

# The Essential Report – Digital Rights Watch

23 July 2019



## The Essential Report

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Prepared By: Essential Research

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Data Supplied by:



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**AMSRS** 

Our researchers are members of the Australian Market and Social Research Society.



## Key Insights

### 1. There is concern among the public about the implications of digital information legislation changes

- 40% say they are very concerned about the police raids on journalists homes and offices, this issue had the greatest concern compared to other tested statements
- 35% said they were very concerned that all telecommunication companies retain data on every Australian and since 2015, government agencies have made 350,000 requests for access to this information each year
- 34% said they were very concerned that law enforcement agencies have the power to break into encrypted communications systems (such as Whatsapp, Messenger or Viber) in the investigation of relatively minor offences
- In each case, the proportion of the public stating they were very concerned was higher than the proportion of those without any concern

### 2. Coalition voters had lower concern than other parties for the implications of these changes

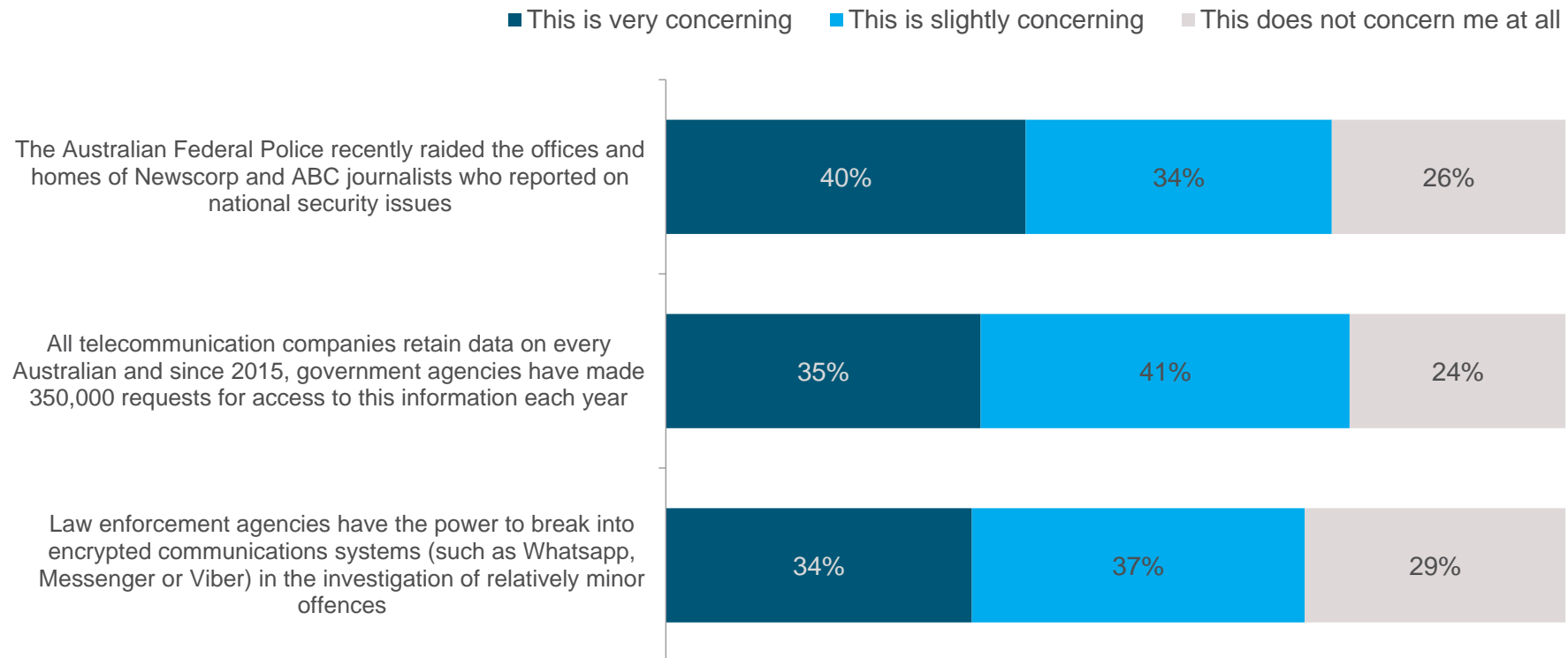
- For each of the three implications, Coalition voters were most likely to say they were not at all concerned and least likely to be very concerned
- Voters of independent and minor parties (including One Nation and UAP) were more likely to be very concerned by the implications. 49% are very concerned about telecommunications companies retaining data (compared to 32% for all other voters), 42% are very concerned that encrypted messages can be accessed (compared to 33%), and 46% were very concerned about the police raids on journalists (compared to 39%)
- Half of Labor voters (50%) were very concerned that that the Australian Federal Police recently raided the offices and homes of Newscorp and ABC journalists who reported on national security issues (compared to 34% of voters for all other parties)

