SUBMISSION No. 13

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Committee Secretary
Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety
Department of House of Representatives
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Submission to the Inquiry of the Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety

Google is pleased to provide these comments to the Joint Select Committee on Cyber-Safety.

Google takes cyber-safety seriously. We believe that the Internet reflects society and just as we need to be street smart in the offline world, we all need the know-how and tools to be 'cybersmart' online. We believe that being cybersmart and cybersafe is all about user education, user empowerment through technology tools (such as SafeSearch Lock), and cooperation with law enforcement.

The terms of reference identify that key in all of this discussion is the need to 'ensure that the opportunities presented by, and economic benefits of, new technologies are maximised'.

The Internet has brought unprecedented freedoms to millions of people worldwide: the freedom to create and communicate, to organise and influence, to speak and be heard. The Internet has democratised access to human knowledge and allowed businesses small and large to compete on a level playing field. It's put power in the hands of people to make more informed choices and decisions. Taken together, these new opportunities are redefining what it means to be an active citizen.

We believe in putting people in the driving seat, through education and technological tools to manage their own online experience. The online world involves all of us being responsible citizens - we must behave appropriately and with respect, and we must take steps to protect ourselves. Raising awareness amongst young people of the need to do this, and teaching them how, is imperative.

Cyber-safety involves a range of important stakeholders: young people, parents, teachers, schools, police, NGOs, governments and online service providers. Online service providers promote cyber-safety through education and technological tools that empower people to manage their online experience. Given the diversity of online services, the approach to cyber-safety needs to be flexible and futureproof. New technologies are emerging constantly.

In this submission we outline:
- Google's activities;
- Google's 'cybersmart, cybersafe' philosophy;
- Our work with Australian cyber-safety partners; and
- YouTube's technological tools that promote a 'cybersmart, cybersafe' experience.

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Google's activities

This submission is made on behalf of Google and YouTube. Google, through acquisition, is also the provider of the well-known YouTube service. YouTube is a user generated video sharing platform around which communities form, have discussion and interact.

Google's breakthrough technology and continued innovation serve our mission of 'organising the world's information and making it universally accessible and useful.' Google invests a lot of time developing new products that assist users. Google also invests a lot of time working on the cybersmart, cybersafe aspects of those products.

Based on our experience, we believe that service providers are motivated to work towards a safe environment for their users as this is fundamental to obtaining and maintaining users' trust – which is key to success. In order for a service to be successful, users must feel comfortable using the service. Providers want their brand associated with comfort, safety and security. Ultimately, it is imperative to providers' bottom line to get cybersafety right.

More information about Google's activities is provided in the annexure.

Google's 'cybersmart, cybersafe' philosophy

When it comes to online safety, Google's approach is to:
1. Empower people with tools to help them manage their online experience.
2. Educate people about how to stay safe online.
3. Protect people by working with law enforcement and industry.

Empower people with tools to help them manage their online experience.

- We work closely with a network of child safety experts who advise us on how to promote safety and combat abuse in our products.

- We understand that many people don't want to have adult content included in their search results, especially when children are using the computer. Google has developed its own SafeSearch filter, which uses advanced technology to block pornographic and explicit content from search results. Users can customise their SafeSearch settings by clicking on the "Preferences" link to the right of the search box on Google.com.

- Further examples of tools are provided in our discussion of YouTube, below.

Educate people about how to stay safe online.

- Promoting safe behaviour and prohibiting illegal content and abuse in our products.
  - We have launched an online safety resource, Tips for Online Safety (www.google.com/familysafety), which offers resources for families on how to use Google safely, and quick links to tools like SafeSearch.
  - Through our product Help Centres, we provide our users with tips and articles for staying safe and protecting their privacy while using Google products. We also invite

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our users to tell us about illegal content or abuse they encounter on the web or in our products through our Help Centres.

  o We provide a localised YouTube Safety Centre, more information is provided in our discussion of YouTube below.

- We support non-profit organisations' educational efforts to increase awareness about safety online. Our Australian partners include The National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN), Inspire Foundation, The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, Kids Helpline, Bravehearts and, in New Zealand, Hector's World. We work with our partners to provide online public service announcements that promote access to resources about safety and other educational efforts. More detail is provided below.

Protect people by working with law enforcement and industry.

- Removing child sexual abuse images. We use databases from designated organisations listing websites suspected of containing child sexual abuse images in order to remove illegal URLs from our search results.

- Combatting abuse. When we discover child pornography or are made aware of it, we respond quickly to remove it and report it to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) or the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

- Cooperation with law enforcement to combat child exploitation. Google cooperates with child safety investigations, and has a legal team devoted to this effort 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We respond to thousands of law enforcement requests for assistance, and hundreds of subpoenas, each year. We also provide training and technical assistance to law enforcement officials investigating online crimes against children through forums such as the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) National Conference and the Virtual Global Taskforce (VGT).

Our work with Australian partners

As mentioned above, we work with Australian child safety and wellbeing organisations to educate people about cyber-safety. For example:

- we worked with the Australian Federal Police to launch their ThinkUKnow YouTube channel (www.youtube.com.au/thinkuknowaus)
- we worked with Bravehearts to launch the Bravehearts YouTube channel for White Balloon Day (www.youtube.com.au/bravehearts)
- in support of the Government's Cybersmart program we have provided the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) with general information about the safety features available from Google and YouTube, for use in its programs (copies of these information sheets are attached).

In addition, we worked with Smart Online, Safe Offline (SOSO) on the launch on YouTube of an interactive cyberbullying campaign, called Cyber Bullying Affects Real Lives (www.youtube.com.au/soso). Madelene McGrath, NAPCAN's SOSO Project Manager has said that

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"Google and YouTube's support for this campaign was invaluable, and by working closely with YouTube to become part of the fabric of the site, we were able to engage far more effectively with our youth audience and deliver our message in a highly impactful way. Google and YouTube went well beyond being a media publisher and acted as a strategic partner throughout, ensuring the delivery of a highly successful campaign."

We work on an ongoing basis with our partners, as noted above. Here are some messages from our partners:

Wendy Protheroe, General Manager Counselling Services, Kids Helpline - a service of BoysTown:
"Kids deserve to be able to enjoy the benefits the internet can give them; they deserve to have a range of safety tools available and they deserve to know that the company whose services they are using is actively committed to their safety. Kids Helpline has found Google to be such a company. Google has provided in-kind support and a great donation that enabled Kids Helpline to provide online safety tips, resources and links to our counselling services."

Kerry Graham, CEO, Inspire:
"Our partnership with Google is critical to our mission of helping millions of young people lead happier lives. With Google's support we can reach and connect with young people at times and in places that traditional mental health services can't. An example is a young person who found Inspire's Reach Out.com program through Google AdWords:
Just that it was there. It was 1:30am, I was desperate and had nowhere to turn. I somewhat sarcastically went to Google and typed in 'help'. This site was the first result. Thank you."

Hetty Johnston, Founder and Executive Director, Bravehearts:
"Google has been instrumental in enabling Bravehearts to reach out to the community and in particular, children and young people, with our educational messages and services to protect children. The effectiveness of the Bravehearts YouTube channel and Google Adwords as communication mediums is reflected in the growing demands on our services and the increased number of children, young people and adults that we are able to reach and help. We sincerely thank Google for helping us to empower children and adults everywhere to say no to child sexual assault."

Dr Judith Slocombe, CEO, The Alannah and Madeline Foundation:
"Google's commitment makes a big difference: it sends a strong message to the whole community about the importance of being smart, safe and responsible when using technology. We are delighted with the support we have received from Google; it will help us deliver the Cybersafety and Wellbeing Initiative, a national framework guiding and supporting schools to implement relevant cybersafety and wellbeing policies and practices. A world-first approach to cybersafety, it provides a roadmap to the best available cybersafety resources for schools, kids and parents."

We look forward to continuing our work to help all Australians be cybersmart.

YouTube's technological tools that promote a 'cybersmart, cybersafe' experience

YouTube is a user-generated video sharing platform around which communities form, have discussion and interact. Every minute, 24 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube. As a platform for user-generated content, and given the volume of content, it is not possible to review videos in advance of them being made available on the site.

The primary safety features on YouTube are as follows:

- The YouTube Community Guidelines (http://au.youtube.com/t/community_guidelines) set out what is, and is not, acceptable - for example adult content, graphic violence, hate speech, harassment, invading privacy, or the revealing of other peoples personal information is not allowed. Users who repeatedly violate guidelines have their accounts terminated.

- YouTube has developed an innovative, reliable and user-friendly community policing system - users report potential violations of the YouTube Community Guidelines by "flagging" a video, flagged videos are then reviewed for compliance with the Community Guidelines 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- Our YouTube review teams receive extensive training on an ongoing basis, including from law enforcement organisations and child safety organisations. This training enables our team to effectively and efficiently respond to flagged videos.

- Where a video does not comply with the Community Guidelines, it will be removed from the site and, in appropriate circumstances, referred to law enforcement.

- YouTube has also developed digital hashing technologies to prevent the re-upload of files that have been removed, and is continually developing tools to promote this goal.

- In addition to the flagging system, users are able to contact YouTube directly with privacy, harassment, or bullying complaints through the Help & Safety Tool.

Users are also empowered to manage their own experience through a range of tools:

- Safety Mode on YouTube is an opt-in setting that helps screen out potentially objectionable content that a user may prefer not to see or don't want others in their family to stumble across while enjoying YouTube.
- uploading videos as "Private" to be shared with specified family and friends
- blocking specific users from interacting with them
- choosing to allow only their "friends" to communicate with them
- choosing to pre-screen comments
- choosing to disable commenting altogether for each of their videos
- choosing to filter the comments they see. This is a new feature that has resulted from YouTube engineers' constant innovation. Filter W*rds gives users the control to set their preferences so that they see only filtered comments.

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In addition, the YouTube Safety Centre provides multimedia safety tips to users, including advice on keeping personal videos private, cyberbullying, spam and phishing; as well as information about how to protect their identity and appropriately manage interactions with other users, and tips on how to be a responsible cyber citizen and how to use the community flagging system. We worked closely with our partners as well as the ACMA and Australian Federal Police to develop this content. The YouTube Safety Centre contains localised information, relevant to our users.

Conclusion
We look forward to following the work of the Committee as it considers the important issues captured within its Terms of Reference.

Kind regards

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ANNEXURE

About Google
Google's mission is to organise the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful. This means giving our users around the world access to the information they want, from the widest variety of sources, wherever they are. We believe this brings people greater choices, new freedoms, and ultimately more power.

Search is at the heart of what we do - we help people find things. From a rare magazine, to a blog for fellow young mums, to an up-to-the-minute stock quote, to a map of a new town you're visiting ... the subject matter ranges from the entertaining to the educational and potentially life-changing.

Part of broadening this access to information means breaking down barriers. We've made web search available in more than 100 languages, and have more than 1,500 local-language versions of our products. We're also attempting to bring more kinds of information to more people - offline information, videos, news, photos, and maps. This is opening a doorway to a whole new world - giving young people in remote parts of Australia access to online, street level imagery of cities around the world, for example.

Google's mission is to organise - not create - information. We actually want to see people move off our site as fast as possible - because that means we've put them in contact with what they're looking for. We are a technology company, and our business is about connecting people with information at lightning speed, and overcoming the technological barriers to that.

Google in Australia
Our Sydney office is a central hub for Google in developing innovative products and partnering with local businesses and agencies. We have over 350 employees in Australia in sales, engineering, and business support, and some of Google's most exciting new projects - like Google Wave - were developed in Australia.

We help users
We help millions of Australians connect with information, customers, audiences, users and colleagues in Australia and throughout the world.
- Our engineers localise Google products to make them available and relevant for Australians, including local movie and stock price searches, Real Estate Search and Transit in Google Maps.
- We're committed to partnering with local organisations like the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN), Inspire, The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, Kids Helpline and Bravehearts.

We develop innovative products
Google's Australian engineers develop a wide range of global and local products and have a strong track record of innovative products and services.

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- Our local engineers work on pioneering innovations in geospatial web applications, collaborative software, network infrastructure and more.
- Recent global products developed in Australia include Google Wave, Google Maps, and Real Estate Search for Google Maps.

We support Australia's IT sector and broader community

We support Australia's vital IT sector through employment, industry engagement, education, access to code and initiatives to encourage a new generation of IT professionals.

- Sponsoring University programs and prizes and close involvement with University IT and Engineering Departments. Scholarships such as the Australian and New Zealand Anita Borg scholarship to encourage women engineers, Google Australia summer internships for University students, Google Student Day for school students
- Opening up Google products to the open source community to foster innovative services and mash-ups
- Hosting developer events: G'day Google, a series of overseas events, designed to show expat Australians the exciting career opportunities available in Australia. Developer Days regularly held in Sydney.
- Mentoring young Australian and NZ programmers to put their ideas into practice: Summer of Code, Code Jam and the Highly Open Participation Program
- Promoting Science, Technology and Australian initiatives such as such as Doodle 4 Google, to encourage students to express what it means to be Australian and hosting the launch of National Science Week.

