



Investigations of illegal online services to be focus of new Inquiry

The House Standing Committee on Communications will hold its first public hearing for the inquiry into the use of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* by government agencies to disrupt the operation of illegal online services.

The Committee will hear from the Department of Communications and the Australian Federal Police (AFP) tomorrow.

In its submission to the inquiry, the Department of Communications proposes the development of whole of government guidelines to assist Government agencies to use section 313(3) of the Act to disrupt access to illegal online services.

The guidelines would specify minimum requirements and recommend procedures to follow when seeking to disrupt such services.

The AFP supports the development of whole of government policies for the use of section 313(3), and recognises the need for transparency and accountability in making requests to block web sites.

“The Committee looks forward to beginning this new Inquiry into an important piece of legislation that enables the telecommunications industry and police to work together in fighting online crime,” Committee Chairman Jane Prentice said.

Details of the hearing are as follows:

Date: Wednesday 29 October 2014
Time: 8:00am Department of Communications
8:30am Australian Federal Police
Venue: Committee Room 1R3, Parliament House, Canberra

Further information on the inquiry, including the full terms of reference and how to prepare a submission can be obtained from the Committee’s website at www.aph.gov.au/section313 or from the Secretariat on (02) 6277 2352.

For media comment: please contact the Committee Chairman, (07) 3378 1599 or (02) 6277 4426

Further information: contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 2352, email ic.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee’s webpage at www.aph.gov.au/section313