

From: Isaac.heathwood
To: [Assistance Bill Consultation](#)
Subject: The Assistance and Access Bill 2018
Date: Thursday, 6 September 2018 3:03:09 PM

Hello,

I am writing this letter because I am concerned at the governments continued efforts to force security vulnerabilities in our online infrastructure.

It pains me to no end that no matter how many times you state that it is 'not a backdoor', asking for access to unencrypted plaintext at any part of a service using encryption is still a fucking security vulnerability. There is not and will not be a way to keep whatever access methods used secret and secure. Providing only 'good guy' government hackers with knowledge of flaws is only playing a dangerous waiting game.

A dangerous waiting game I'm sure our leaders will be happy to gamble with for some quick PR points once they arrest the next handful of disgruntled young men planning to leave the country.

I have previously worked for the federal government in IT. And it pains me to say it when I say that I do not often trust any major IT project with federal oversight as a result. While there certainly has been some very successful cases of new technology being built from the ground up (the GNSB's ICON and Ministerial Communications Network for example), there have been colossal problems with change management and general procedures when it comes to retooling or redesigning systems. I personally knew people at both HP and the ABS during Cenusfail who knew that issues raised with concern were not being addressed due to internal management being complacent and I knew people who worked on the automatic debting system for DHS who were at times almost instructed to make the claims process obtuse as to hide the discovered but ignored flaws in the assessment process as to give more time to the department to fix it.

I trust similar stories will abound should they leak out of any potential requests for data. And they always leak out.

In summary, I think Digital Rights Watch are summing up most of our thoughts best when they say:

"As drafted, this Bill would authorise vast new powers to authorities with almost no understanding of the limitations, the implications, or oversight mechanisms. Encryption protocols are the backbone of the digital economy, facilitating every single transaction online. Any attempt to weaken these will be a risk that no other democracy is taking. Strong encryption is essential to the modern Australian economy, and it would be a mistake to deliberately weaken it."

So please, while I'm sure the executive has already made their decision to be the little snitch that squeals for all the big kids at the 5 eyes playground table, maybe you'll listen a little bit and make a paltry media release for 30 minutes stating you'll take comments into consideration and consider making amendments.

That would at least make us feel like we achieved something before you fuck us all anyway.

Sent with [ProtonMail](#) Secure Email.