

To whom it may concern,

I have strong concerns regarding the access to metadata in civil proceedings and would like to make a formal submission to the consultation panel.

While I concede that telecommunications metadata should be available to government and federal & state police in order to prevent terrorism, drug trafficking and other criminal offenses, I do not believe that the benefits to this metadata being available for civil cases outweighs the breach to privacy and security risks it entails.

Big data is changing rapidly. It won't be long before metadata means everything from tracking a person's movements through GPS, banking and financial transactions and potentially even biometric data transmitted through fitness trackers. As we move forward technologically, we will continue to see more and more data being tracked on us. The risk of this being available for accessed during frivolous or vexatious litigation is incredibly high.

Furthermore, access to this sort of data could be incredibly damaging to individuals, regardless of whether they end up winning the civil case. Access to metadata by a competing party in a civil case could result in the process serving as punishment.

I strongly believe that privacy regarding metadata should be strengthened in light of what it now, and will soon, entail. Allowing metadata to be accessed by litigants in civil suits would be a terrible breach to privacy and security.

Kind regards
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