

Disinformation and Misinformation

I've been reading the draft bill on management of Misinformation and Disinformation. I have the following comments to make.

This draft bill under takes to perform a

Classification of Misinformation and disinformation as per the detail quoted in the bill below.

(1) For the purposes of this Schedule, dissemination of content using a digital service is *misinformati*

on on the
digital
service if:

- (a) the
conten
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inform
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that is
false,
mislea
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decept
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and
- (b) the
conten
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exclud
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conten
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misinfo
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purpos
es; and
(c) the
conten
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provid
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the
digital
service
to one
or
more
enduse
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Austral
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(d) the
provisi
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the
conten
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the
digital

service
is
reason
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likely
to
cause
or
contrib
ute to
serious
harm.

(2) For the
purposes of
this
Schedule,
disseminatio
n of content
using a
digital
service is
***disinformati
on*** on the
digital
service if:

(a) the

content
contains
information
that is
false,
misleading or
deceptive;
and
(b) the
content is not
excluded
content
for
misinformation
purposes; and
(c) the

content is provided on the digital service to one or more end users in Australia; and (d) the provision of the content on the digital service is reasonably

likely
to
cause
or
contrib
ute to
serious
harm;
and
(e) the
person
dissem
inating,
or
causin
g the
dissem
ination
of, the
conten
t
intends
that
the
conten
t

deceive
another
person
.

Note:
Disinformation
includes
disinformation by or on
behalf of a
foreign power.

(3) For the purposes of this Schedule, in determining whether the

provision of content on a digital service is reasonably likely to cause or contribute to serious harm, have regard to the following matters:

- (a) the circumstances in which the content is disseminated;
- (b) the subject matter

of the
false,
mislea
ding or
decept
ive
inform
ation in
the
conten
t;

(c) the
potenti
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reach
and
speed
of the
dissem
ination;
(d) the
severit
y of
the
potenti
al

impact
s of
the
dissem
ination;
(e) the
author
of the
inform
ation;
(f) the
purpos
e of
the
dissem
ination;
(g)
whethe
r the
inform
ation
has
been
attribut
ed to a
source

and, if so, the authority of the source and whether the attribution is correct ;

(h) other related false, misleading or deceptive information disseminated;

(i) any

other
relevan
t
matter.
Note:
See
the
definiti
on of
harm
in
clause
2.

(4) Subclause (2) does not limit subclause (1).

So, the bill intends to, in essence create an additional role of an arbitrary body, within ACMA ;

As highlighted by Alex Antic

Liberal Senator for South Australia:

Australian
Communications and
Media
Authority
(ACMA) the
authority to
“develop a
code of
practice
covering
measures to
combat
misinformatio
n and

disinformation on digital platforms, which the ACMA could register and enforce."

By "enforce," they mean that corporations, such as social media platforms, accused of

sharing
"misinformati
on" or
"disinformatio
n" could face
penalties of
up to \$2.75
million, and
individuals
could be
penalised
with fines of
up to \$0.55
million.

The Fact

Sheet states:
“rules made
under the Bill
may require
digital
platform
services to
have systems
and
processes in
place to
address
misinformatio
n or
disinformatio

n that meets
a threshold of
being likely to
cause or
contribute to
serious harm.

And

One category
of harm
outlined in
the Fact
Sheet is,
"Harm to the
health of
Australians."

Would that include such misinformation, now acknowledged as fact, as lockdowns doing more harm than good, or pharmaceutical products being linked to myocarditis?

Another category is "Harm to the Australian environment." Will content that expresses scepticism about the Net Zero agenda be considered mis or dis information

under the
pretext of
protecting us
from climate
change?

And, of
course, harm
includes

“Hatred
against a
group in
Australian
society on the
basis of
ethnicity,

nationality,
race, gender,
sexual
orientation,
age, religion
or physical or
mental
disability."

Will saying
that men
shouldn't play
women's
sports, or
defending
traditional

marriage, be considered "hate"

One is compelled to strongly agree with the concerns expressed by Senator Antic.

In view of these facts the following concerns and questions come to light.

- Censorship of information with which the "body" does not agree, in their opinion. My question bring who can declare that the body's opinion is correct?
- Who is to be the judge of misinformation, on what premise or

basis? There is a book by Stephen Meyer named *A Return of the God Hypothesis* available. There are many YouTube discussions around this book. The book puts forward a theory that Science has changed its mind about the 'origins of species' and it puts forward arguments for "Intelligent Design". Would the references made by a person on Facebook to a group of "friends" be considered misinformation and stifled?

● Are we living in an

era where the activities spoken about by George Orwell in his book Animal Farm are coming to pass - where we are all equal but some are more equal than others? Also the are scenarios spoken about within his other book Nineteen Eighty Four coming to light in our present age?

- Are the Australian people, those who voted the present Federal government into power, not intelligent enough to judge what is and isn't misinformation for themselves?
- Is Australia about to

become a Nanny state where we are told what we are allowed to think and believe?

- Are we no longer entitled to our own opinion? Who has the right to take that from us?
- Are we on the brink of becoming like Germany under the Nazis or East Germany under the Stasi? Noting that these organisations are no longer "in power".
- Communist China is however "in power" - would one have ever thought that a Democratic country like Australia would want to discourage

free thinking?

Conclusion

On consideration of what would be a useful approach around the containing of "mis and dis information', the management of Foreign interference - the likes of TikTok content and content from similar sources, would be more sensible and productive. This is what should be considered.