

# Submission re New ACMA powers to combat misinformation and disinformation.

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We write in response to the ACMA's request for feedback on the proposed Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023 (the Bill). We strongly object to this bill and wish to see it squashed as soon as possible.

Some of our key concerns are - The Vague Definition of Misinformation and Disinformation, The Inadequate Definition of Harm, A Deficiency of Excluded Content, The Worrying Extent of Control Over Digital Platforms

We contend that this definition is unacceptably broad, particularly given the extent to which the powers conferred within this Bill will come to infringe on the public's ability to not only speak, but have access to information, and think freely. It utterly fails to provide, either through gross oversight or deliberate omissions, details on: what constitutes false or misleading information, who decides whether the content satisfies the harm component and what determinants determined?, what are the checks and balances to guard against arbitrary determinations in regards to who determines what subject matter will fall within the act?,

There is no freedom of the press, nor can Australia's purported democratic system of governance be properly implemented where the only information the public is able to access is that which is sanctioned by the state and its ancillaries. Who decides what is fact and what is not? Who fact checks the fact checkers given how absolutely wrong many fact checks have proven to be

Overall, this is an ill-conceived bill whose primary purpose is to establish a 'ministry of truth' that will ensure that no opposing voices to the political apparatus can utilise public spaces or any other effective digital communications platform to speak; whilst propping up all structures and organisations that will act as the mouthpiece for the state. This bill renders onto ACMA the type of powers that mirrors the CCP's chokehold on the dissemination of information in China. It is hard to believe that powers such as these are being proposed in a "liberal democracy."

This bill is an abomination and if it is to pass, it will see the descent of this great nation into fascism the likes of which even Stalin and Mao could not conceive of in their wildest dreams. We the Australian people have noted this ill-disguised attempt at control over our minds and every thought. The community needs to be able to compare and evaluate information for themselves, and to do their own active critical thinking without being babied by the state.

This discussion is about the curtailment of respectful free speech and expression, especially where it might be critical of policies, laws, politicians or governments in general. Increasingly, over the last few years we've experienced considerable government overreach and interference and corporate meddling in our personal affairs, based on their belief as to how we should behave and what we should think.

Regards,

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