)volution conference late last year. We continue to build on that work to ensure that the digital economy is a safe, fair and inclusive one over the coming years. As consumers increasingly turn to digital markets to meet their needs, they should expect the same protections and standards that they encounter in more traditional markets.

I'd like to thank the whole CPRC team for their continued commitment to improving the lives and wellbeing of consumers and for their demonstrated agility in responding to the challenges posed by this life-changing and workplace-changing event of COVID-19. I also thank my Board colleagues for their commitment to CPRC, their vision and unflagging energy in the service of consumers.

On behalf of the Board I warmly welcome Ms Melissa Horne MP as incoming Minister for Consumer Affairs, Victoria. Our work with the Victorian Government feels more relevant and necessary than ever. To ensure that all consumers - renters, young people, energy consumers and casual workers in particular - have access to available support.

We see this as a collective responsibility across government, industry and the community sector and look forward to continuing to play our part.

To this end, we will continue to offer our consumer insights, evidence-based recommendations for change and collaborative, solutions-focussed engagement to policymakers charting a course towards economic recovery.

“*Consumer trust and confidence will be central to rebuilding our markets and economies.*”

C. Wolthuizen

Catherine Wolthuizen
CPRC Chair



CEO's Address

Lauren Solomon

The 2020 we all thought we might have, certainly now seems worlds apart from the one we are currently living through. First and foremost, we at CPRC would like to recognise and express our deep gratitude to those on the frontline working tirelessly and creatively to keep people safe and our world ticking over during this human tragedy.

The changes underway in our society and markets are both personal and collective. We're finding new ways to work. New ways to support those in need. New ways to connect with community. And new ways to derive meaning as we go about our lives.

At CPRC we consider ourselves to be very fortunate to be able to continue with our work during this difficult time, when so many are facing the disruption and disconnection of their lives. I am proud of the clever, committed team at CPRC and the transition we have made, along with our partners and the community. Together we are finding new ways of working on the most significant consumer challenges Australia has ever faced.

When the unprecedented impact of COVID-19 became clear, we took a step back and considered how we could ensure that consumers are best-supported by government, industry and community over the coming months and years. We rapidly launched a multi-month research initiative to provide the evidence of the consumer experience of COVID-19. Our ability to emerge stronger from this crisis will be determined by the extent to which we put people at the centre of new systems, processes and interventions.

We have always been a solutions-focussed and evidence-led organisation but our approach to COVID-19 has taken this to the next level.

Our team has also been on-ground delivering critical energy information and training materials to 650 frontline community workers in 35 workshops around the state of Victoria to ensure that consumers are able to access their rights and available support. This long-standing and award-winning Energy Simplified partnership with the Victorian Government has now made the shift online and ramped up much-needed support as the COVID-crisis bears down and energy bills rise.

The now essentiality of data-driven products and services has almost been overlooked in the seismic remote transition of workplaces and markets. Yet, the very same policy challenges face Australia to ensure that consumers are safe online, to ensure their personal information is better placed in their control and to prevent misuses of power in digital marketplaces.

In November 2019, CPRC hosted a national conversation at our Data (R)Evolution event exploring what it would take to design and deliver a genuinely consumer-centric approach to data policy and the governance of digital markets. Leading thinkers, decision makers, activists and academics debated new frontiers in competition policy, outdated notice and consent frameworks, and new AI and machine-learning technologies making their way to market.

I'd like to warmly thank our supportive, energetic and forward-looking Board for their guidance and aspirations for the organisation as we take bold new steps during unprecedented times. Thanks also to Consumer Affairs Victoria for their commitment to our organisation and support in amplifying the impact of our research across the Victorian Government and nationwide.

We warmly welcome Minister Horne, our incoming Minister for Consumer Affairs and look forward to working together to deliver evidence-based policies to improve the wellbeing and lives of Victorians.

As we stand here at the end of the financial year, we see more need than ever for consumers to receive the protections and support they need. Fairness, safety and inclusion must be at the heart of the recovery mission, with consumers at the centre. CPRC stands by our community, government, industry and academic colleagues working towards those same goals.

Fairness, safety and inclusion must be at the heart of the recovery mission.



Lauren Solomon
CPRC CEO



COLLECTIVE IMPACT

researchers

4 key reports & 11 submissions

- **Consumers and COVID-19:** from crisis to recovery
- **Choosing care:** the difficulties in navigating the Home Care Package Market
- **Online reviews:** a guide not a gospel
- **Exploring regulatory approaches to consumer vulnerability:** A CPRC report for the AER

- **Provided** a robust evidence-base for reforming consumer protections in retirement villages with The University of Melbourne
- **Uncovered** the challenges and barriers around consumer choice in the home care package market with the University of South Australia
- **Delivered** through our award-winning **Energy Simplified** partnership with the Victorian Government: 12 online co-design workshops with Vietnamese and Arabic groups, 8 energy webinars reaching 287 participants and 33 in-person training sessions for 494 community workers and volunteers

partners for impact

changemakers

- **Cemented** our role as an Australian authority on the regulation of consumer data and the digital economy – advised senior levels of government, conducted cutting-edge research, and amplified the consumer voice in public policy debates
- **Connected** global and local data policymaking for a fairer, safer digital future – brought together 100+ leading international and local thinkers at Data (R)Evolution and presented our research at the World Economic Forum ‘Redesigning Consent for Better Data Protection’ conference
- **Contributed** vital new research and practical ideas for change in housing and home care markets, influencing inquiries at state and national levels
- **Developed** a leading framework for policymakers and regulators responding to consumer vulnerability through our report for the Australian Energy Regulator, connecting the Australian policy community with international thinking and practice

amplifiers

- **650** traditional media mentions
(up **68%** on the previous financial year)
- **2100+** social media mentions
- **43%** increase in followers across Twitter and LinkedIn
- **6** Consumer Policy Connect Updates in FY19/20
(reaching an audience of **790+** subscribers)

collaborators and supporters

- **6 research partnerships continued:**
La Trobe University, Griffith University, University of Melbourne, University of South Australia, RMIT, Deakin University
- **2 new research partnerships established:**
Australian Human Rights Commission, Centre for Inclusive Design

CONSUMERS & COVID-19: from crisis to recovery

Here at CPRC, we are researchers, listeners and observers. We dig deep to find evidence-based solutions.

When the extraordinary and ongoing impact of COVID-19 became clear, we took a step back and considered how we could ensure that consumers are best-supported by government, industry and community over the coming months and years.

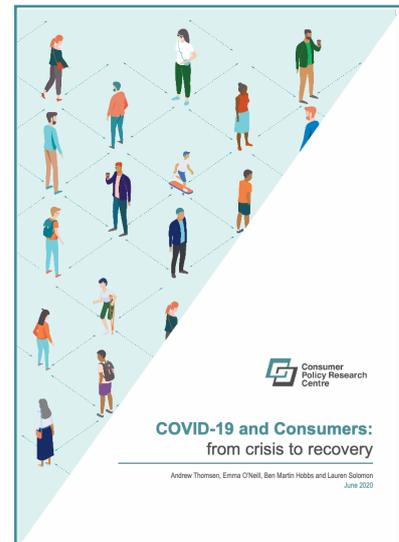
This led to the launch of our research initiative – ***Consumers and COVID-19: from crisis to recovery.***

A project designed to provide policymakers, regulators, industry and the community sector with unique, timely information on consumer experiences of COVID-19 across essential service markets, and policy insights for driving recovery.

Household expenditure makes up over 55% of Australia's GDP. Consumer trust and confidence underpinning renewed, sustainable consumer activity will be critical to Australia's recovery.

Our foundational report released in June 2020, *Consumers and COVID-19: From crisis to recovery*, exploring:

- the consumer impact of COVID-19, historical lessons and their limits
- the first findings from a survey of 1100 Australian consumers and their experiences of COVID-19, conducted in May 2020
- amplified and emerging consumer vulnerabilities in the COVID-19 environment
- consumer support measures locally and globally
- building blocks for consumer recovery.



