

Censoring Australia

Voice of Freedom - with Carl and Mary-Jane

1. Public information

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/inquirer/government-censors-work-hard-to-decide-what-we-are-allowed-to-see/news-story/535ecceb5c5c6363f15778214ee1b25e>



If anyone needs convincing on this crucial stand for free speech, they only need consider what happened during the pandemic. As I have revealed in these pages previously (thanks to dogged Freedom of Information applications by maverick Liberal senator Alex Antic) the government secretly censored online Covid posts for three years during the pandemic.

Antic has continued to pursue this issue, which should be a major national scandal. We now know a lot more about what sort of information was censored.

Under this secret arrangement taxpayers paid an Australian arm of the global M&C Saatchi communications empire more than \$1m to monitor digital communications and alert the Department of Home Affairs to posts the government might want taken down, in which case the department asked platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to remove them, using the digital companies' own content guidelines as the pretext. More than 4000 interventions were made and now Antic has obtained a spreadsheet detailing each of them. It is extraordinary and alarming to see the factual, arguable and reasonable social media posts the government censored.

2. What is truth?

No harm	Mis info	Permitted speech
Harm	Dis info	Mal info

False *True
what the government says is*

3. Senator Antic's discovery

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS BUDGET ESTIMATES
MAY 2023 Home Affairs Portfolio Department of Home Affairs Program 1.2: National Security and
Resilience BE23-146 - FOI Request FA 22/12/00629 – Referrals Document - Database of COVID
Referrals > To find this enter these search details here >

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Senate_estimates > select 'more options' in search
field > enter these details

Search questions on notice

Keyword(s):

[Fewer options](#)

Who:

Asked by Senator: Only Current Senators

Asked by Committee: Only Current Committees

Asked of Portfolio: Only Current Portfolios

Asked of Agency: Only Current Agencies

When:

Estimates Round: Hearing Date From: Hearing Date To: ⓘ

Filters:

Question Number: ⓘ

Question Status: ⓘ

Portfolio Question Number: ⓘ

4. My censorship

Details of Mary-Jane’s censorship is set out in the Freedom of Information request (attached and screenshot summary below).

27-Jun-22	A Facebook video claiming that COVID-19 is no more dangerous to people than the common flu or cold	Video content is assessed to have breached Facebook’s COVID-19 policies and protections (Community Standards). By claiming that COVID-19 is no more dangerous to people than the common flu or cold (01:26:00 – 01:26:45), the content includes categories of potentially harmful information explicitly prohibited by Facebook including: claims that downplay the severity of COVID-19, such as: in the context of discouraging vaccination or questioning the efficacy of vaccines, claims that COVID-19 is no more dangerous to people than the common flu or cold. The post also attempts to undermine public confidence in the COVID-19 vaccination program.	Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/mjliddicoat/post/s/pfbid0Sg5aFWBhgFnYgXacTuSCjW2MTTcdGeLAdMfcnaNHTecy81YYqGhCnsnxENgHNeGqI
-----------	--	---	----------	---

According to the Australian Government department of health’s assessment in this document



2023 · Volume 47

Communicable Diseases Intelligence COVID-19 Australia: Epidemiology Report 76

Reporting period ending 2 July 2023

COVID-19 Epidemiology and Surveillance Team

[https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/99424DA2A5F3A488CA2589BA019141B/\\$File/covid_19_australia_epidemiology_report_76_reporting_period_ending_2_july_2023.pdf](https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/99424DA2A5F3A488CA2589BA019141B/$File/covid_19_australia_epidemiology_report_76_reporting_period_ending_2_july_2023.pdf)

the COVID-19 associated case fatality rates is 0.19% (see Table 7 below)

Table 7: COVID-19 associated case fatality rates among cases notified to NNDSS, by age group and date of onset, 1 January 2020 to 18 June 2023^{a,b,c,d}

