James

Good work on an excellent Taskforce report. I’m replying for the Home Affairs Portfolio.

Overall Home Affairs support the actions and recommendations contained in the Taskforce draft report. We note that the recommendations align with our work through the Christchurch Call to Action, Digital Industry Engagement Senior Officials Group, Aqaba Process, and Five Country Ministerial meetings.

Definition of terrorist and extreme violent material
The Taskforce modified the definition of ‘abhorrent violent material’ rather than using the definition in the Criminal Code Amendment (Sharing of Abhorrent Violent Material) Act 2019. The Taskforce definition is for ‘terrorist and extreme violent material’. The modified definition does not limit violent acts to those recorded or streamed by the perpetrator or an associate and avoids implications that the taskforce recommendations are for livestreaming only.

Noting this difference we advise that the definition used for terrorist and extreme violent material is suitable and will not affect Home Affairs work but it is at odds with the legislated definition.

Minor comments/suggestions on Actions:
We also make a number of other minor comments and suggestions.

Definitions
AFP suggests the Report should clarify that “crisis situations involving terrorist and extreme violent material online” refers to situations of mass sharing of AVM, rather than to counter-terrorism operations that happen to involve terrorist and extreme violent material online (where police would lead the operational response). This could possibly be clarified in the definitions section of the Report.

Action 2: Reactive Moderation
We suggest renaming action 2 from ‘Reactive Moderation’ to ‘Enhanced Moderation’.
Minors comments/suggestions relating to Recommendations:
Recommendations under Action 4: Industry-Government Collaboration
We suggest that recommendations under this action reference the role of the Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC) as the whole-of-country body with key responsibility for coordination of all jurisdictions and industry engagement for CT matters.

Recommendation 5.4
We anticipate Internet Service Providers will be a key stakeholder in delivering the broader cyber agenda and would therefore like to be involved in any work to develop the legislative amendments to establish the content blocking framework described in Rec 5.4.

Recommendation 6.2
We suggest the Report should clarify how recommendations 6.1-2 (emergency response network) will interact in practice with existing requirements under the new laws for notifications about abhorrent violent material to be made to AFP.

Recommendation 7.2
We note that the inquires recommended under 7.2 are consistent with the Department’s views that the Government needs to be thinking more broadly about concerns across the national security, cyber security and community safety domains.

Happy to discuss further.

HH

Hamish Hansford
First Assistant Secretary
National Security and Law Enforcement Policy Division
Policy Group
Department of Home Affairs
Dear all

Further to 's email on Monday, please find attached a first draft of the Taskforce Report.

The report itself will also be going to industry members of the Taskforce this morning, and we’ll convene telephone chats with each of the major platforms (most likely on Friday). Happy to loop you into those discussions if you would like.

Grateful for your comments on the report ASAP, and not later than midday on Friday, 7 June. Apologies in advance for the tight turnaround.

As this stage, we are pencilling in a meeting of the Taskforce next Thursday in Sydney. We expect to confirm this shortly, and details will follow.

or I would be happy to discuss the broader process and strategy for the Taskforce work for the next couple of weeks, if this helps.

Regards

James

James Penprase
Assistant Secretary / Digital Media and Copyright
Department of Communications and the Arts

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