



AUSTRALIAN DIGITAL ALLIANCE

Extension of safe harbour welcomed as an incremental step

Wednesday 27 June 2018

For immediate release

Canberra, Australia—Important changes to Australian copyright law passed today will protect Australia’s education, cultural and disability organisations and help them provide better services to our communities.

Under the [Copyright Amendment \(Service Providers\) Act 2018](#) Australian disability organisations, education providers and cultural institutions will now be covered by the copyright safe harbour scheme, which will protect them from being held liable when their online services – from public access computers to digital hubs – are used by others to infringe copyright.

The [Australian Digital Alliance](#) (ADA) welcomed the greater certainty extending the scheme brings for these sectors.

“It is excellent to see the safe harbour scheme extended to include our schools, universities, libraries and archives as well as disability organisations,” said ADA Executive Officer Jessica Coates.

“Extending the scheme means these organisations now have the same legal protection as commercial ISPs, providing them with a more certain and supportive legal environment and allowing them to confidently provide more innovative services.”

“Bringing these organisations into the safe harbour scheme will also improve the system for Australian creators to take down infringing materials while also ensuring users of these services are guaranteed a right of appeal. It’s a win for all involved.”

However, the ADA continues to express concern that the safe harbour scheme does not yet protect Australian technology companies.

“This is an important first step in the process of updating safe harbour”, said Ms Coates, “but Australia technology companies are still exposed to greater risk than their international counterparts. Australian companies are being sued right now, spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in court even when they have been acting as model corporate citizens.”

“We hope the Government will honour their commitment to modernise the Australian copyright system, including creating a comprehensive safe harbour scheme that provides the same protections to all online service providers.”

The ADA and its members endorse the extension of the safe harbour scheme passed today and commit to working with the Government to further extend the scheme to reflect international best practice.

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Interviews and media contact

Ms Coates is available for interview by request. All media inquiries related to this media release should be directed to:

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