



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EFA Calls On Australian Government To Trust Australians
With Details On Contact Tracing App**

Australia, 17 April 2020 - Electronic Frontiers Australia (EFA) calls on the Australian government to start talking meaningfully and in detail to technologists, rights advocates, and the general public about its proposed contact tracing app.

“The government has for some time demonstrated an aversion to transparency and plain speaking. In this public health crisis we need leaders who can speak honestly, transparently, and clearly to the public about their plans and what they mean for all of us,” said EFA Chair Lyndsey Jackson.

“The government can’t bully the public into trusting it,” she said.

“Australians are very well aware of the poor technology track record of successive governments. They have experienced first hand the issues with the Census, My Health Record, #robodebt, and MyGov melting down right when Australians needed it most. The government cannot assume it is trusted on technology matters because it simply isn’t,” Jackson said.

“To rebuild trust, the government needs to bring the public into its confidence. It must trust us to be able to talk through the issues, to find a way forward together. Australians do understand how to talk about technology, even if individual Ministers do not. There are many, many organizations out here in civil society who could be helpful. Our message to government is: You can’t do this on your own. Please, for once, let us help you,” she said.

“We need a position on technology that can be explained clearly and is well understood. We can firmly say: Protect people's privacy, be explicit with opt-in options, make code open source, store all data locally and in a distributed fashion. And, critically, we need a very clear time limit on these extraordinary measures so that people can have confidence their trust now won’t be abused in future,” she said.

“We cannot permit our government to get technology wrong again. There is too much at stake,” Jackson concluded.

About EFA

Electronic Frontiers Australia Inc. is an independent, member-funded not-for-profit organisation that has been promoting and protecting digital rights since 1994. For more information, visit efa.org.au.

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Points:

1. Why this and not something else? Prove it's required. Proportionality - to the health crisis
2. Lack of trust, and this requires us to trust government. Consequence of undermining trust at every turn for years on end.
3. Serious treatment of risk: Actions required to demonstrate they can be trusted, not just empty words again.

Open source - keeping in check

Deletion of data - legislation says we have to - how?

Public trust - three weeks ago people told an app is the best way to get updates, now we have this feature upgrade coming that was not spelled out in the T&C's

Public Trust a

Richard:

I'm not really sure whether this is supposed to be a final statement or a working document for our thoughts?

My view

This government has shown us that they can't be trusted not to share the data they control far and wide - eg My health Record, metadata access. With that said, technology has great potential to help combat a serious risk to life for Australians.

Strong controls - should be truly opt in (no backdooring into existing apps), should be time limited, should be **open source so experts around australia can keep an eye on it**, and should store **all data locally** until someone is confirmed positive. All of this should be mandated by law, not features of the technology which can be changed after the fact.

Attempt: