



MPs to examine cybercrime-fighting tool

This Wednesday Members of Parliament will meet to discuss whether the use of Section 313 of the Telecommunications Act 1997 can and should continue to be used by government agencies to fight cybercrime.

The House Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications, chaired by Jane Prentice MP, will examine whether past uses of s313 were appropriate, legal and effective, and whether changes should be made to the legislation to broaden or narrow the scope of its powers.

Issues to be addressed include:

- the efficacy of disrupting websites that host illegal content
- the legal basis of using s.313 in its current form
- whether other legislation provides for the disruption of illegal activity online
- whether the purpose of disruption has been adequately defined
- the need to better define the issues/offences against which s.313 is directed
- a potential role for ACMA as the principal reporting and oversight agency for use of s.313

Mrs Prentice said the Committee had considered a range of submissions relating to the use of s313 to disrupt criminal activity online.

“This Inquiry has raised important issues about personal freedom and community protection. Wednesday’s hearing will allow the Department of Communications to clarify its position on a number of issues and give the Committee a clearer view of the best way to achieve a balance between personal freedom and social responsibility when addressing the disruption of illegal online services,” she said.

Details of the hearing are as follows:

Date: Wednesday, 18 March 2015
Time: 8:00 am to 9:00 am
Venue: Committee Room 1R3, Parliament House, Canberra

Audio of the hearing will be broadcast live at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/live>

Further information about the Inquiry, including the full terms of reference and how to prepare a submission can be obtained from the Committee’s website at www.aph.gov.au/section313 or from the Secretariat on (02) 6277 2352.

For media comment: please contact the Committee Chairman, (02) 6277 4426 or (07) 3378 1599

Further information: contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 2352, email ic.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee’s webpage at www.aph.gov.au/section313