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Review of Australia's Online Safety Unlawful Material Codes Launches

Australia's peak communications, digital, and video game industry associations, responsible for developing Australia's Online Safety Codes, have opened a **public consultation on the review of the *Unlawful Material Codes* (Phase 1 Online Safety Codes)**.

These codes include obligations on digital services across the tech stack from hosting services to ISPs, search engines, app stores and social media services to take action against the most serious unlawful online content, including child sexual abuse material (CSAM), pro-terror material, and material promoting extreme violence.

From 4 June 2026, the review invites submissions from the public, civil society and industry on whether the Codes contain appropriate community safeguards and remain fit for purpose as the online environment and regulatory landscape continue to evolve.

The *Unlawful Material Codes* form a crucial part of Australia's world leading online safety framework. Other jurisdictions such as the EU and the UK have introduced similar requirements, but they are less comprehensive in scope.

Australia's system, co-developed between the industry and the regulator, meets or exceeds those comparable regimes in breadth of services covered and the range of harmful content addressed.

Australia's framework goes further, covering six distinct categories of digital services:

- Social media services
- App distribution services
- Hosting services
- Internet carriage services (ISPs)
- Equipment providers (connected device manufacturers)
- Search engine services

When combined with the eSafety Commissioner-developed *Unlawful Material Standards*, which cover messaging, email, dating services, online games, websites, and generative AI services, Australia's framework applies complementary and robust measures across virtually the entire digital ecosystem through which harmful content can be created or distributed.

"These Codes represent a globally unprecedented industry effort. Australia is setting the benchmark for what a comprehensive, co-regulatory online safety framework looks like, one that holds the entire technology stack accountable, not just the platforms that attract the most public attention."

— **Dr. Jenny Duxbury, Director of Policy, Regulatory Affairs, and Research, DIGI, on behalf of the Industry Code Steering Group**

The review is examining whether the Codes remain current considering three key developments:

1. Changes in the threat and technological landscape

- Including the rapid growth of generative AI tools and chatbots as potential vectors for the creation and distribution of unlawful material.

2. Changes in Australia's regulatory settings

- Including the commencement of the co-regulatory Age-Restricted Material Codes developed by these same associations, the Unlawful Material Standards, and the Government's plans to introduce a Digital Duty of Care, and reform of the National Classification Scheme.

3. Addressing confusion and drafting inconsistencies

- Resolving terminology inconsistencies and ensuring compliance measures remain clearly understood across the range of services in scope.

The industry associations invite submissions from the public, civil society organisations, and technology companies.

Submissions may address any of the discussion questions in the consultation paper, which covers topics including the proportionality of current measures, human rights considerations, technological developments, and international comparisons.

Submit via: hello@onlinesafety.org.au or www.onlinesafety.org.au

Submissions close: 9th July 2026

The codes and consultation materials are available at onlinesafety.org.au. For media inquiries, including to speak with Dr. Jenny Duxbury, contact press@digil.org.au

About the codes:

The Unlawful Material Codes were developed by a steering group comprising AMTA, ATA, CESA, DIGI, and IGEA. The Codes were registered by the eSafety Commissioner in 2023-2024 following two rounds of public consultation and more than 120 submissions.

About the industry associations:

The **Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association (AMTA)** (amta.org.au) is the peak body and trusted voice of the mobile telecommunications industry in Australia. Its members span telecommunications carriers, network vendors, infrastructure providers, handset manufacturers, and other smaller providers. Its mission is to promote an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable mobile telecommunications industry in Australia.

The **Australian Telecommunications Alliance (ATA)** is the peak body of the Australian telecommunications industry. We are the trusted voice at the intersection of industry, government, regulators, and consumers. Through collaboration and leadership, we shape initiatives that grow the Australian telecommunications industry, enhance connectivity for all Australians, and foster the highest standards of business behaviour. For more details, visit www.austelco.org.au.

The **Consumer Electronics Suppliers Association (CESA)** (cesa.asn.au) provides a united forum and voice for suppliers of consumer appliances to focus on regulatory, technical and commercial issues that affect the capacity of member companies to supply products in the Australian market.

The **Digital Industry Group Inc. (DIGI)** (digi.org.au) is a non-profit industry association for the digital industry and a key Government partner in efforts to address online harms, data and consumer protection online and to grow the digital economy, through code development, partnerships and advocacy for effective and implementable approaches to technology policy..

The **Interactive Games & Entertainment Association (IGEA)** (igea.net) is the industry association representing and advocating for the video games industry in Australia, including the developers, publishers and distributors of video games, as well as the makers of the most popular games platforms, consoles and devices. IGEA has over a hundred members, from emerging local game development studios to some of the largest video game companies in the world.