

Senate Select Committee on Adopting Artificial Intelligence

Responses to Questions on Notice

Amazon Commercial Services Pty Ltd and Amazon Web Services Australia Pty Ltd (AWS) (collectively, Amazon) provide the following responses to questions on notice which arose during a hearing held by the Senate Select Committee on Adopting Artificial Intelligence (Committee) on 16 August 2024, as well as additional written questions Amazon received from the Committee's secretariat on 20 August 2024.

Questions on notice received during the Committee hearing on 16 August 2024

Question 2

Senator Ghosh asked Amazon's representatives to take the following question on notice:

"If I might, as a backstop, ask you to take that question [does Amazon capture audio recorded from Alexa devices] on notice in relation to Australian homes."

Alexa uses voice recordings and other information, including from third-party services, to answer questions, fulfill requests, and improve a customer's experience and our services. When an Alexa-enabled device detects the wake word (typically "Alexa"), a recording of what the customer has asked Alexa is sent to Amazon's cloud where we process the request and other information to respond to the customer. Alexa and Echo devices are designed to record as little audio as possible. Customers can review voice Alexa recordings associated with their Amazon account, and delete those voice recordings one by one, by date range, or device at any time in the Alexa app and online at the Alexa Privacy Settings page. We provide customers detailed information about how Alexa works and how data is used in our Alexa and Alexa Device FAQs, including in our FAQ ["How do my voice recordings and text transcripts improve Alexa?"](#).

Question 3

Senator Ghosh asked Amazon and AWS to take the following question on notice:

"[In relation to sources of information Alexa draws from] when you refer to licensed data, are you expressly purchasing the licence or purchasing the use of that data for use in your AI models, or is it more generic than that?"

The Alexa business sources licensed content from a variety of trusted sources in news, health, sports and other areas to help ensure Alexa can provide factual, helpful information in response to customer queries.

Question 4

Senator Ghosh asked Amazon’s representatives to take the following question on notice:

“In addition to the information captured on Alexa, how does the data that is captured from the use of a service like Prime Video or Kindle then get used, if it does, to train the AI models that we’re talking about? Is that something you can just take on notice and let me know?”

At Amazon, we use customer information to provide customers with the services they love, and in ways that benefit them – such as by making it easier to discover products when shopping on Amazon.com.au, finding their next favourite show on Prime Video, or providing them with suggestions of products they might like based on their purchase history. We know that customers care about how their information is used, and we appreciate their trust that we will do so appropriately. The Privacy Notice available on Amazon.com.au describes how Amazon collects and processes personal information through Amazon Services, including our websites, devices, products, services, and online and physical stores.

Where relevant for particular services like Alexa, we provide customers with additional information about how we may use data related to their use of those services. We also give customers control over whether their Alexa voice recordings are used to improve the service in both the Alexa app and online at Alexa Privacy Settings.

Question 5

Senator Ghosh asked Amazon’s representatives to take the following question on notice:

“[T]hrough the Prime Video, Kindle, Audible systems and publishing businesses, you have an enormous volume or a massive library of filmed, written and recorded works from Australian creatives. Has that content been used to train AI models?”

As rightsholder ourselves, we take IP-related concerns seriously and respect the rights of artists and creators.

Amazon’s Titan foundation models, which are available through AWS’s Bedrock service, have been trained on data from a variety of sources, including licensed data, proprietary data, open-source datasets, and publicly available data where appropriate. This is an evolving area and we don’t disclose specific sources of our training data.

Question 6

Senator Ghosh asked Amazon’s representatives to take the following question on notice:

“One of the other matters they raised was that the Association of Voice Actors and the MEAA had developed what they referred to as an AI rider which sought to prohibit companies like Audible using AI to create synthesised voice or likenesses of the actor. Their submission to us was that Audible has consistently refused to accept those terms . . . It certainly would assist if you’re able to provide some of that rationale on notice.”

We understand and respect the concerns addressed by the proposed AI rider. Audible has not digitally replicated any individual voice actor’s voice to narrate audiobook content without that voice actor’s consent. Additionally, Audible’s voiceover contracts include a “name and likeness” provision that already limits Audible’s use of the actors’ name and likeness (including their voice).