



First public hearing for data retention inquiry

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security will hold a public hearing on Wednesday for its inquiry into the Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Amendment (Data Retention) Bill 2014.

The hearing will include representatives of government and industry involved in the data retention Implementation Working Group, including the Australian Federal Police, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, the Australian Crime Commission, and the Communications Alliance.

The Data Retention Bill seeks to implement a mandatory telecommunications data retention regime. It contains measures to require telecommunications suppliers in Australia to retain certain data for two years. The data would not include a person's web-browsing history, or the content of a communication, email or social media post. The Bill would also limit those able to access telecommunications and stored data to enforcement agencies with a demonstrated need and with appropriate internal procedures to protect privacy.

The hearing is expected to focus on the nature of the telecommunications data proposed to be retained under the regime, and the utility of that data for law enforcement and security agencies.

The Chair of the Committee, Mr Dan Tehan MP, said "This first hearing of the Committee's inquiry will be an important opportunity to explore with agencies the rationale behind the proposed data retention regime and the nature of the proposed dataset."

"We will be considering the appropriateness of the data retention regime proposed in this Bill and its application to the investigation and prosecution of serious criminal offences and to countering threats to national security. Safeguards and oversight will be a key focus for the Committee."

Details of the hearing are as follows:

Wednesday, 17 December 2015 – 9.10am to 3.00pm
Committee Room 2S3, Parliament House, Canberra

Further public hearings with a range of stakeholders are scheduled to take place on 28 and 29 January 2015. Submissions to the inquiry are requested no later than Monday, 19 January 2015.

The Committee intends to report by 27 February 2015.

Further information about the inquiry, including the program for the hearing, can be accessed via the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/pjicis>. The Bill and Explanatory Memorandum can be accessed via http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation.

For media comment, please contact the Office of the Chair, Dan Tehan MP, on 6277 4393 (Parliament House) or 03 5572 1100 (Electorate).

For inquiry information, please contact the Committee Secretariat on 02 6277 2360 or email dataretention@aph.gov.au.