

17 April 2012

Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Cyber-safety
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Secretariat

Telstra welcomed the opportunity to appear before the parliamentary Joint Select Committee's inquiry into the Cyber-safety of Senior Australians on Friday, 23 March 2012.

Please find attachment the answers to those questions that were raised, and taken on notice by Telstra.

Telstra looks forward to further engagement with the government and other interested stakeholders on these matters.

Yours sincerely,

James Shaw
Director
Government Relations

Questions taken on notice

1. Does Telstra have a view on whether any existing laws could be amended to further protect consumers from online scams and fraud?

Telstra is aware that there are various channels available to report cyber frauds and scams. For example, victims of cyber crimes (such as fraud) can report these crimes to State and Territory Police. Spam messages sent by email, SMS or MMS are dealt with by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), who are very active regulators in this space. More general scam activity can be reported to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) via the SCAMwatch website.

However, while these avenues are available to consumers to report fraudulent online activity, it is unclear whether consumers generally have an adequate level of knowledge about these channels, so it may be the case that some consumers are unlikely to report a fraud or scam because they don't know who to report it to. Others may not report their experiences simply because they are too embarrassed at having been scammed, or don't know they have been scammed.

Rather than introducing further regulation, Telstra suggests that more needs to be done to educate consumers and raise their awareness about the various types of online frauds and scams that they need to be wary of; and the resources available for consumers to report incidents of online fraud and scams.

2. What are the main issues of concern raised by participants in Connected Seniors workshops?

Typically, the main issues raised by participants of Telstra's Connected Seniors workshops are as follows:

- While senior Australians are keen to engage online and use technology, it is often considered to be too difficult and participants often do not know where to find help and resources to assist them in learning how to use the internet.
- There is a real fear of technology being too difficult, however, increasingly seniors recognise that there is a real risk that they will be left behind and excluded, by not being connected to the internet.
- Seniors indicate that they require programs that practically demonstrate the relevance of using the internet, and that training and demonstrations need to be kept simple and straightforward
- Seniors prefer to be trained in smaller groups, with lots of opportunity to practice – and then return for more follow-up training
- Seniors are concerned about cyber-safety and consequently are reluctant to transact online. Viruses and scams are also an increasing concern.

3. Can we provide statistics on the number of unique visits to Telstra's cyber-safety site and the Telstra Connected Seniors site?

We do not have records that identify the age of our users who are visitors to our Cyber-safety page. However, in 2012, to date Telstra's cyber-safety website: www.telstra.com.au/cyber-safety has had 108,542 unique visitors to the cyber safety site.

The Telstra Connected Seniors website: www.telstra.com.au/telstra-seniors has approximately 5000 unique visits to the website each month.

4 Where do people get access to the Telstra Connected Seniors video?

The Telstra Connected Seniors website: www.telstra.com.au/telstra-seniors currently hosts educational DVDs and other training materials. Additionally, the site will soon support more than 50 new training videos.

The educational DVDs will also be loaded onto YouTube, with many currently there already.

Selected Libraries across the Australia also have the DVDs as items for loan.