

## Australia's approach to countering foreign interference

Countering foreign interference requires a whole-of-nation effort to raise the cost and reduce the benefit to foreign powers interfering in Australian society.

The Australian Government's approach focusses on:

- engaging at-risk sectors to raise awareness of foreign interference
- building resilience in Australian society through the implementation of risk mitigation strategies
- defending directly against foreign interference activity through a coordinated government response
- enforcing Australia's foreign interference and espionage legislation by investigating and prosecuting breaches.

## Reporting foreign interference

Please contact the **National Security Hotline** if you believe you have information on possible foreign interference activity or have seen or heard something suspicious that may need investigation by security agencies.

### Phone:

- 1800 123 400 (in Australia)
- (+61) 1300 1234 01 (from outside Australia)

### Email:

hotline@nationalsecurity.gov.au

## Find out more

For more information on the Australian Government's approach to countering foreign interference, visit:

[www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au)

## Additional resources

Understand the threat environment:

- [www.outreach.asio.gov.au](http://www.outreach.asio.gov.au)

Learn about cyber security:

- [www.cyber.gov.au](http://www.cyber.gov.au)

Manage risks and protect your business:

- [www.business.gov.au/risk-management](http://www.business.gov.au/risk-management)



Australian Government  
Department of Home Affairs

**Counter Foreign Interference  
Coordination Centre**

## Counter Foreign Interference Coordination Centre (CFICC)

CFICC works across Australian governments, with the private and civil sectors, the wider community, and with international partners to strengthen Australia's response and resilience to foreign interference.

CFICC was established in 2018 to coordinate Australia's whole-of-government policy response to foreign interference, focussed on building resilience in the sectors of Australian society most at risk from foreign interference.

CFICC's efforts aim to increase Australia's ability to deter foreign powers from doing us harm, safeguard the independence of our decision-making, protect what we value in our society, while continuing to advance Australia's collective interests.

Visit [www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au) for information on the Australian government's approach to countering foreign interference in:

- Industry
- Democratic institutions
- Education and research
- Culturally and linguistically diverse communities

## What is foreign interference?

Foreign interference is activity that is:

- carried out by, or on behalf of, a foreign power; which is
- coercive, deceptive, clandestine or corrupting; and is
- contrary to Australia's sovereignty, values and national interests.

Foreign interference serves the strategic, political, military, social or economic goals of foreign powers, at the expense of Australia's own.

It can reach right across Australian society, targeting the people, information and infrastructure of governments, industry, academia, the media, and culturally and linguistically diverse communities. It can occur alongside espionage and other forms of malign influence.

It is important to distinguish foreign interference from foreign influence – that is, the routine diplomatic influence practiced by all governments.

Australia is not concerned with foreign influence activity that is open and transparent, and that respects our people, society and systems.

## What does foreign interference look like?

Those who engage in foreign interference seek to adversely shape Australia's sovereign decision-making and alter outcomes by:

- cultivating and manipulating people, including through personal, political, business and diplomatic relationships, to gain an improper advantage;
- limiting freedom of expression and shaping the media and communications landscape to spread propaganda; dominating foreign language media; or undermining and misguiding public discourse on matters of national significance;
- singling out sections of the community through pressure and manipulation to sow discord, silence dissent or damage the cohesion of our society.