

From: [REDACTED]

## NEW ACMA POWERS TO COMBAT MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION

On the face of it, the ACMA powers seem quite reasonable, however, closer examination shows this proposal to be nothing more than an attempt to censor what Australian citizens can say on subjects that affect them and their fellow citizens. How dare unelected bureaucrats be licensed to censor free speech in a supposedly democratic country such as Australia? What makes the proposed bill even worse are the harsh penalties detailed within it.

The long and complicated format of the draft bill, with the penalties hidden at the very end have two effects:

1. To make it easy for bureaucrats to interfere with the free, reasonable and honest dissemination of information **at the behest of governments.**
2. To provide a field day for lawyers so long as the disseminator of information has sufficient money to pay for lawyers.

The definitions of disinformation and misinformation can easily be interpreted subjectively, as has already happened. This has been amply demonstrated in relation to the response to Covid. This mal-interpretation was more often than not at the behest of or organised by, governments or government agencies. Even worse was the deliberate strategy to induce fear and hence control, in the population. Challenges to such draconian measures were often classed as either disinformation or misinformation. We now know that much of what was said during the Covid pandemic by governments was simply not true. Even at the time there were those who were much better qualified than government decision makers but who were silenced.

The Bill specifically excludes professional news content and Federal and State government sponsored content. Of professional news purveyors the taxpayer funded ABC is one of the major sources of 'news' in Australia, yet it is one of the most biased and hence reasonably subject to online criticism. Equally we have discovered through the Covid pandemic the deceitful and duplicitous behaviour of Federal and State Governments. More recently, we have been lied to by the Federal Government over the cost of electricity.

In a recent specific case, the question of the content of Uluru of the Statement from the Heart was raised by Peta Credlin on Sky News who showed films of Megan Davis and Pat Anderson stating quite categorically that the Statement is at least eighteen pages long. This assertion was changed on the ABC 7.30 Report to fit the 'narrative' desired by the Prime Minister who subsequently admitted that he had not read the full Statement and saw no need to. Yet Peter Credlin's credible commentary was removed from Facebook after being 'fact checked' by the ABC and RMIT. This represents appalling duplicity.

If these new ACMA powers are implemented, Australia will be going down the path of the old East Germany, North Korea and Communist China to name but three.

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