

**Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety**

Chair: Senator Catryna Bilyk
Deputy Chair: Alex Hawke MP

New inquiry into cybersafety for senior Australians

Concerns about older Australians in an increasingly online society have led the Parliament's Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety to launch an inquiry into cybersafety for senior Australians.

The internet is now part of the everyday lives of most Australians who rely on it for many things, from paying bills and doing business to keeping in touch with friends or even finding a partner.

While senior Australians comprise the fastest growing demographic of online users, research indicates that fears about privacy and security prevent too many older Australians from participating in the digital economy.

At the same time, increased interaction on social networking sites has brought exposure to online scams, such as dating and mass marketing scams, some targeting older people in particular.

The inquiry into cyber safety for senior Australians invites older Australians, industry experts and other stakeholders to report on the nature and extent of these threats and what can be done to combat them.

Committee chair Senator Catryna Bilyk said the Committee will investigate the best means to reduce the risks, enhance consumer protection and build online confidence for older internet users.

"The internet has opened a whole new way of communicating and removed barriers of time, distance and physical limitation," Senator Bilyk said.

"It is a matter of equity that older Australians are confident to enjoy the ease of digital communication, and so participate more fully in society."

The Committee is seeking submissions by Friday 17 February 2012.

Further information on the inquiry, including the terms of reference and information on preparing a submission, is available from the committee's web site <http://www.aph.gov.au/jscc> or from the secretariat on (02) 6277 4202.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Media comment: contact the Committee Chair Senator Catryna Bilyk on (02) 6277 3349 or mobile 0419 694 512

Background: contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 4202