A monthly, nationwide consumer survey running from May – October 2020:

- uncovering the latest activities, behaviours, experiences and expectations of consumers across the sectors of rental housing, mortgage providers, energy, telco, insurance and credit
- providing a regular, monthly evidence base for policymakers, businesses and the community sector alike to effectively respond to consumer need through the design of consumer support measures.

We are extremely proud of this research initiative which involves the full CPRC Research and Policy Team: Andrew Thomsen, Emma O'Neill, Ben Martin Hobbs and Lauren Solomon.



CONSUMER WELLBEING

Through our consumer wellbeing research stream, we are working collaboratively across sectors to design fairer, safer and more inclusive markets.

Our work is more relevant than ever, with events such as COVID-19 exposing and exacerbating consumer vulnerabilities and amplifying the need for markets that work for people.

Key Report

Choosing care: the difficulties in navigating the Home Care Package market (30 Jan 2020)

This reports offers a range of insights into the barriers experienced by older Australians and their carers in accessing, evaluating and getting home care services. This is followed by a series of recommendations for change to improve the delivery of Home Care Packages.

5 Submissions

- Essential Services Commission
Competitiveness Review (20 Apr 2020)
- Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety – Aged care program redesign: services for the future consultation paper (24 Jan 2020)
- Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety – Residential Tenancies Regulations 2020 (18 Dec 2019)
- Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety – Retirement Villages Act Review (10 Dec 2019)
- Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety – Residential Tenancies Regulations (confidential, 12 Jul 2019)

4 Grants and Partnerships

(Total value of \$150,821)

Choice in the Home Care Package Sector

In partnership with the University of South Australia, CPRC is conducting the first large scale quantitative survey of individuals accessing Home Care Packages to provide evidence to inform the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Choice for older Australians with La Trobe University

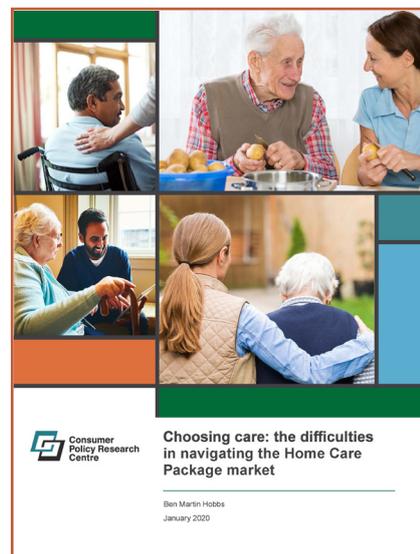
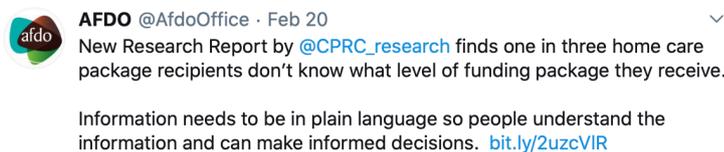
To empower older people in accessing aged care services in a consumer market, this project: identified barriers and facilitators when making choices; recommended strategies at the local and national level to reduce the digital divide and support older people make informed choices; and identified the limitations of the existing regulatory and policy framework.

Information disclosure in off-the-plan housing sales with Griffith University

This project examined information disclosure in relation to residential ‘off the plan’ sales contracts, uncovering the demographics of off-the-plan buyers and providing ground-breaking quantitative and qualitative research on consumer experiences of information disclosure and choice in this complex market.

Information disclosure in the retirement villages market with The University of Melbourne

To inform our submission to the Victorian Government’s review of the Retirement Villages Act 1986, CPRC co-funded the University of Melbourne to research what information is available to older Victorians when choosing a retirement village; and to determine how easily, or not, this information is able to be understood and compared across different information sources and different villages in the market.



Research Services

Exploring regulatory approaches to consumer vulnerability: a report for the Australian Energy Regulator

Ensuring that consumers experiencing vulnerability are helped and not hindered by business practice, policy and regulation is a long-standing challenge for all sectors.

New research completed by CPRC Research and Policy Director, Emma O'Neill for the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) explores leading approaches internationally, examples of initiatives working closer to home, and opportunities to take Australia towards fairer and more inclusive markets for all consumers.



Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_research · Feb 25

"We need to embed lasting principles of fairness & fair conduct in regulation, otherwise we'll be forever chasing our tail as new tech comes into the market & causes unexpected problems for people." CPRC's Emma O'Neill joins Clare Savage & David Green at AER's Dr Gill Owen Forum.



AER @aergovau · Feb 26

At last night's Dr Gill Owen Forum, we launched a special @CPRC_research report on consumer vulnerability. Read the report here: bit.ly/3cahuUA



8 Advisory Roles

- ACCC Consumer Consultative Committee
- ACMA Consumer Consultative Forum
- AER Energy Made Easy Consumer Consultative Panel
- Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria Consumer Consultation Group
- Origin Customer Advisory Panel
- Telstra CEO Consumer Roundtable
- Victorian Government Building Reform Expert Advisory Panel
- Victorian Legal Services Board Consumer Advisory Committee



What's coming up next?

Heading into 2020-21, CPRC will be working with policymakers, regulators and industry to re-design markets around the needs and expectations of consumers, building on our foundational report and forum – Towards Markets that Work for People (July 2020). We will also be driving the conversation on consumer wellbeing in the context of COVID-19 and economic recovery, by collaborating with our policy community to create a cross-sector measure of consumer wellbeing.



Clare Savage @ClareSavage17 · Feb 25

I have been thinking deeply about the concepts of fairness and vulnerability over the last week and I'm looking toward to tonight's event in memory of Dr Gill Owen who was instrumental in establishing the AER's Consumer Challenge Panel.



AER @aergovau · Feb 25

Our very own Chair @ClareSavage17 is tonight's keynote speaker for the 2020 Dr Gill Owen Forum on fairness for consumers in the energy transition. We'll also be launching a @CPRC_research CPRC report that we commissioned on consumer vulnerability. Stay tuned to find out more!



Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_research · Mar 16

Thanks Fiona York @HAAGHomeAtLast for inviting CPRC's Ben Martin Hobbs to speak about his recent research on home care packages for HAAG's Raise the Roof show. Tune in to Fiona & Ben's chat on @3CR at 5:30pm this Wed. Read Ben's #ChoosingCare report here: cprc.org.au/publication/ch...



DATA AND TECHNOLOGY

Australians are spending more money and time online than ever before. Digital products and services have become essential and part of our daily lives, particularly in the context of COVID-19 and the accelerated shift to digital living.

The benefits of digital transformation must not be undermined by inadequate protections, power imbalances or growing inequality. CPRC's research takes a consumer-centric approach to policy design in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Our data research and policy engagement activities throughout FY20 focussed on the importance of developing an integrated, economy-wide consumer protection framework across Australia.

To promote consumer interests, trust and engagement, the digital economy needs to be governed by lasting, cross-sector principles of fairness, safety and inclusion that can adapt to new and unexpected technological developments.

These protections include reforms arising from the ACCC's Digital Platforms Inquiry such as an unfair trading prohibition, root and branch Privacy Act changes, a general safety right that protects consumers online, and 'data for good' initiatives that harness the deep value in consumer data and ensure this is shared in the public interest.

6 Submissions

- Australian Treasury Inquiry into Future Directions for the Consumer Data Right: Issues Paper (25 May 2020)
- ACCC Ad-tech Inquiry – Issues Paper (21 Apr 2020)
- Australian Human Rights Commission – Human Rights and Technology Discussion Paper (26 Mar 2020)
- Department of Home Affairs – Code of Practice – Securing the Internet of Things (IoT) for Consumers (2 Mar 2020)
- Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet Review of the DataVic Access Policy (31 Jan 2020)
- Australian Treasury consultation on the ACCC Digital Platforms Inquiry Final Report (13 Sept 2019)

3 Grants and Partnerships

(totalling in value at \$143,182)

Exploring bias in algorithmic decision-making with the Australian Human Rights Commission

The AHRC is partnering with CPRC - as well as CHOICE, Data61 and The Gradient Institute - on an experiment to better understand the risk of algorithmic bias to consumers. The experiment will investigate what factors may produce more or less accurate and fair results, and analyse these results from a technical, human rights and consumer rights perspective.

