

Dear Director,

I understand the need to regulate online content so as to protect Australians from harms such as cyberbullying, child abuse material, and non-consensual sharing of intimate images. I agree with these goals, but have grave concerns about other aspects of the Online Safety Bill 2020.

I am an ordinary person, but I care about my own privacy, and the safety and security of others whose identities make them vulnerable when governments intrude inappropriately into their private lives, such as sex workers and LGBTQ people.

Firstly, I agree with most sex workers, and organisations run by sex workers that stand for sex worker rights, that Part Nine of this bill gives the eSafety Commissioner inappropriate and overreaching powers to demand the removal of, and filter Australians' access to, online adult content. Non-abusive adult content should be accessible by adults. These measures will also disproportionately impact sex education and LGBTQ resources, causing harm to those communities. I therefore oppose part 9 and call on Part 9 to be removed from the Online Safety Bill 2020.

I also agree with many of the concerns raised by the organization Digital Rights Watch. The expansion of the Commissioner's information gathering powers to private communications, and the attempt to undermine encrypted messaging services, is deeply frightening to me, as I do not trust law enforcement officers not to abuse their access to private data, nor do I trust the commissioner, or future commissioners, to responsibly wield broad powers to conduct investigations "as they see fit", share private information with foreign agencies, and impose harsh penalties for non-compliance.

Due to the above concerns, I would like to echo Digital Rights Watch's calls for a provision to review the effectiveness of these new powers, increased oversight into the decisions made, a meaningful appeals process for removal notices, and assurance that digital platforms will not be expected to undermine encryption in order to comply with this Bill.

Yours sincerely,

James Mallett.