

The proposed changes to the Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979 represent a significant expansion of this act.

When the Attorney General initially introduced this legislation, he stated that its purpose was only intended to combat serious crime.

He said "The mandatory metadata retention regime applies only to the most serious crime – to terrorism, to international and transnational organised crime, to paedophilia".

Already the number of organisations, with no investigatory role in those serious crimes, that have access to this data is extremely broad (reference: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-01-18/government-releases-list-of-agencies-applying-to-access-metadata/7095836>).

Expanding access to this sensitive data for civil matters is a massive overreach in the stated purpose of this data.

As a private citizen I am vehemently opposed to this expansion of the Act. As a working journalist, I can easily foresee a situation where a civil litigant seeks to access my metadata in a matter where they wish to identify an information source.

Access of metadata is already far broader than the purpose initially stated. This proposed expansion represents an unreasonable extension of the act, one that significantly impacts the privacy of citizens.

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