

To whom it may concern,

I would like to advise the department of communications that the amendments proposed Attorney-General Senator George Brandis QC to allow access to internet users metadata in civil proceedings is not in the interest of the government, law enforcement, or the community.

If the proposed changes are passed you will find that more and more users will start to encrypt their internet traffic using things such as VPN's ([Virtual Private Networks](#)). This will actually hinder the ability of law enforcement to gather valuable information on dangerous targets. If you combine this with the recent victory of Foxtel to have some websites banned it is becoming increasingly clear that Australia is not a friend to technology innovation or privacy. Australia already has a bad reputation in the technology community, preventing us from taking a larger share in the technological boom. You can see this sentiment on sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Reddit. [This](#) specific post on Reddit shows that the slightly more tech inclined part of the community strongly disagrees with these changes and the way they have been proposed.

I would also like to point to [a ZDNET article](#) that shows how short of a timeframe Senator Brandis has allowed for submissions. I must agree with the sentiment of the article and suggest that this was a deliberate act designed to limit the exposure of the changes to the wider public. This sort of behaviour should be, at the very least, strongly frowned upon and ideally should be given a written warning with strong consequences for repeat offences.

I thank you for taking the time to read my submission and strongly urge you to consider if this is in the interest of Australia. Do we want to become another internet surveillance state?

Sincerely,
James Smith