

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to respond to the proposed Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023) which has been created in response to a 2021 report on the adequacy of digital platforms' disinformation and news quality measures.

Having glanced at a portion of the **necessary** reading I have decided not 'digest' the 500 plus pages of information made available to me (see bold italic below).

I would prefer to ask the following question:

**Qu: What is oversaturation of information?**

**Ans:** Information overload is the state of feeling overwhelmed by the volume of information to the point at which one feels more confused than knowledgeable about a particular topic. Information overload can manifest itself as brain fog and difficulty making decisions.

It is my considered opinion that the 500+ pages are a distraction from the issue at hand. i.e. There is just too much 'bureau speak' to absorb, so why even bother?  
The 500 + pages are as follows:

*ACMA misinformation report: Fact Sheet 1 Key Research Findings* (3 pages)

*ACMA misinformation report: Fact Sheet 2 Code Framework* (2 pages)

*ACMA misinformation report: Fact Sheet 3 Next steps* (2 pages)

*ACMA report to Government on the adequacy of digital platforms' disinformation and news quality measures* (146 pages)

*Exposure Draft Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023* (64 Pages)

*Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023—guidance note* (108 Pages)

*Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023—fact sheet* (9 pages)

**Transparency Reports:**

*Twitter (21 pages)*

*Tik Tok (25 pages)*

*Redbubble (9 pages)*

*Microsoft (32 pages)*

*Meta (49 Pages)*

*Google (30 pages)*

*Apple (10 pages)*

*Adobe (10 pages)*

And so to the matters at hand. Mainstream journalists will predominantly write in favour of their source of funding which may include government instruction or corporate views. This becomes quite apparent when one examines the upcoming referendum regards 'The Voice' (The Uluru Statement of the Heart). At this moment, we see numerous Corporations supporting a YES stance. These include:

The AFL and NRL (whose primary business is sport), BHP and Rio Tinto (mining), Qantas (travel), Woolworths (Food), ANZ (banking), Local Councils (roads, rates & rubbish). Why are these organisations using their profiles (and money) to support 'The Voice' when the final and ultimate decision is to be made by you and I (the electorate).

One can only assume that by taking their stance, such corporations are engaging in some form of lobbying (i.e. seeking to influence a legislator) in order to solicit a 'Yes' response. Upon examining the following definition, it follows that such corporate views could also be labelled as Propaganda i.e.

**“Information, ideas, opinions, or images, often only giving one part of an argument, that are broadcast, published, or in some other way spread with the intention of influencing people's opinions”**

Having dispensed with the 500+ pages, I believe that the Misinformation, Disinformation Bill is best resolved by examining **Article 19 of United Declaration of Human Rights**

*“Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”*

**Australia was also one of eight nations involved in drafting the Universal Declaration. It was signed by the Australian Government in 1948 and still stands today.**

Without freedom of speech, individuals could not criticize government officials, test their theories against those of others, counter negative expression with a different viewpoint, or express their individuality and autonomy.

Regards

Garry Smith