Senate Select Committee on Adopting Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Adopting Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Attorney-General's Department

Hearing date: 16 August 2024

Hansard page: 56

David Pocock asked the following question:

Senator DAVID POCOCK: Thank you for your time this afternoon. I might start with Attorney-General's, if that's all right. I've just seen the Criminal Code Amendment (Deepfake Sexual Material) Bill 2024. I'm interested if you've been consulted about deepfake use in elections.

Ms Priestly: Not that I'm aware of. I'd have to take it on notice to check with some of my other colleagues in the department. But, just generally, electoral policy sits with the Department of Finance.

Senator DAVID POCOCK: But you haven't been consulted in terms of how to potentially prohibit or criminalise the use of deepfakes in elections?

Ms Priestly: We'll take that on notice, Senator.

The response to the question is as follows:

Artificial intelligence technologies that generate images and videos (such as deepfakes) can be used to undertake a range of online harms, such as providing inaccurate or false information during electoral processes. The impact of these technologies has been raised with the department.

The department notes that the Government has asked the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (JSCEM) to consider how governments and the community can prevent or limit inaccurate or false information influencing electoral outcomes, particularly with regard to artificial intelligence and deepfakes, foreign interference, social media, and mis- and disinformation. The Government looks forward to the JSCEM's report which is due by the end of 2024.