



5 August 2023

Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023

No. , 2023

Thank you for permitting to forward my views and concerns regarding the above amendment.

I will start initially with my grave concern regarding the perceived need to impose any form of censorship on our existing law (s). It now seems these further amendments to the existing communication bills is to allow the ongoing actions of censorship we have just experienced. And to this I object, my further reasons follow:

- 1- Under section 1 in the exposure draft the definitions of “harm” which would be enacted by the few individuals given this position in the respective government department (s), on the entire population of our Country. These amendments only reflect the current mindset regarding the definition of the term “harm”. And has already created unjust treatment to various individuals in our society as it already stands, these further amendments to censor is akin to the cancel culture but more insidious, as its not in the public arena. For example, many poor decisions made by the elected government (s) of Australia have resulted in harm and potential harm* to its citizens today. And my stating this would pass any “pub test” with the majority of voting citizens. And of course these actions will not be included by these amendments whilst having the greatest potential to cause harm to the vast majority.
 - 2- Danger of imposing censorship is amplified when consideration is given to the potential and unfortunately likely misuse by current and future governments, and those sitting on this board are likely to underestimate the probability of this because the cast has been set for this directive and their work is to move this forward regardless.
 - 3- The selection of those appointed to make decisions for the over 26 million population regarding what and when to censor would not be put in the electorates hands who are affected by this but by the government, and allied international countries and corporations. One only has to review relatively recent history to see that a country that currently was involved with the combined war exercise that France exposed the entire east coast of Australia and to New Zealand with its nuclear testing.
- 3- Currently the esteem held prior to more recent times by the citizenry of elected politicians is low. This is not due to the various media / digital platforms but primarily due to more extensive reporting of the actual situations. It is up to informed individuals (which is the Australian population) to make a better-informed choice. Any “perceived” mis or dis information by these proposed changes would very likely “corral the populous” into what

really has great potential to become propaganda; espoused by the very governmental committees “entrusted” to preserve our country’s democratic processes.

4- I believe that any further imposition placed on the already over regulated freedoms of Australian citizens will cause any overbearing government to possibly lose the next election.

* Current status of Darwin’s provision of port to China just one of many examples.

Yours sincerely