

Submission to DITRDCA on the proposed Misinformation and Disinformation Bill.

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Date: Sat, 19 Aug 2023 16:45:48 +1000

As we have only to consult history in the Twentieth Century, the termination of free speech never augurs well for a vibrant and democratic society. It soon loses its vigour, productivity, creativity and hope.

I strongly recommend that any censorship should be strictly limited, and agreed upon by society itself. Opinions of dissent towards government ideology or policies need to be permitted and discussed openly as would be normal in a free society.

Precise definitions of misinformation and disinformation are almost impossible to make due to perpetual and rapid changes in the information landscape. The definition of what constitutes harm should not be made by those who have a vested interest (political, financial, pharmaceutical etc.) but if absolutely necessary by a proven, validated, neutral, multidisciplinary independent group representing the people in a society. Biased reporting of academics, media content, skewed guidelines and profit driven policies can be hazardous to public health and safety.

In my assessment, the risks of the passage of this legislation to the community are severe and the legislation should not be passed.

[REDACTED]

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