Enhancing Consumer Awareness of Privacy and Internet of Things with Deakin University

This study will investigate consumer awareness of privacy issues associated with the Internet of Things (IoT) used in domestic contexts. We aim to determine how consumers understand the privacy implications of IoT technologies, and to develop a series of privacy icons that can help raise consumer awareness at the point of sale.

Consumer Anonymity Measuring Project with The University of Melbourne

This research is designed to identify new technologies collecting consumer data and explore the differential treatment of consumers online. Stage 1 of the project – the State of the Art in Data Tracking Technology – was launched in 2019, with Stages 2 and 3 to follow in the coming year.

Major Event: Data (R)Evolution

We were delighted and honoured to host the brilliant collective of over 100 minds that gathered both on and off stage for our second annual consumer data conference Data (R)Evolution on Tuesday 19 November 2019.

Bringing together national and global perspectives from across sectors, the day kicked off with a keynote from ACCC Chair, Rod Sims and eSafety Commissioner, Julie Inman Grant on the emerging opportunities and challenges for policymakers and regulators.

We firmly believe in the ingenuity, intellect and capabilities of the Australian policy community. Together, we can put consumers and people at the heart of change and build a future that engenders trust, safety and fairness and fosters sustainable economic growth.



Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_resear... · Nov 19, 2019

Thank you for joining us to officially open [#DataREvolution](#) this morning @[MarleneKairouz](#) MP, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming & Liquor Regulation; Minister for Suburban Development; Member for Kororoit. Very grateful for your support.



Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_resear... · Nov 19, 2019

Wonderful to have @[SenatorHume](#), Assistant Minister for Superannuation, Financial Services & Financial Technology give an opening address this morning at [#DataREvolution](#).



Other key speakers included:

- Human Rights Commissioner, Edward Santow who is currently consulting on the Human Rights and Technology project;
- Interim National Data Commissioner, Deborah Anton who is overseeing the Australian Government Data Sharing and Release reforms;
- Global speakers Finn Lützwow-Holm Myrstad, the Director of Digital Policy at Norwegian Consumer and Marco Pierani, the Public Affairs and Media Research Services



Panel #1 Rights in the Digital Age
(L-R: Dr Damian Clifford, Drew MacRae, Lizzie O'Shea, Melanie Drayton, Edward Santow)



Opening Plenary: Emerging opportunities and challenges for policymakers and regulators
(Rod Sims and Julie Inman-Grant)

Dr Katharine Kemp @Katharine_Kemp · Nov 19, 2019
Hearing from HR Commissner, @esantow on the 2% success rate of London Metro Police facial recogn project @CPRC_research #DataREvolution



Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_research

.@ClareONeilMP highlights "kids today are creating a digital footprint they are going to carry into the rest of their lives" but without understanding or giving genuine consent. "What does informed consent mean? It's questionable whether we have a genuine choice." #DataREvolution



Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_resear... · Nov 19, 2019
"... there is a huge potential in technology solving our everyday problems & bigger societal problems... one thing we know for sure from our work is that we need to get some fundamental things right first." @finnmyrstad @forbrukerradet shares global insights at #DataREvolution.



Research Services

Consumer Data Right Data Standards Body – consumer and community sector research and engagement project

Ensuring that consumer and community organisations are supported to provide input and insights to the development of the Consumer Data Right standards is fundamental to ensuring that the scheme is best placed to support positive consumer outcomes.

CPRC was engaged by the Consumer Data Right Data Standards Body (DSB) to deliver a 12 month research and engagement project with the goal of:

- expanding how the DSB consults consumer advocates and community organisations to inform standards development; and,
- providing community-informed advice on how the Data Standards can be strengthened or augmented to facilitate simple, informed, and trustworthy data sharing experiences that provide consumers with positive outcomes over the short and long term.

7 Advisory Roles

- National Data Advisory Council
- Prime Minister and Cabinet Digital Experts Advisory Panel
- Consumer Data Standards Banking Advisory Committee
- Consumer Data Standards Energy Advisory Committee
- ACCC Consumer Consultative Committee
- ACMA Consumer Consultative Forum
- Telstra CEO Consumer Roundtable

Consumer Data Research Network

The Consumer Data Research Network (CDRN)’s goal is to maximise academic research impact, share insights with policymakers, and build greater shared understanding of how to provide consumers with better outcomes in the digital age. Our founding partners – leading Australian researchers from across disciplines – function as an advisory group to CPRC in guiding the development, implementation and expansion of the CDRN. Activity within the CDRN will recommence in the coming year with a renewed sense of purpose and collaborative mission.

What’s coming up next?

Our research and engagement on data and technology is continuing strong, as digital services become even more essential to our daily lives. Ensuring that consumers are empowered, protected and best-placed to benefit from digital technologies remains a focus of our research and policy engagement.

In the context of the continuing COVID-19 crisis and the pathway to economic recovery, we will be taking a close look at how consumer risks have been amplified by the accelerated shift to a digital economy and online living, the urgent need for strong, economy-wide consumer protections, and how the value of consumer data can be harnessed in the public interest and help drive economic recovery.

We’re looking forward to releasing our latest research on data and technology over the coming financial year and announcing the recipient of our 2020 Research Pathways Program \$100,000 research grant.

 **Consumer Policy Research Centre** @CPRC_research · Oct 3, 2019
CPRC CEO @_LaurenSolomon is in San Francisco this week for the @WEF & @StanfordCIS conference - Redesigning Consent for Better Data Protection - where she will present CPRC's #consumer #data research. bit.ly/2puzWUub

 **Lauren Solomon** @_laurensolomon · Oct 3, 2019
Fantastic to be in sunny San Francisco today sharing Aus research at @StanfordCIS & @wef notice & consent forum. I'll be discussing why we believe transparency & choice is necessary but not sufficient for the protection of consumers in a #digital world. #collaboration #bigdata



National Data Advisory Council
(L-R: Joshua Meltzer, Lauren Solomon, Nicholas Biddle, Alan Finkel, Deborah Anton, Michael Keenan, Paul McCarney, Angelene Falk, David Kalisch.)

LIVED CONSUMER EXPERIENCE LIBRARY

At CPRC we undertake research that provides a solid evidence base for policymakers, regulators, businesses and community sector organisations to reimagine and redesign markets.

Our Lived Consumer Experience Library – a new initiative from CPRC – calls attention to the ‘real’ experiences of everyday people in engaging with complex markets and accessing essential and important products and services.

We are drawing on diverse methods and disciplines – through our own research and the work of others – to highlight lived consumer experiences that can inform better policymaking.



Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_resear... · Oct 24, 2019

Thanks for including us in this discussion @RMIT Behavioural Business Lab! Deregulation of complex service markets has been coupled w assumptions of how rational consumers should choose, not how they actually do. Behavioural insights are central to effective market stewardship.



Swee-Hoon Chuah @sweehoon · Oct 23, 2019

Participating in a panel discussion hosted by Dr. Ingrid Burford of the RMIT Behavioural Business Lab on the role of BI in navigating complexity. #rmitbbl



Key Report

Online reviews: a guide not a gospel (19 Dec 2019)

This report explores how Australians are increasingly relying upon online reviews when buying goods and services online. 82% of those surveyed had looked at online reviews or ratings at least sometimes over the last 12 months. The report highlights some tips from UK consumer group WHICH? and CPRC's own research to help guide consumers when navigating online reviews



Grants and Partnerships

(totalling in value at \$90,955)

Consumer reviews with University of Technology Sydney

The growing importance of online consumer reviews in consumer decision-making, the increasing ubiquity of star ratings and the growth of pay-per-review industries have undermined the rigour of reviews and ratings mechanisms. To fill the research gap on the views of Australians, CPRC undertook a consumer survey in collaboration with the University of Technology Sydney, revealing widespread reliance on online reviews and difficulties separating fact from fiction.

