



PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS

Inquiry into and report on all aspects of the conduct of the 2016 Federal Election and matters related thereto

Issue date: 27 June 2018

Cyber interference in the spotlight

The Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters has resolved to consider if Australian elections are at risk of social media manipulation, such as that seen in recent reports of cyber manipulation of elections in the United States and United Kingdom.

Therefore the Committee will be extending its inquiry into the 2016 election to consider:

- the extent to which social media bots may have targeted Australian voters and political discourse in the past;
- the likely sources of social media manipulation within Australia and internationally;
- way to address the spread of deliberately false news online during elections; and
- measures to improve the media literacy of Australian voters.

Committee Chair Senator Linda Reynolds said threats today come in many forms, not just over our physical borders.

“This examination is in response to the increasing threat of interference in Australian elections made possible by advances in technology and increased use of social media platforms,” Senator Reynolds said.

Submissions on this issue are now welcome before 8 August 2018, and public hearings will be announced when scheduled.

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For background:

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