We make local businesses more competitive

Thousands of Australian businesses use Google products - Search, AdWords, YouTube, Google Maps and Google Apps - as a core part of their business.

- Online tools help businesses connect with local and overseas customers, stand out in competitive local markets and improve their workplace productivity.
- Marketing with Google AdWords allows businesses to maintain effective, targeted ad campaigns with virtually no start up costs. In particular, AdWords helps small and medium businesses grow their customer base and connect directly with people in Australia and around the world.
- We also help local online publishers make money from their content through Google AdSense. These tools grow the web ecosystem and power the digital economy.
- Google has developed strong partnerships with Australian businesses and agencies and helps them utilise a range of enterprise and online advertising solutions.
- Business stimulus offer: In 2009, we announced a business stimulus offer, to help Australia's 1.88m small and medium-sized enterprises speed up in the economic slowdown. We offered a free $75 search marketing campaign, to help Australian businesses reach new customers and drive sales. Thousands of companies took up the offer across diverse sectors.
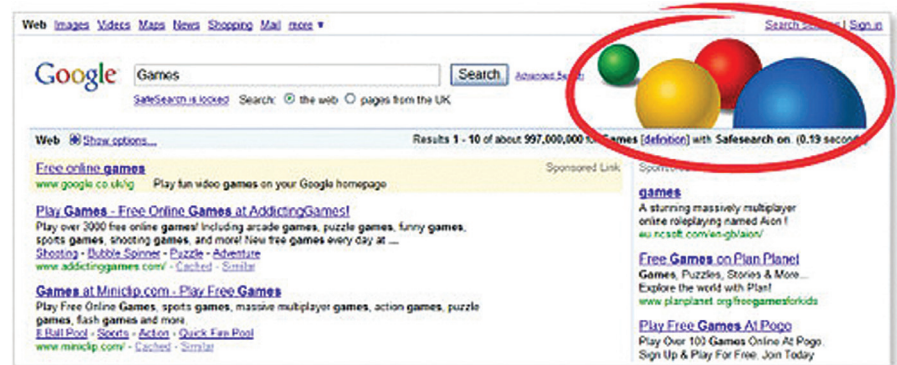
Locking Google SafeSearch

Google SafeSearch is a feature that lets you filter sexually explicit web sites and images from your search results. While no filter is 100% accurate, SafeSearch helps you avoid content you may prefer not to see or would rather your children did not stumble across.

SafeSearch gives you the choice of searching with a filter set to 'Strict', 'Moderate', or 'None'.

The default setting is 'Moderate' which excludes most explicit images from Google Images results but doesn't filter ordinary web search results.

You can change your SafeSearch settings at any time, and you can 'lock' SafeSearch to 'Strict'. The 'Strict' setting applies SafeSearch filtering to all your search results (ie both image search and ordinary web search).

When you lock SafeSearch, two things will change. First, you'll need to enter your password to change the setting. Second, the Google search results page will be visibly different to indicate that SafeSearch is locked:

Even from across the room, the coloured balls give parents and teachers a clear visual cue that SafeSearch is still locked. And if you don't see them, it's quick and easy to verify and re-lock SafeSearch.

How to lock Google SafeSearch
• To enable the lock, select Settings on the Google homepage and choose Search Settings.
• Scroll down to SafeSearch Filtering and click "Lock SafeSearch"
• You will be required to sign in.
• You will be asked to "Lock SafeSearch Filtering". This will set SafeSearch filtering to strict.
• The spinning icon indicates that SafeSearch is being set to strict and locked across Google domains.

You will need to do this in each of the browsers on your computer (each of Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Internet Explorer etc). The SafeSearch "lock" is browser-specific.

Once you are signed out of your Google account, your kids cannot log onto the same browser with their own Google account and change the preference. Only your account can change your "strict" setting for that browser. You'll be asked for your password if you want to unlock the preference.

We hope you and your family find exactly what you're looking for in Google search results — and nothing more.

This document is provided as an example of online safety tips.

You Tube ™

10 Tips for Playing and Staying Safe on YouTube

There are lots of ways to have fun on YouTube: upload your own videos; personalise your playlists; subscribe to channels you like; and, of course, search for something that surprises and entertains you, then share it with your friends. While you're having fun, keep these tips in mind:

1.

TMI
Even though your YouTube Profile lets you share your name, age, town and school, there's no need to share Too Much Information that could help someone identify you.

2.

Steer clear of searchers
The default setting allows anyone with your e-mail address to locate your channel. To give you more privacy, click the "Edit Channel" button in your "Account Settings" to disable that setting.