Age group (years)	Omicron to date 15 December 2021 – 18 June 2023	Delta 16 June – 14 December 2021	Pandemic to date 1 January 2020 – 18 June 2023
0–9	< 0.05%	< 0.05%	< 0.05%
10–19	< 0.05%	< 0.05%	< 0.05%
20–29	< 0.05%	< 0.05%	< 0.05%
30–39	< 0.05%	0.06%	< 0.05%
40–49	< 0.05%	0.18%	< 0.05%
50–59	< 0.05%	0.65%	0.05%
60+	1.06%	6.13%	1.17%
Unknown	< 0.05%	0.00%	< 0.05%
Australia	0.18%	0.71%	0.19%

- a Source: NNDSS, extract from 19 July 2023 for deaths with an illness onset date to 18 June 2023.
- b To account for the lag between illness onset and the development of severe illness, cases with an onset date in the last two weeks have been excluded from calculations of the case fatality rate.
- c A value of 0.00% indicates that no COVID-19 associated fatalities occurred during the indicated period for the specified age group.
- d Crude case fatality rates which reflect number of deaths as a proportion of reported COVID-19 cases during specific periods, noting these rates are likely overestimated due to underreporting of cases.

Compare the above official Australian Government COVID-19 fatality rate of 0.19% with the official influenza season fatality rate recorded in the Department of Health summary of the 2019 influenza season in Australia: 1 case in 328, or 0.3%.

[https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/aisr-2019-national-influenza-season-summary?language=en#:~:text=Influenza%20A\(H3N2\)%20predominated%20nationally,cases%20of%20influenza%20in%202019.](https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/aisr-2019-national-influenza-season-summary?language=en#:~:text=Influenza%20A(H3N2)%20predominated%20nationally,cases%20of%20influenza%20in%202019.)



Australian Government
Department of Health

INFORMATION BRIEF
Updated on 30 June 2021

2019 Influenza Season in Australia
A summary from the National Influenza Surveillance Committee

Page 2 of 5

-
- The proportion of hospitalised patients admitted to ICU ranged by influenza type and subtype – 13.3% of patients with influenza A(H1N1), 6.0% of patients with influenza A(H3N2), and 4.0% of patients with influenza B were admitted to ICU. Of those with an untyped influenza A infection, 6.4% were admitted to ICU.⁵
 - Influenza positivity in patients presenting to sentinel GPs with ILI did not exceed 50% in any week during the seasonal period of 2019. In the previous 5 years, weekly influenza positivity exceeded 50% at no point in 2018, for six weeks in 2017, three weeks in 2016, five weeks in 2015, and 1 week in 2014.²
 - The number of deaths reported in notified cases of laboratory-confirmed influenza to the NNDSS in 2019 (n=953) was considerably higher than the 5 year average (403.8), but 19% lower than the number of deaths reported in 2017 (n=1,183).
 - The ratio of deaths to all notified cases in 2019 (1 death per 328 notifications) was higher than the 5 year historic range (range: 1 death per 451 notifications in 2015 to 1 death per 391 notifications in 2018).⁴
 - Deaths reported in notified cases to the NNDSS have largely been in older adults. The median age of deaths reported in notified cases was 86 years (range: 1 to 106 years), with 87% of deaths reported in people aged 65 years and older.⁴

5. Senator Rennick's discovery

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS BUDGET ESTIMATES MAY 2023 Home Affairs Portfolio Department of Home Affairs Program 1.4: Counter-Terrorism BE23-043 - Online Content Incident Arrangement - Contract with M&C Saatchi > To find this enter these search details here > https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Senate_estimates > select 'more options' in search field > enter these details

Search questions on notice

Keyword(s):

[Fewer options](#)

Who:

Asked by Senator: Only Current Senators

Asked by Committee: Only Current Committees

Asked of Portfolio: Only Current Portfolios

Asked of Agency: Only Current Agencies

When:

Estimates Round: Hearing Date From: Hearing Date To:

Filters:

Question Number:

Question Status:

Portfolio Question Number:

6. What I did – my FOI

7. What you can do – FOI template