Subject:	ACCS/Department catch-up [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Location:	MS Teams | Room - Nishi - 5.007 Bells (Cap 08, Webex)
Start:	Thu 10/07/2025 4:00 PM
End:	Thu 10/07/2025 5:00 PM
Recurrence:	(none)
Meeting Status:	Accepted
Organizer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Required Attendees:	Irwin, Andrew; s 22(1)(a)(ii) ; s 22(1)(a)(ii); Tony Allen; VANDENBROEK, Sarah
Resources:	Room - Nishi - 5.007 Bells (Cap 08, Webex)

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Rescheduling the meeting from this morning.

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Passcode: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
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Age Assurance Technology Trial

The Hon Anika Wells
Minister for Communications
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

9th August 2025

Dear Minister,

Please find enclosed the Final Report of the Age Assurance Technology Trial. As you know, the Trial was commissioned by DITRDCSA to evaluate **whether age assurance can be done** in Australia in a way that is accurate, proportionate and privacy-preserving. As an approved conformity assessment body, we conducted the Trial independently, focusing on technology not policy.

We assessed the effectiveness, reliability, usability, privacy and security of age assurance across age verification, age estimation, age inference, successive validation, parental control and parental consent. We also considered where in the technology stack controls would be most effective. This included lab work, school-based field trials and mystery shopping across Australia, as well as independent academic validation and technology readiness assessments. We had particular regard to the risk of bias, including any impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The evidence shows that **age assurance can be done in Australia** privately, efficiently and effectively, with no substantial technological limitations identified. Provider claims were independently validated against the Trial's evaluation criteria. Systems performed broadly consistently across demographic groups, aligned with cyber security good practice and are converging on international standards, though there is scope to improve usability, risk management and interoperability. The Trial also observed a risk of unnecessary data retention in the absence of clear guidance. Together these findings give regulators and industry a strong evidence base to proceed with implementing laws that apply age restrictions online.

We are grateful to the 48 providers who participated across the suite of technologies, and to the schools, parents, young people, mystery shoppers and expert contributors who made the evaluation meaningful at national scale.

I also wish to record my thanks to all those who worked to deliver this project within eight months. The Trial was led by my teams in the UK and in Perth, WA at the Age Check Certification Scheme, in partnership with KJR, an Australian software quality engineering consultancy specialising in software testing and AI implementation. In addition, the consortium

Age Assurance Technology Trial

included leading data science, ethics and age assurance expertise from Illuminate Tech, engagement specialists SafetyTech Limited, consumer research experts Scout Insights in Brisbane, and our creative and web teams at Heartburst in Melbourne and SoJo Creative. I must also acknowledge our legal counsel Lyn Nicholson in Holding Redlich's Sydney office, the independent academic validator Professor Toby Walsh of the University of New South Wales and the Stakeholder Advisory Board chaired by Professor Jon Rouse at Monash University.

We are particularly grateful for the careful supervision from your Office and from the Department team led by Sarah Vandenbroek and Andrew Irwin. This is a project with global significance and I pay tribute to the investment and leadership shown by your Government to commission this work and explore this topic so thoroughly.

I also want to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and water in Australia and pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging. We were particularly pleased by the enthusiastic engagement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the schools and mystery shopping testing phases of our Trial.

Because the Trial used a standards-based approach, it naturally points to the next phase: accreditation of conformity assessment bodies and certification of individual products and implementations against international standards such as ISO/IEC 27566, IEEE 2089.1 and ISO/IEC 25000. This would give the eSafety Commissioner and the OAIC a consistent, cost-effective mechanism to recognise compliant solutions in both functionality and data protection, reduce burden on platforms and create confidence in age assurance for families and businesses. We recommend that you consider a government-led certification programme that audits both products and live deployments against those standards within Australia's existing standards and conformance infrastructure.

We hope this Report provides a robust foundation for Australian regulators as they consider regulatory settings and the standards-based ecosystem required to make the Internet a safer place for children. We would be pleased to brief you and your officials in more detail on any aspect of the trial an on a practical roadmap for an Australian certification programme that audits products and verifies real-world implementations on platforms against international standards, so that compliance can be demonstrated from day one as new regulations come into force.

Yours sincerely,

s 47F

Tony Allen
Project Director, Age Assurance Technology Trial