

June 1 2023

Submission on Safer Online Services and Media Platforms

by Wiremu Thomson

I would like to say that I strongly dislike the proposal that you are considering and would prefer that you abandon the work. I am aware of overseas developments in this space as well as the great firewall of China, and I am unhappy with the DIA heading in the direction proposed.

As a potential victim of misuse of social media, or at least have suffered harm, my preferred solution would be for the Police to establish an online crimes division that could handle complaints and seek a warrant from a court judge to require a platform to identify the IP address or other contact information of the poster, so that they can investigate further when they believe someone has done something illegal. And if Police cannot contact the poster within a reasonable timeframe then they can request the platform remove the content provided the Police can prove it is likely illegal.

To contrast this, my experience was looking on the Police's website about how to make a complaint, and the Police's website saying that digital complaints should go to Netsafe. Netsafe asked me to contact the company, and the company then required me to provide a copy of my drivers licence to them under who knows what privacy conditions. The company then said they didn't have a problem with the content. I went back to Netsafe, who were like "Oh well. If that's what the company thinks, then what can we do." Anyway, you might think that what you're proposing addresses this, but it comes with the cost of potential authoritarianism and a lot of privacy when people are just legally going about their business.

Regarding the complaints DIA may be receiving from parents about their children (a normal eternal inevitability, though perhaps not usually shared with the Government), as I understand it parents already have the ability to solve this for themselves using parental controls on their internet router/modem.

Regards,
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