

From: Kirk Alberts
To: [Assistance Bill Consultation](#)
Subject: Submission to consultation on the Assistance and Access Bill 2018
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Dear Minister

I recently heard about the Assistance and Access Bill and was deeply concerned. By prosecuting anyone who whistleblows on the abuse of the powers it grants while not providing any regulation on said power's use it becomes impossible for the average person to know if their information is being gathered and potentially misinterpreted in order to prosecute them, either for a crime or just to silence an opponent's voice. Aside from the immorality and invasion of privacy, it is also concerning in the following areas:

In order for the system to work, the government would require detailed information on how various companies' services work and the installation of additional software to provide access to their clients' information. Doing so exposes the software to many, and also by nature adds a way in which could be exploited by criminals or unscrupulous employees. Such a breach of cybersecurity is unacceptable!

This bill is an attack on the rights of people of other nationalities, such as Americans, as it allows them to request information they could normally not access themselves from the Australian government and exploit that as they see fit. The potential of this to cause international backlash against Australia is immense, and just the possibility of this kind of misuse would harm the global perception of Australia and its people to some kind of fascist surveillance state.

Any company that offers a secure and encrypted service or privacy and security of your details will be negatively harmed by this bill. For starters, failure to comply results in a \$10 million dollar fine, and compliance results in a major loss of trust in the consumers. What use is an encryption service that has a giant back door in it? As such, these companies will rapidly lose clients and potentially collapse, or at least move their service to countries not affected by such a ridiculous bill. Many Australians would be affected as their companies that they built or work for have to close up shop, who knows how bad of an effect this could have on the economy?

The internet is relatively young in terms of developments, yet has had a substantial effect on our world. People can communicate and do business with people all over the world, have rapid access to information and education, can access their funds online and transfer them in moments. All of this relies on encryption to prevent its misuse. Without it, online dealings would be rendered risky and be avoided. Aside from the aforementioned economical impact, this would have a major impact on the people too by destroying their trust in online privacy. People would not be free to say anything they pleased lest it be misunderstood and used against them, and would create a distrust with the government and its agencies themselves, who are meant to serve and protect the people. This attack on online privacy will likely have major consequences.

I urge the government to consider how this Bill, in its current draft form, could damage the way that I, and many other Australians, use digital communications on a daily basis. I am also concerned about the impact on my rights - particularly the right to privacy.

Thank you for your time.

Kirk Alberts

