

Attachments:

[Australian Government_letter to ACMA.docx](#) ;

David McCormack



Public

New ACMA powers to combat misinformation and disinformation

The bill that is proposed is extremely dangerous and represents a massive overreach of the government. The simple fact that a nonelected government organisation will decide what is dis/mis information and will have the powers to censor/limit/label content places power beyond the scope of government agencies and damages fundamental rights of democracy in this country.

It is nonsensical to believe the Australian public could trust a government organisation with the power to influence the public narrative on any topic it chooses. This power will erode the foundation of democracy at the deepest level.

Who decides what should be labelled mis/disinformation? The public needs the opportunity to decide their point of view based on ALL the information, that is how democracy works, indeed that is how science works. Open debate on topics receiving the same for and against arguments. The inference that mis/disinformation is dangerous pales into insignificance the potential harm contrived meddling of the facts will provide to democratic choice.

At what point does the government instruct the ACMA on pushing its agenda? During a pandemic? During an energy crisis? During a climate emergency? Any perceived crisis will represent an opportunity for government via the ACMA to enforce its opinions and manipulate the public.

There is no balance possible where this concept of censoring information will lead to a more balanced outcome for the public to make decisions based on all the available information. In the media currently there is extreme polarisation and distrust of media outlets driven mostly by the underlying narrative of each media/news organisation outlet. The only way to bring this together and for the public to again trust its sources of information is to have less censorship and greater transparency. This bill will only deepen the mistrust within the community, increase the divide between community groups and lead to a more fractured society distrustful of everyone.

Well done government on making things worse.

Regards

David McCormack