Service quality and consumer decision-making with RMIT Behavioural Business Lab

CPRC partnered with the RMIT Behavioural Business Lab – a multi-disciplinary team studying business decision-making using psychological approaches – on a project exploring the impact of service quality measures on consumer decision-making in the energy market. The project also drew in policymakers, regulators and industry. CPRC's research with RMIT provides rigorous evidence of the importance of service quality measures to consumer decision-making, and highlights the need for market stewards to collect this information and make it accessible to consumers in competitive markets.



EDUCATION & TRAINING:

Energy Simplified

Our landmark consumer education and community training program is a partnership with the Victorian Government. Launched in 2019, Energy Simplified helps people take control of their energy bills.

Co-designed with community workers and consumers, the training is supported by a range of energy information materials, including fact sheets, explainer videos and posters housed on Energy Info Hub. We've gone virtual in 2020 with webinars helping Victorians take control of their energy bills.

Key Projects

The Energy Affordability Training Partnership with the Victorian Government developed tailored energy information materials and a training program to enable Emergency Relief workers to provide energy bill assistance to households accessing emergency relief services.

The Energy Information for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) project is undertaking user-based research to understand, adapt and deliver energy information for the Vietnamese and Arabic speaking communities.

The Energy Info Hub website was relaunched as a portal for community workers to access independent, expert information on energy. The website houses the information resources produced in the Energy Affordability Training Partnership and AusNet Services projects.

Key Reports

The Identifying In-Need CALD Consumers research report (March 2020) identified two in-need Victorian CALD groups to engage for the Energy Information for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) project

A report on the findings from the CALD codesign research conducted with the Vietnamese and Iraq-born Arabic speaking communities was provided to DELWP in June 2020. The findings are being used to develop tailored energy information materials to support the two communities to take control of their energy bills.



Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_resear... · Aug 16, 2019
Collaboration is critical to ensuring better outcomes for consumers. Thank you to our partners @DELWP_Vic @CISVictoria @EllisJonesLive for your significant efforts in bringing the new look #energyinfohub & training program to life.



Those Energy Guys @EnergyInfoHub · Aug 16, 2019
Thank you to @LilyDAmbrosioMP @DELWP_Vic @CISVictoria @EllisJonesLive @AusNetServices & all who attended today's #energyinfohub & training program launch, & to Mill Park Library for hosting us!



Outreach and Engagement

- **12 online codesign workshops** were completed with **24 participants (12 Vietnamese and 12 Arabic speaking groups)**. The codesign was originally planned to be completed through face to face interactive workshops but was moved to an online format when the COVID-19 restrictions were introduced.
- **Eight energy webinars** for community workers and households reaching **287 participants**.
- **33 face-to-face training sessions for 494 workers and volunteers** across CISVic's emergency relief network.

EDUCATION & TRAINING: Energy Simplified



Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_research - Aug 16, 2019

Thank you @LilyDAmbrosioMP @DELWP_Vic for joining us to officially launch the brand new #energyinfohub & training program.



Those Energy Guys @EnergyInfoHub · Aug 16, 2019

@LilyDAmbrosioMP officially launches the new look #energyinfohub website & #energy training program today in Mill Park. 600+ emergency relief workers in 30 locations will be trained to support vulnerable consumers thanks to @DELWP_Vic



Animation from an Energy Simplified video



Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_research

Big congratulations to Karl & Cam from @CPRC_Research on the launch of the new look #energyinfohub & training program! A meaningful & practical new program to support vulnerable energy consumers.

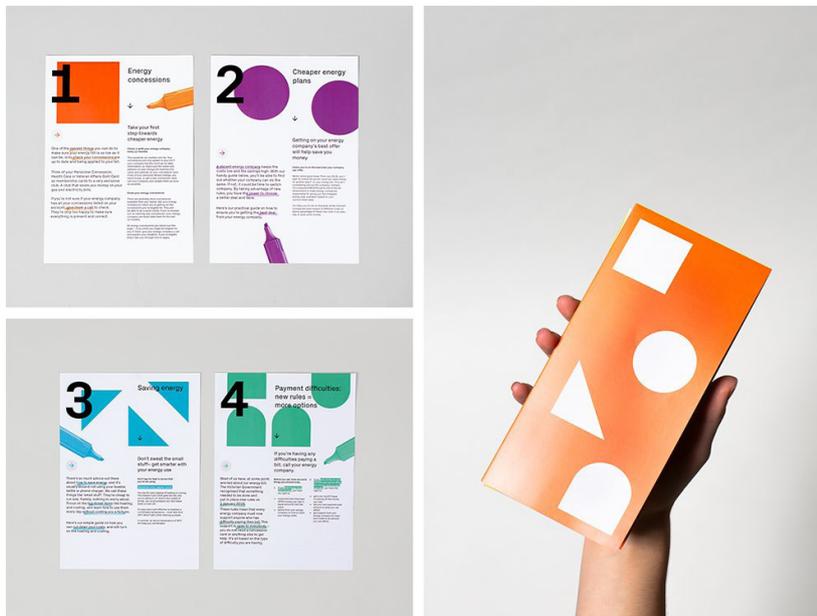


Partnerships

Our partnership with **AusNet Services** is delivering energy webinars to households and community workers to equip them to manage energy bills during the coronavirus pandemic. This partnership also helped produced a series of energy information materials for households as well as supporting the **Energy Information for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) project**.

Awards

The Energy Simplified program was recognised for its approach to communications winning the **‘Communication Research Award of Excellence’ in the 2020 international Gold Quill Awards** as well as being selected as a **finalist in the 2019 Australian Graphic Design Association Awards**.



Energy Simplified training material and flyer



Getting help to bring down the bills

posted by Sentinel-Times | October 10, 2019 | News



Leon Burgher may live off the grid, but he plays a key role in advising South Gippslanders how to save on their energy costs. gm014019

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**AMPLIFYING
THE
CONSUMER
VOICE**

381 news mentions and **272** broadcast mentions **traditional**
68% increase in media presence in FY19/20 from 18/19 **media**

THE AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS REVIEW

Google's data haul sparks call to reform privacy act

EXCLUSIVE
 By DAVID SWAN
 TECHNOLOGY EDITOR
 Follow @swan_legend

and SUPRATIM ADHIKARI
 FORMER TECHNOLOGY
 EDITOR

8:21AM NOVEMBER 12, 2019
 4 COMMENTS



CEO of think-tank Consumer Policy Research Centre Lauren Solomon in Flinders Lane Melbourne. Picture: David Geraghty, The Australian.

Google's harvesting of Australians' location data represents the tip of the iceberg according to the Consumer Policy Research Centre (CPRC) chief executive Lauren Solomon, who is calling for urgent reform of the Privacy Act to better protect consumers against the murky and vague data practices of the tech giants.

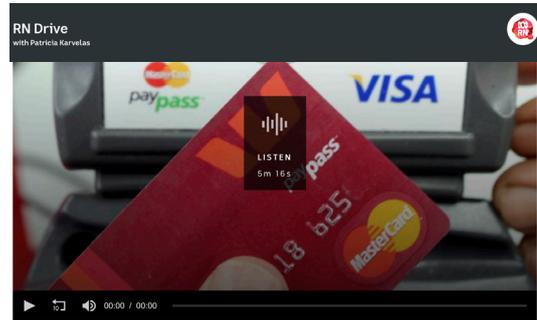


Image: AAP: David Crosling

How the COVID crisis is impacting consumers

By Patricia Karvelas on RN Drive

Share

Download 4.82 MB

The economic impact of the pandemic is hitting many hard, with more than one in four Australians worried about their ability to pay for essentials and rent.

social **2100+** social media mentions
media **43%** increase in followers across Twitter and LinkedIn

Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_research · Mar 16
 Thanks Fiona York @HAAGHomeAtLast for inviting CPRC's Ben Martin Hobbs to speak about his recent research on home care packages for HAAG's Raise the Roof show. Tune in to Fiona & Ben's chat on @3CR at 5:30pm this Wed. Read Ben's #ChoosingCare report here: cprc.org.au/publication/ch...



