



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY JOINT COMMITTEE ON LAW ENFORCEMENT

MEDIA RELEASE

Completion of the committee's inquiry into the *Criminal Code Amendment (Sharing of Abhorrent Violent Material) Act 2019*

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement has completed its report for its inquiry into the *Criminal Code Amendment (Sharing of Abhorrent Violent Material Act) 2019*.

The committee has been examining the effectiveness of the AVM Act in reducing the exploitation of digital platforms by extremists and terrorists. The committee found that the risk of harm to the community remains prevalent and that the growth of abhorrent violent material (AVM) in online environments continues to challenge law enforcement and industry participants alike. This threat environment necessitates a robust online safety legislative framework to help prevent extremists and terrorists from using online platforms to advance their objectives, and protect Australians from exposure to abhorrent violent material and extremist propaganda.

The Chair, Mr Julian Simmonds MP, said the committee found the legislation provides an effective and appropriate framework 'for ensuring quick action is taken in relation to the AVM, both by deterring misconduct by industry and by providing regulators and law enforcement with important tools in their efforts to respond to cases where extremists or terrorists have sought to exploit online platforms to promote violence.'

Mr Simmonds added that the committee determined the AVM legislation continues to play a vital role within Australia's broader online safety framework, and has also encouraged the development of safer systems, and helped foster valuable relationships between the eSafety Commissioner, law enforcement, and industry.

The committee, Mr Simmonds said, concluded 'that the legislation strikes the right balance in granting flexibility for providers who are making complex judgment calls with the need to prevent virality of abhorrent material and facilitate the quick action of law enforcement in the subsequent disruption of crime.'

The committee identified that industry, in particular smaller platforms, would benefit from increased consultation with and guidance from government on the operation of the AVM Act. To this end, the committee has recommended that the government establish a forum for regular and ongoing consultation with industry. This forum should focus on ways that industry can be more effective in enacting the AVM legislation and ensure industry has the guidance and support it requires to do so.

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For further information on the committee or the inquiry, please contact the committee secretariat on +61 2 6277 3419 or le.committee@aph.gov.au.