3.

Post for friends only
When you upload a video, the default broadcast option is "public," so anyone can view your clips. Go to "My Videos," click "Edit," and switch to "private," so only your friends can see.

4.

Do the Grandma Test
Do the grandmother test before you post: If you are uploading a video that you wouldn't want your grandmother to see, think twice before you post it.

You Tube™

5. **If you see it, flag it!**
Flagging isn't dobbing. If you see a video that breaks the Community Guidelines, let us know. You've got to sign in to flag a video, but people won't be able to see who flagged the video.

6. **Inappropri*te Comments**
You don't have to see vulgar words or sexual language in comments on any video. Just click on the "Hide Objectionable Words" option next to Text Comments to replace those words with ***.

7. **That's me in that video!!**
If you come across a video that violates your privacy, contact the person who posted it. Sometimes people don't realise they've violated your privacy. If they don't remove it, report it to us.

8. **Permission slip-ups**
Make sure you have permission before you post someone's face in your videos. Posting someone else's personal information without permission could get you kicked off the site.

9. **Respect yourself**
Don't let someone else bother you. Remove insulting comments from your videos and use the Help and Safety Tool to block users who harass you.

10. **What you do online matters**
Being mean hurts as much online as offline. Being a bully makes you seem weak and invites others to bully you. Plus, you may get banned from YouTube, and that's no fun.

Visit www.youtube.com.au and click on the Safety link on the bottom of the page for more information about playing and staying safe on YouTube.

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Safety Mode on YouTube

Safety Mode on YouTube is an opt-in setting that helps screen out potentially objectionable content that you may prefer not to see or don't want others in your family to stumble across while enjoying YouTube.

An example of this type of content might be a newsworthy video that contains graphic violence such as a political protest or war coverage.

While no filter is 100% accurate, when you opt-in to Safety Mode, videos with mature content or that have been age restricted will generally not show up in video search, related videos, playlists, shows and movies.
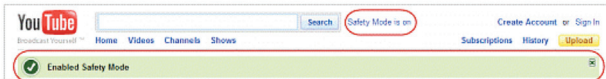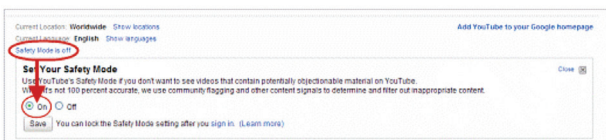
You Tube™

How do I use Safety Mode?

Follow the instructions below to access and turn on Safety Mode.

Safety Mode On:

1. Click Safety Mode at the bottom of every page to open the preference setting.

2. Click On and Save to opt-in.

3. You are now in Safety Mode!

To opt-out, open preferences and click Off and Save.

To lock Safety Mode:

1. Sign In to your YouTube account.

2. Click Safety Mode at the bottom of every page to open the preference setting.

3. Click On and Save & Lock to opt-in and lock this browser.

4. You are now in Locked Safety Mode!

To opt-out, open preferences and click Unlock Safety Mode. Enter your YouTube password to unlock Safety Mode.

You Tube ™

How to report content on YouTube

The YouTube flag is the most important tool for telling YouTube about content you think should not appear on the site.

If you aren't sure about what sort of content is not allowed on the site, take a look at the YouTube Community Guidelines.

The types of things that are not allowed include:

1. Pornography or sexually explicit content.

2. Bad stuff like animal abuse, drug or substance abuse, or bomb making

3. Graphic or gratuitous violence

4. Videos of someone getting hurt, attacked, or humiliated

5. Shock videos (eg gross videos of accidents, dead bodies)

6. Copyright infringement

7. Hate speech

8. Predatory behaviour, stalking, threats, harassment, invading privacy, or the revealing of other members' personal information

9. Spam

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We ask that everyone takes these rules seriously, and doesn't try to look for loopholes. Rather, just understand them and try to respect the spirit in which they were created.

So how do you flag a video on YouTube?

To flag videos you have to be a member of the YouTube community. If you're not already a member, you'll need to create a user account and sign in. Once you've signed in, here's what you do:

1. Below each video is a 'flag' button.
2. Click on the 'flag' button to reveal a drop-down menu listing different types of content that violates our Community Guidelines.
3. Select the type of content that applies to the video you are flagging. Sometimes you'll be prompted to enter the window of time offending content appears in the video.
4. Then click 'Flag this video'.

It's that simple.

We review flagged videos 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. And in most cases they are reviewed and acted upon in under an hour.