

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
Submission on the exposure draft of the proposed Communications Legislation Amendment
(Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023 20 August 2023



I am making this submission in my role as a journalist and writer [REDACTED] This proposed legislation sets up the Australian Media and Communications Authority (ACMA) as a powerful censorship organ of the state. The effect will be that ACMA controls everything that Australians can see, hear and say online through industry codes of practice enforced by Big Tech corporations. This legislation assumes that ACMA, an arm of the state, is able to determine what is “untrue, misleading or deceitful” (misinformation) when they have no such ability. ACMA doesn’t know (and cannot know) what is true. It therefore cannot preside over, set and enforce misinformation codes of practice. This is outsourced state censorship, totalitarian in scope, designed to control the public conversation and camouflaged as protection. Misinformation is jargon for being wrong, and disinformation is a made-up word for lying. The government should not be in the business of determining “truth” for the Australian public. This legislation should therefore be rejected in full.