

## Submission

### **Re: New ACMA powers to combat misinformation and disinformation**

This bill should not be passed because it ensures the destruction of democracy.

On the ACMA submission website, 'The Issue' is elaborated as "Misinformation and disinformation pose a threat to the safety and wellbeing of Australians, as well as to our democracy, society and economy". Unfortunately, this statement is incorrect. *Censorship of free and open discourse* poses a threat to the safety and wellbeing of Australians, as well as to our democracy, society and economy; and it seems that this bill intends to allow just that.

Democracy is based on the premise that the government has the *informed consent* of the people to perform its duties. If the Australian government is allowed to define what is *false, misleading or deceptive* information, how can the Australian people have unbiased access to that information to make up their own minds? Surely the Australian government doesn't think that the average Australian adult is incapable of making up his/her mind about what is right and wrong.

Moreover, how does the government intend to discern which information is *false, misleading or deceptive*? Even if the government hired every so-called expert in the world to evaluate the information, their verdicts will only be *the opinions of those experts*, nothing more. To even think that one small group of people have all the answers and the power to veto facts and ideas to the contrary, is not only immoral, but is a dangerous threat to democracy.

On top of all this, the bill empowers the government to go after people that post information so deemed (i.e. *false, misleading or deceptive*) by pressuring the platforms to remove the content or provide information on the people posting the information, and depending on the action, fining or imprisoning them.

This Orwellian overreach is greatly disturbing. Facilitating the removal of alternative views is a big first step toward keeping public thought 'in line'. This is what communist regimes do. I am shocked to think that the Australia government wants to follow in these footsteps.

The Australian government must not pass any bills that restrict the ability of the Australian people to access and impart information, and to make informed decisions. This bill in particular will facilitate censorship of the communist kind, and is abhorrent to the democracy that is Australia. This bill should not be passed.