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**Joint Select Committee on Social Media and Australian Society
Ph (02) 6277 5708**

Dear Committee Secretariat:

I am the founder/owner of a nine-year-old family business, based in Queensland. We make high-quality Lithium Batteries for a wide range of marine, land, and solar energy applications. Our customers range from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the NSW Ambulance Service to caravan and RV owners across Australia. All of our products are tested and certified by the globally recognised International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC).

Despite our longevity and deep customer base, we are currently the target of an orchestrated cyberbullying attack via YouTube since September 2023. The bullying is based on one person's opinion and supported by a group of online followers. The bullying is being used to discredit the quality of our products, pressure our supporters, and spread misinformation about our brand across the internet.

Cyberbullying in Australia is regulated by certain laws, such as the Enhancing Online Safety (Non-consensual Sharing of Intimate Images) Act 2018 (Cwlth.) and state-based legislation.

Naturally, we are seeking urgent legal remedies, including mediation, within these frameworks, to resolve this situation and protect our business. However, the challenge with this approach is that it requires time. Initiating a defamation claim, for example, has a minimum period of 10-to-12-months. As we wait and work through the legal process, my business remains vulnerable to damaging attacks and accumulating losses, which we now estimate to be in the millions of dollars as a direct consequence of these events.

There must be a better solution - somewhere businesses can turn for support, where a third party can evaluate the nature of the attack and, if necessary, hold the perpetrators accountable for their actions or, at the very least, refer them to another recognised authority capable of doing so.



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The Chair of the Joint Select Committee on Social Media and Australian Society, Ms Kate Thwaites MP, is quoted as saying '*Australians are concerned about the impact social media is having across many areas of our community*'. She's right. However, this is not just about protecting children from social media. Australian businesses should also be protected.

The unchecked spread of misinformation and disinformation on social media can significantly harm reputations and financial stability. On behalf of business owners and operators in Australia, I ask that the Committee a) consider my situation as an example of what is happening in the broader context of social media's impact on businesses, and b) consider necessary changes to protect both individuals and businesses from the adverse effects of social media.

Kind regards,

Paul Tomolowicz
CEO, Deep Cycle Systems Pty Ltd