COTA Australia @COTAAustralia · Jan 30
 MEDIA RELEASE: COTA's calls for choice and control reinforced by new home care research by @CPRC_research cota.org.au/news-items/med.. ping @richardmcolbeck @JulieCollinsMP @RoyalAged @AgedCareQuality



Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_resear... · Dec 19, 2019
 "The reality is that it is very difficult to navigate the truth online." CPRC CEO @_LaurenSolomon chatted with @moniquehore about the risks of relying on online reviews which should be seen as "a guide not a gospel". Check out our new research report! bit.ly/2PY5ew9

Herald Sun @theheraldsun · Dec 18, 2019
 Christmas shoppers are being warned not to be dudded by dodgy online reviews as gift giving ramps up this festive season.

Here are some of the tactics that mislead consumers online.

trib.al/U0zIQW

Lauren Solomon @_laurensolomon · Jul 29, 2019
 Great to have a chat with @jendudley last week on why we need a step change in the management of consumer data in Aus. ACCC Digital Platforms Inquiry recs include a right for consumers to erase their #data. [#Bigdata](http://news.com.au/technology/onl..)



Consumer Policy Research Centre @CPRC_resear... · Dec 12, 2019
 Thanks for having us @karina_carv @abcnews. Missed @_laurensolomon's earlier interview? Jump on ABC24 at 8:15pm to hear Lauren discuss the Australian Government's response to the @accgovau's #DigitalPlatformsInquiry.



The ACCC's 600-page report into tech giants is coming. Facebook and Google will be forced to better protect Australians' privacy and be more transparent about collecting personal data if the...
news.com.au



6 Consumer Policy Connect Updates in FY19/20 **e-**
 (reaching an audience of **790+** subscribers) **news**

WE THE MET TEAM

Our team is comprised of a number of curious, committed and collaborative people with expertise spanning public policy, consumer engagement and outreach, regulation, law reform, psychology and social policy.

We recognise the importance of diversity in skills and understanding when tackling complex policy challenges, and this is a significant reason we often collaborate through our work – building shared understanding of benefits and risks of various approaches to consumer policy.



Lauren Solomon
Chief Executive Officer



Emma O'Neill
Research and Policy
Director



Karl Barratt
Research and
Engagement Manager



Ben Martin Hobbs
Senior Research and
Policy Manager



Andrew Thomsen
Senior Research and
Policy Manager



Cameron Crome
Energy Trainer



Claire Rizzo
Administration Manager



Nina Lewis
Research Engagement
Manager (Consumer
Data Right)



Gillian Jervis
Finance and
Partnerships Officer



Kaye Bratetich
Executive Assistant



Siân Kilgour
Communications Manager

MEET THE BOARD

CPRC discharges its responsibilities as an independent research organisation in a transparent and accountable manner. CPRC's commitment to accountability is supported by our governance and management structures and our internal systems and processes.

The CPRC Board has been integral to the governance and management of CPRC, including: setting its strategic direction; monitoring progress towards achievement of outcomes; and, being accountable for CPRC on behalf of the community.

The Board is made up of longstanding Directors with diverse skills and experience.

Over the reporting period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020, the CPRC Board of Directors comprised:



Catherine Wolthuizen, Chair



Dr David Cousins AM, Deputy Chair



Petrina Dorrington, Director



Maree Davidson AM, Director



Professor Helen Dickinson, Director

DIRECTORS' REPORT

On the 16 June 2020, the Hon. Marlene Kairouz MP resigned from her position as Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation.

On the 22 June 2020, Melissa Horne was appointed as the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation; Minister for Fishing and Boating.

Directors' Meetings

During the reporting period, five Board meetings were held, and three out of session meetings.

Director	Position	Meetings conducted while a Director	Meetings attended
Catherine Wolthuizen	Chair	5	4
Dr David Cousins AM	Deputy Chair	5	5
Petrina Dorrington	Director	5	4
Maree Davidson AM	Director	5	4
Prof Helen Dickinson	Director	5	5

Company Secretary

Ms Claire Rizzo was appointed Company Secretary on 1 July 2018 and remained in this position during the reporting period 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020.

Finance and Revenue Subcommittee

Over the last reporting period, the Finance and Revenue Subcommittee met once. The role of the Subcommittee is to:

- Develop a sustainable finance growth strategy
- Review and determine the financial capabilities and needs of the organisation as it embarks on a strategic growth strategy
- Make recommendations to the full Board about major strategic decisions which will impact resourcing and finances, including fundraising
- Oversee decisions and process relating to financial systems and appointment of external Auditor
- Review and undertake funding/partnership decisions related to the implementation of CPRC's Funding and Partnerships Policy.

The members of the Subcommittee comprise of the following Board members:

- Catherine Wolthuizen
- Petrina Dorrington
- Maree Davidson AM

OPERATIONS

Over the last twelve months, CPRC have developed and implemented the following organisational policies:

- Gifts, Benefits & Hospitality Policy
- Working from Home Policy – during COVID-19 pandemic
- COVID-19 Safe Plan

COMPLIANCE & REPORTING

In early 2017, CPRC identified 150 compliance obligations relating, but not limited to:

- Corporations Act
- Audit Act
- Company Constitution
- CPRC/CAV Funding Agreement
- CPRC By Laws
- Public Administrations Act
- Privacy and Data Protection Act
- Anti-Corruption Act
- Charter, EEO and RRT Act
- Ombudsman Act

Over the last 12 months, CPRC has implemented around 85% of its obligations underneath the framework. The framework comprises of a calendar which holds key reporting dates, reminders and identifies the party/parties responsible as well as a comprehensive spreadsheet detailing each obligation, demonstrating how the organisation is compliant and includes links to folders where this information is stored on CPRC's information management system. In addition, a compliance manual has been developed which provides step by step instructions on the processes that need to be undertaken to ensure continuity.

CPRC have statutory obligations under Part 4 of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014. On 31 August 2019, CPRC submitted their Protective Data Security Plan (PDSP), including attestation to OVIC.

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

ABN 23 100 188 752

Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

ABN 23 100 188 752

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For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

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Directors' Report

30 June 2020

The directors present their report on Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd for the financial year ended 30 June 2020.

1. General information

Information on directors

The names of each person who has been a director during the year and to the date of this report are:

Catherine Wolthuizen (Chair)

Experience

Considerable experience as consumer advocate and ombudsman including as the independent Customer Advocate at NAB, and Ombudsman at the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) in the UK. Held senior roles in two Australian consumer organisations and a former Chair of the Consumer Federation of Australia. Also appointed to the Legal Services Board in Victoria and the Board of the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman.

Dr David Cousins AM (Deputy Chair)

Experience

An economist with extensive background in consumer policy and regulation through university studies and teaching, government and regulatory positions and consulting. Previously been a Director of Consumer Affairs Victoria and also has a strong interest in ethical investment, being Chair of the Board of Uniting Ethical Investors. In 2009 was made a Member of the Order of Australia in recognition of services to consumer policy and administration in Australia.

Petrina Dorrington

Experience

Extensive experience in not for profit leadership roles including executive roles with Kids Under Cover, and the Inland Queensland Tourism and Development Board. Currently a board member of the Royal Children's Hospital and volunteers as mentor for the Lord Mayors' Charitable Foundation Youth in Philanthropy Program.

Maree Davidson AM

Experience

Provides consultancy services and project management across strategic communications and planning, change management, business development and marketing. Also a member of National Coalition Against Bullying and holds several board positions including Chair of the Advisory Committee for the Indigenous Leadership Fellowship and board member of Fitted for Work.

