

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this.

I want to start by saying that I've seen the work that organisations like 'Digital Rights Watch' and 'Electronic Frontiers Australia' have been doing and the concerns they've raised, and I find it incredibly frustrating that these groups continue to be ignored and not taken seriously by the eSafety office.

I question who the Online Safety Act is really trying to protect. Using ID for age verification is dangerous. Data leaks and mismanagement of information are things that have happened numerous times in the past and are a very real threat to Australian's safety.

Also, the option to be anonymous online is paramount!

Imagine a woman trapped in an abusive relationship looking to leave her partner. She would likely need to organise help and support online through trusted friends, family and organisations.

If she needs ID to use social media, how could she make an anonymous account in secret where she could safely access support groups, information and trusted people without being found out by her abusive partner?

Not to mention the people who have already escaped abusive relationships and rely on having online anonymity to stay hidden from their ex partners.

People NEED the ability to choose anonymity while online.

I post some censored adult content on my social media and I also have a fake surname attached to all my online profiles. I live in a relatively small town and if I had to use my real name online, it would be incredibly easy for someone to find my phone number and where I live.

Anonymity also gives people the freedom to explore and express themselves in different ways that help them to learn and grow as a person. Personally, I will probably stop using social media altogether if I have to trust giving a third party my government ID just to use a platform like Facebook.

Also, what about people who don't have ID? My husband is 34 but doesn't have any photo ID because he's never travelled overseas and doesn't drive or go out anywhere that requires him to have ID. How does he prove who

he is online? Although he's also said he'll delete his Instagram if this verification system goes through.

That also greatly concerns me.

My husband has battled with depression most of his life. He gets social anxiety too and doesn't go outside much. I'm the only person he interacts with irl.

Online though, he has an art account with 4000 followers, a meme account with 3000 followers, and a multitude of people he regularly interacts with. I personally don't actually interact much with people irl either because no one in my area shares my views and interests. I rely on the network of people I've come to grow close with across my social media over the years. Please consider people like us!

There are many people who rely on online communities for help, support, learning and friendship.

Forcing Australians to give private information to a third party when some of us are wildly uncomfortable with that and vehemently against it will result in some of us losing our accounts and access to safe and supportive online spaces.

I have expressed this in my previous submissions relating to the Online Safety Bill, but it's worth mentioning again - It really concerns me that so much power is being given to one individual who isn't elected, but rather appointed to the role of eSafety Commissioner, and that there are no safeguards in place, such as reviews, or rules and consequences to hold that individual accountable should their actions cause significant harm.

It especially concerns me that the current eSafety Commissioner, Julie Inman Grant, appeared on a podcast for NCOSE, an organisation notorious for being anti-porn, anti-LGBT and anti-sex work.

Julie shared a tweet about the podcast in September and many people replied to the tweet, expressing their concern over her involvement with such an organisation.

Rather than reply to anyone, or involve herself in any discourse over the matter, she just deleted the tweet and ignored everyone. She's said in the past that sex workers aren't her target with the Online Safety Act, but how can her words be trusted when she's clearly not willing to even discuss her actions over the NCOSE podcast / tweet?

This is a person who will be in charge of what's "harmful" on the internet.

I have a Patreon account where I share images and clips of me tying myself and being naked in rope.

I use social media like Instagram and Twitter to promote myself. What if my content on social media is deemed harmful and I lose my accounts, effectively making it impossible for me to promote my Patreon anymore and losing potential income? What is the process for me to question this decision? How am I able to ask for a review? How am I able to trust there will even be a fair review from the eSafety office when the eSafety Commissioner has time and again shown that she's not genuinely interested in listening to the concerns of sex workers and various digital rights organisations?

Another thing that concerns me is that encryption is being talked about in the BOSE as if it's a hindrance; a barrier to overcome, whereas encryption is actually quite important to individual privacy and should be protected to stay safe and secure online. Shouldn't we instead be looking at strengthening encryption, which would do more to protect children and all of us and our identities online?

I'll finish this by saying that I fully support the joint submission made by Digital Rights Watch and Global Partners Digital and I agree with everything they wrote in their submission here -

<https://digitalrightswatch.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Global-Partners-Digital-Digital-Rights-Watch-Joint-Submission.pdf>

I implore you to take serious note of what they've written and follow their recommendations.