Dr Helen Dickinson

Experience

Helen Dickinson is Professor of Public Service Research and Director of the Public Service Research Group at the School of Business, University of New South Wales, Canberra. Expertise in public services, in particular governance, leadership, commissioning and priority setting. Has published 18 books and over 60 peer-reviewed journal articles on these topics. In 2015 was made a Victorian Fellow of the Institute of Public Administration Australia.

Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

ABN 23 100 188 752

Directors' Report

30 June 2020

1. General information

Principal activities

The principal activity of Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd during the financial year were to undertake independent consumer research and in partnership with others to inform evidence-based policy and business practice change. Working closely with policymakers, regulators, academia, industry and the community sector, Consumer Policy Research Centre's vision is to support a fair outcome for all consumers.

In the past twelve months the Consumer Policy Research Centre has continued to grow and expand its research, consulting and education capabilities consistent with its strategic objectives. This will enable the Consumer Policy Research Centre to increase impact and become a more sustainable organisation going forward.

No significant changes in the nature of the Company's activity occurred during the financial year.

Short term objectives

The Company's short term objectives are to:

- Produce impactful consumer research to drive change in government policy and business practice to benefit consumers.
- Increase awareness of CPRC's activities across government, industry, academia and the community sector.
- Build a respected, effective team of evidence-based policy changemakers.

Long term objectives

The Company's long term objectives are to:

- Become a leading force for the fair, safe and inclusive operation of marketplaces in Victoria and Australia.
- To increase impact through evidence-based research, provision of research, education, training and effective engagement activities.

Strategy for achieving the objectives

To achieve these objectives, the Company has adopted the following strategies:

- Consolidating research activities to the following high-impact areas: Consumers and COVID-19: from crisis to recovery; Data and Technology; Consumer Wellbeing; Lived Experience Library.
- Expanding education, training and research activities to diversify our impact and funding base.
- Strengthening our role as a key interconnector between the sectors by hosting online forums and conferences that will engage and connect policymakers, regulators, academic experts, community advocates and industry leaders.

Directors' Report

30 June 2020

1. General information

How principal activities assisted in achieving the objectives

The principal activities assisted the Company in achieving its objectives by:

- Providing a solid, relevant evidence-base for decision makers to improve policies and programs to benefit consumers.
- Expanding the reach and networks of the organisation to gather diverse insights and increase collaboration across the sectors.

Members' guarantee

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd is a company limited by guarantee. In the event of, and for the purpose of winding up of the company, the amount capable of being called up from each member and any person or association who ceased to be a member in the year prior to the winding up, is limited to \$ 10 for members that are corporations and \$ 10 for all other members, subject to the provisions of the company's constitution.

At 30 June 2020 the collective liability of members was \$ 10 (2019: \$ 10).

The Member is the Minister of the Crown in right of the State of Victoria for the time being administering the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012 incorporating Schedule 2 of the Competition and Consumer Act 2010.

2. Other items

Future developments and results

Likely developments in the operations of the Company and the expected results of those operations in future financial years have not been included in this report as the inclusion of such information is likely to result in unreasonable prejudice to the Company.

Meetings of directors

During the financial year, 5 meetings of directors (including committees of directors) were held. Attendances by each director during the year were as follows:

Directors' Meetings		
Number eligible to attend	Number attended	
Catherine Wolthuizen (Chair)	5	4
Dr David Cousins AM (Deputy Chair)	5	5
Petrina Dorrington	5	4
Maree Davidson AM	5	4
Dr Helen Dickinson	5	5

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

ABN 23 100 188 752

Directors' Report

30 June 2020

Auditor's independence declaration

The lead auditor's independence declaration in accordance with section 307C of the *Corporations Act 2001*, for the year ended 30 June 2020 has been received and can be found on page 5 of the financial report.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:



Director:

Catherine Wolthuizen (Chair)



Director:

Dr David Cousins AM (Deputy Chair)

Dated 02 October 2020

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

ABN 23 100 188 752

Auditor's Independence Declaration under Section 307C of the Corporations Act 2001 to the Directors of Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2020, there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the *Corporations Act 2001* in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



Andrew Fisher FCA, Partner (auditor registration number 306364) on behalf of
Banks Group Assurance Pty Ltd, Chartered Accountants
Authorised audit company registration number 294178 (ACN 115 749 598)
02 October 2020

Melbourne, Australia

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

ABN 23 100 188 752

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

		2020	2019
	Note	\$	\$
Revenue	5	1,690,098	1,631,124
Other income	5	59,720	15,565
Occupancy costs		(4,556)	(39,224)
Administrative expenses		(107,438)	(91,881)
Employee benefits expense		(793,332)	(677,910)
Research and other project expenses		(747,765)	(431,276)
Other expenses		(162,706)	(164,899)
Finance expenses		(22,306)	-
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year		(88,285)	241,499
Total comprehensive income for the year		(88,285)	241,499

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

ABN 23 100 188 752

Statement of Financial Position

As At 30 June 2020

	Note	2020 \$	2019 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	8	1,287,120	1,369,168
Trade and other receivables	9	46,765	6,114
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>1,333,885</u>	<u>1,375,282</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	10	47,999	33,273
Right-of-use assets	11	315,810	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>363,809</u>	<u>33,273</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>1,697,694</u>	<u>1,408,555</u>
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	12	265,228	201,084
Lease liabilities	11	60,921	-
Employee benefits	13	77,824	35,979
Other financial liabilities	14	-	63,784
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>403,973</u>	<u>300,847</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	11	330,327	-
Employee benefits	13	12,566	3,454
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>342,893</u>	<u>3,454</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>746,866</u>	<u>304,301</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>950,828</u>	<u>1,104,254</u>
EQUITY			
Accumulated surplus		<u>950,828</u>	<u>1,104,254</u>
TOTAL EQUITY		<u>950,828</u>	<u>1,104,254</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

ABN 23 100 188 752

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

2020

	Accumulated surplus \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2019	1,104,254	1,104,254
Change in accounting policy to reflect the retrospective adjustments - adoption of AASB 16	(65,140)	(65,140)
Balance at 1 July 2019 restated	1,039,114	1,039,114
Deficit attributable to the entity	(88,286)	(88,286)
Balance at 30 June 2020	<u>950,828</u>	<u>950,828</u>

2019

	Accumulated surplus \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2018	694,744	694,744
Change to opening balance due to change in accounting policy	168,010	168,010
Balance at 1 July 2018 restated	862,754	862,754
Surplus attributable to the entity	241,500	241,500
Balance at 30 June 2019	<u>1,104,254</u>	<u>1,104,254</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

ABN 23 100 188 752

Statement of Cash Flows For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
Note	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Receipts from customers	1,806,901	1,632,155
Payments to suppliers and employees	(1,791,602)	(1,254,538)
Interest received	8,888	15,565
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	18 <u>24,187</u>	<u>393,182</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	<u>(33,104)</u>	<u>(4,181)</u>
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	<u>(33,104)</u>	<u>(4,181)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Payment of lease liabilities	<u>(73,131)</u>	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	<u>(73,131)</u>	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	(82,048)	389,001
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	<u>1,369,168</u>	<u>980,167</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	8 <u><u>1,287,120</u></u>	<u><u>1,369,168</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

ABN 23 100 188 752

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

The financial report covers Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd as an individual entity. Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd is a not-for-profit Company limited by guarantee, incorporated and domiciled in Australia.

The functional and presentation currency of Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd is Australian dollars.

The financial report was authorised for issue by the Directors on 02 October 2020.

1 Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Corporations Act 2001*.

2 Change in Accounting Policy

Revenue from Contracts with Customers - Adoption of AASB 15

The Company has adopted AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* and AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* for the first time in the current year with a date of initial application of 1 July 2019.

The Company has applied AASB 15 and AASB 1058 using the cumulative effect method which means the comparative information has not been restated and continues to be reported under AASB 111, AASB 118, AASB 1004 and related interpretations. All adjustments on adoption of AASB 15 and AASB 1058 have been taken to retained earnings at 1 July 2019.

The key changes to the Company's accounting policies and the impact on these financial statements from applying AASB 15 and AASB 1058 are described below.

The company has had to determine the substance of all grant contracts in place and determine if revenue should be recognised under AASB 15 or AASB 1058.

If performance obligations were sufficiently specific, AASB 15 was applied when recognising the revenue associated with the contract. Key performance obligations were identified, and revenue was only recognised when these obligations were fulfilled. Any payments received before key performance obligations were fulfilled were treated as income in advance and recognised as necessary.

If performance obligations were not specific, AASB 1058 was applied to the contract. Revenue was therefore recognised upon receipt of the associated asset.

Leases - Adoption of AASB 16

The Company has adopted AASB 16 *Leases* using the modified retrospective (cumulative catch-up) method from 1 July 2019 and therefore the comparative information for the year ended 30 June 2019 has not been restated and has been prepared in accordance with AASB 117 *Leases* and associated Accounting Interpretations.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

2 Change in Accounting Policy

Leases - Adoption of AASB 16

Impact of adoption of AASB 16

The impact of adopting AASB 16 is described below:

Company as a lessee

Under AASB 117, the Company assessed whether leases were operating or finance leases based on its assessment of whether the significant risks and rewards of ownership had been transferred to the Company or remained with the lessor. Under AASB 16, there is no differentiation between finance and operating leases for the lessee and therefore all leases which meet the definition of a lease are recognised on the statement of financial position (except for short-term leases and leases of low value assets).

The Company has elected to use the exception to lease accounting for short-term leases and leases of low value assets, and the lease expense relating to these leases are recognised in the statement of profit or loss on a straight line basis.

Practical expedients used on transition

AASB 16 includes a number of practical expedients which can be used on transition, the Company has used the following expedients:

- lease liabilities have been discounted using the Company's incremental borrowing rate at 1 July 2019;
- right-of-use assets at 1 July 2019 have been measured at an amount equal to the lease liability adjusted by the amount of any prepaid or accrued lease payments;
- a single discount rate was applied to all leases with similar characteristics;
- the right-of-use asset was adjusted by the existing onerous lease provision (where relevant) at 30 June 2019 rather than perform impairment testing of the right-of-use asset;
- used hindsight when determining the lease term if the contract contains options to extend or terminate the lease.

Grant expenditure recognition

Research grant expenditure is now recognised as an expense when it becomes payable to the entity, where in previous years grant expenditure was accrued when it was pledged to the the grant recipient.

The net impact of the adjustment for FY19 was a decrease of grant expenditure \$88,548, decrease in grants payable of \$256,559 and increase of opening retained earnings of \$168,011.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

3 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Revenue and other income

For comparative year

Revenue is recognised when the amount of the revenue can be measured reliably, it is probable that economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the Company and specific criteria relating to the type of revenue as noted below, has been satisfied.

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is presented net of returns, discounts and rebates.

Grant revenue

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd receives non-reciprocal contributions of assets from the government and other parties for zero or a nominal value. These assets are recognised at fair value on the date of acquisition in the statement of financial position, with a corresponding amount of income recognised in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income.

Revenue from contracts with customers

For current year

The core principle of AASB 15 is that revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the Company expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services. Revenue is recognised by applying a five-step model as follows:

1. Identify the contract with the customer
2. Identify the performance obligations
3. Determine the transaction price
4. Allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations
5. Recognise revenue as and when control of the performance obligations is transferred

Generally the timing of the payment for sale of goods and rendering of services corresponds closely to the timing of satisfaction of the performance obligations, however where there is a difference, it will result in the recognition of a receivable, contract asset or contract liability.

None of the revenue streams of the Company have any significant financing terms as there is less than 12 months between receipt of funds and satisfaction of performance obligations.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

3 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Revenue and other income

Specific revenue streams

The revenue recognition policies for the principal revenue streams of the Company are:

Grant income - AASB 15

Where grant income arises from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations then the revenue is recognised when control of each performance obligations is satisfied.

The performance obligations are varied based on the agreement but may include the provision of research, consulting and education services to various institutions.

Each performance obligation is considered to ensure that the revenue recognition reflects the transfer of control and within grant agreements there may be some performance obligations where control transfers at a point in time and others which have continuous transfer of control over the life of the contract.

Where control is transferred over time, generally the input methods being either costs or time incurred are deemed to be the most appropriate methods to reflect the transfer of benefit.ter detail of revenue stream

Grant income - AASB 1058

Amounts arising from grants in the scope of AASB 1058 are recognised at the assets fair value when the asset is received. The Company considers whether there are any related liability or equity items associated with the asset which are recognised in accordance with the relevant accounting standard.

Once the assets and liabilities have been recognised then income is recognised for any remaining asset value at the time that the asset is received.

Other income

Other income is recognised on an accruals basis when the Company is entitled to it.

(b) Income Tax

The Company is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

(c) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of GST.

Cash flows in the statement of cash flows are included on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

3 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(d) Property, plant and equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment.

Items of property, plant and equipment acquired for nil or nominal consideration have been recorded at the acquisition date fair value.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment are measured using the cost model.

Depreciation

Property, plant and equipment, excluding freehold land, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the asset's useful life to the Company, commencing when the asset is ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are shown below:

Fixed asset class	Depreciation rate
Office Equipment	20-50%
Website costs	20%

At the end of each annual reporting period, the depreciation method, useful life and residual value of each asset is reviewed. Any revisions are accounted for prospectively as a change in estimate.

(e) Financial instruments

Financial instruments are recognised initially using trade date accounting, i.e. on the date that the Company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets

All recognised financial assets are subsequently measured in their entirety at either amortised cost or fair value, depending on the classification of the financial assets.

Trade receivables

Impairment of trade receivables have been determined using the simplified approach in AASB 9 which uses an estimation of lifetime expected credit losses. The Company has determined the probability of non-payment of the receivable and multiplied this by the amount of the expected loss arising from default.

The amount of the impairment is recorded in a separate allowance account with the loss being recognised in finance expense. Once the receivable is determined to be uncollectable then the gross carrying amount is written off against the associated allowance.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

3 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(e) Financial instruments

Financial liabilities

The Company measures all financial liabilities initially at fair value less transaction costs, subsequently financial liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

The financial liabilities of the Company comprise trade payables, bank and other loans and lease liabilities.

(f) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

(g) Leases

Lessee accounting

The non-lease components included in the lease agreement have been separated and are recognised as an expense as incurred.

At the lease commencement, the Company recognises a right-of-use asset and associated lease liability for the lease term. The lease term includes extension periods where the Company believes it is reasonably certain that the option will be exercised.

The right-of-use asset is measured using the cost model where cost on initial recognition comprises of the lease liability, initial direct costs, prepaid lease payments, estimated cost of removal and restoration less any lease incentives received.

The right-of-use asset is depreciated over the lease term on a straight line basis and assessed for impairment in accordance with the impairment of assets accounting policy.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments at the commencement of the lease. The discount rate is the rate implicit in the lease, however where this cannot be readily determined then the Company's incremental borrowing rate is used.

Subsequent to initial recognition, the lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. The lease liability is remeasured whether there is a lease modification, change in estimate of the lease term or index upon which the lease payments are based (e.g. CPI) or a change in the Company's assessment of lease term.

Where the lease liability is remeasured, the right-of-use asset is adjusted to reflect the remeasurement or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

Exceptions to lease accounting

The Company has elected to apply the exceptions to lease accounting for both short-term leases (i.e. leases with a term of less than or equal to 12 months) and leases of low-value assets. The Company recognises the payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

3 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(h) Employee benefits

Provision is made for the Company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits that are expected to be wholly settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Employee benefits expected to be settled more than one year after the end of the reporting period have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may satisfy vesting requirements. Cashflows are discounted using market yields on high quality corporate bond rates incorporating bonds rated AAA or AA by credit agencies, with terms to maturity that match the expected timing of cashflows. Changes in the measurement of the liability are recognised in profit or loss.

(i) Adoption of new and revised accounting standards

The Company has adopted all standards which became effective for the first time at 30 June 2020, the adoption of these standards has not caused any material adjustments to the reported financial position, performance or cash flow of the Company or refer to Note 2 for details of the changes due to standards adopted.

4 Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments

The directors make estimates and judgements during the preparation of these financial statements regarding assumptions about current and future events affecting transactions and balances.

These estimates and judgements are based on the best information available at the time of preparing the financial statements, however as additional information is known then the actual results may differ from the estimates.

The significant estimates and judgements made have been described below.

Key estimates - receivables

The receivables at reporting date have been reviewed to determine whether there is any objective evidence that any of the receivables are impaired. An impairment provision is included for any receivable where the entire balance is not considered collectible. The impairment provision is based on the best information at the reporting date.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

5 Revenue and Other Income

Revenue from continuing operations

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Revenue from contracts with customers (AASB 15)		
- Grant income	411,363	1,631,124
Revenue recognised on receipt (not enforceable or no sufficiently specific performance obligations - AASB 1058)		
- Grant income	1,278,735	-
Total Revenue	1,690,098	1,631,124

Other Income breakup

Other Income		
- Interest received	8,888	15,565
- other income	50,832	-
	59,720	15,565
Total Revenue and Other Income	1,749,818	1,646,689

(a) Income by source

Department of Justice	1,167,329	1,239,063
Education and training	428,902	392,061
Research services	78,364	-
Events	15,503	-
Other income	59,720	15,565
Total income	1,749,818	1,646,689

6 Finance Income and Expenses

Finance expenses

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Interest expense on lease liability	22,306	-

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

7 Result for the Year

The result for the year includes the following specific expenses:

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Other expenses:		
Employee benefit expenses	111	-
Depreciation expenses	79,502	13,300

8 Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Cash at bank and in hand	794,414	729,700
Short-term deposits	492,706	639,468
	<u>1,287,120</u>	<u>1,369,168</u>

9 Trade and other receivables

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Trade receivables	4,009	2,000
GST receivable	35,126	2,902
Prepayments	7,630	-
Other receivables	-	1,212
	<u>46,765</u>	<u>6,114</u>

The carrying value of trade receivables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short-term nature of the balances.

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date is the fair value of each class of receivable in the financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

10 Property, plant and equipment

PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Office equipment

At cost	92,593	67,984
Accumulated depreciation	(59,623)	(47,238)
Total office equipment	32,970	20,746

Website costs

At cost	29,960	21,466
Accumulated depreciation	(14,931)	(8,939)
Total website costs	15,029	12,527

Total property, plant and equipment	47,999	33,273
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(a) Movements in Carrying Amounts

Movement in the carrying amounts for each class of property, plant and equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year:

	Office Equipment \$	Website cost \$	Total \$
Year ended 30 June 2020			
Balance at the beginning of year	20,746	12,527	33,273
Additions	24,610	8,494	33,104
Depreciation expense	(12,386)	(5,992)	(18,378)
Balance at the end of the year	32,970	15,029	47,999

11 Leases

The Company has applied AASB 16 using the modified retrospective (cumulative catch-up) method and therefore the comparative information has not been restated and continues to be reported under AASB 117 and related Interpretations.

Company as a lessee

The Company has a lease over land and buildings for its current premises of operation.

The Company has chosen not to apply AASB 16 to leases of intangible assets.

Information relating to the leases in place and associated balances and transactions are provided below.

Terms and conditions of leases

The Company leases land and buildings for their corporate office. The lease is for a period of 5 years which includes a renewal option to allow the Company to renew for an additional 3 year term.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

11 Leases

The corporate office lease contains an annual increase of 4% for the life of the lease.

The Company has elected to measure the right of use asset arising from the concessionary leases at cost which is based on the associated lease liability.

Right-of-use assets

	Buildings	Total
	\$	\$
Year ended 30 June 2020		
Balance at beginning of year	376,934	376,934
Depreciation charge	(61,124)	(61,124)
Balance at end of year	<u>315,810</u>	<u>315,810</u>

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

The amounts recognised in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income relating to leases where the Company is a lessee are shown below:

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Interest expense on lease liabilities	(22,306)	-

Statement of Cash Flows

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Total cash outflow for leases	73,131	-

12 Trade and Other Payables

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Trade payables	217,639	160,647
Other payables	47,589	40,437
	<u>265,228</u>	<u>201,084</u>

Trade and other payables are unsecured, non-interest bearing and are normally settled within 30 days. The carrying value of trade and other payables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short-term nature of the balances.

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

ABN 23 100 188 752

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

13 Employee Benefits

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Provision for annual leave	77,824	35,979
	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
	\$	\$
NON-CURRENT		
Provision for long service leave	12,566	3,454

14 Other Financial Liabilities

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Deferred income	-	63,784

15 Member Guarantee

The Company is incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* and is a Company limited by guarantee. If the Company is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$ 10 each towards meeting any outstandings and obligations of the Company. At 30 June 2020 the number of members was 1 (2019: 1).

16 Key Management Personnel Remuneration

The totals of remuneration paid to the key management personnel of Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd during the year are as follows:

The total remuneration paid to key management personnel of the Company is \$ 403,835 (2019: \$ 240,591).

17 Contingencies

In the opinion of the Directors, the Company did not have any contingencies at 30 June 2020 (30 June 2019: None).

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

18 Cash Flow Information

Reconciliation of net income to net cash provided by operating activities:

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	(88,285)	241,499
Non-cash flows in profit:		
- depreciation	79,502	13,300
- lease liability financing interest	22,306	-
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
- (increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	(33,021)	1,031
- (increase)/decrease in prepayments	(7,630)	2,273
- increase/(decrease) in income in advance	(63,784)	(39,969)
- increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	64,143	157,705
- increase/(decrease) in employee benefits	50,957	17,342
Cashflows from operations	<u>24,188</u>	<u>393,181</u>

19 Events after the end of the Reporting Period

The financial report was authorised for issue on 02 October 2020 by the Board of Directors.

COVID19 and its associated economic impacts remain uncertain. The Company continues to closely monitor developments with a focus on potential and operational impacts. The Directors, on the date of approving these financial statements, are of the view the effects of COVID-19 do not change the significant estimates, judgments and assumptions used in the preparation of these financial statements, however note that the situation is continuing to evolve.

Except for the above, no other matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or could significantly affect the operations of the Company, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Company in future financial years.

20 Statutory Information

The registered office and principal place of business of the company is:

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd
 Level 14
 10-16 Queen Street
 MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

ABN 23 100 188 752

Directors' Declaration

The directors of the Company declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 6 to 22, are in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001* and:
 - a. comply with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements; and
 - b. give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2020 and of the performance for the year ended on that date of the Company.
2. In the directors' opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.



Director



Director

Dated 02 October 2020

Independent Audit Report to the members of Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd (the Company), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Company is in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001*, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 30 June 2020 and of its financial performance for the year ended; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Corporations Regulations 2001*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001* and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We confirm that the independence declaration required by the *Corporations Act 2001*, which has been given to the directors of the Company, would be in the same terms if given to the directors as at the time of this auditor's report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Corporations Act 2001* and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

Independent Audit Report to the members of Consumer Policy Research Centre Ltd

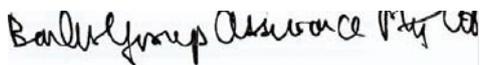
As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

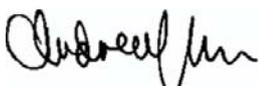
We communicate with the directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

We also provide the directors with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.

From the matters communicated with the directors, we determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial report of the current period and are therefore the key audit matters. We describe these matters in our auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or when, in extremely rare circumstances, we determine that a matter should not be communicated in our report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.



Banks Group Assurance Pty Ltd, Chartered Accountants
Authorised audit company number 294178 (ACN 115 749 598)



Andrew Fisher, Partner
Registration number 306364

Melbourne, Victoria
2 October 2020

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**Consumer
Policy Research
Centre**