### 3. Older people were least concerned about the implications of the legislation changes

- 31% said they were not concerned at all that the Australian Federal Police recently raided the offices and homes of Newscorp and ABC journalists who reported on national security issues (compared to 23% of those aged under 55)
- 38% said they were not concerned at all law enforcement agencies have the power to break into encrypted communications systems (such as Whatsapp, Messenger or Viber) in the investigation of relatively minor offences (compared to 24% of those aged under 55)
- 31% of those aged 55+ said they were not concerned at all that all telecommunication companies retain data on every Australian and since 2015, government agencies have made 350,000 requests for access to this information each year (compared to 20% of those aged under 55)

## Concern due to changes in access to digital information legislation

Q In recent years, changes to legislation has made it easier for the Government and law enforcement agencies to access digital information of individuals in the interest of national security. To what extent are you concerned with the following implications of these changes?



Base: All participants (n=1,089)

## Concern due to changes in access to digital information legislation

Q In recent years, changes to legislation has made it easier for the Government and law enforcement agencies to access digital information of individuals in the interest of national security. To what extent are you concerned with the following implications of these changes?

**The Australian Federal Police recently raided the offices and homes of NewsCorp and ABC journalists who reported on national security issues**

	Total	Gender		Age			Education		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Secondary Education	Professional Qualification	University Education
This is very concerning	<b>40%</b>	40%	39%	38%	40%	40%	41%	37%	42%
This is slightly concerning	<b>34%</b>	33%	35%	37%	38%	28%	29%	38%	35%
This does not concern me at all	<b>26%</b>	26%	25%	24%	21%	31%	29%	25%	22%
Base (n)	<b>1,091</b>	538	553	348	358	385	297	401	358



	State					Location		Employment Status		
	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Capital City	Non-Capital City	In paid employment	Not in paid employment	Retired
This is very concerning	43%	37%	37%	32%	45%	39%	41%	41%	34%	39%
This is slightly concerning	34%	36%	35%	41%	28%	36%	32%	37%	37%	26%
This does not concern me at all	22%	27%	27%	27%	26%	25%	27%	21%	28%	34%
Base (n)	353	275	220	91	103	731	360	545	276	230

	Federal Voting Intention (Lower House)				Household Income*			Household Composition	
	Labor	Liberal + National	Greens	NET: Other	NET: Lower Income	NET: Mid Income	NET: Higher Income	Dependent Children	No Dependent Children
This is very concerning	50%	27%	46%	46%	40%	39%	39%	39%	40%
This is slightly concerning	33%	40%	30%	28%	31%	37%	37%	40%	32%
This does not concern me at all	17%	32%	25%	26%	29%	23%	24%	21%	28%
Base (n)	331	391	92	144	406	293	258	336	755



## Concern due to changes in access to digital information legislation

Q In recent years, changes to legislation has made it easier for the Government and law enforcement agencies to access digital information of individuals in the interest of national security. To what extent are you concerned with the following implications of these changes?

**All telecommunication companies retain data on every Australian and since 2015, government agencies have made 350,000 requests for access to this information each year**

	Total	Gender		Age			Education		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Secondary Education	Professional Qualification	University Education
This is very concerning	<b>35%</b>	37%	34%	38%	33%	35%	36%	35%	36%
This is slightly concerning	<b>41%</b>	39%	42%	42%	47%	35%	36%	45%	42%
This does not concern me at all	<b>24%</b>	24%	24%	20%	20%	31%	29%	20%	22%
Base (n)	<b>1,091</b>	538	553	348	358	385	297	401	358



	State					Location		Employment Status		
	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Capital City	Non-Capital City	In paid employment	Not in paid employment	Retired
This is very concerning	35%	34%	34%	31%	39%	34%	37%	37%	32%	32%
This is slightly concerning	44%	41%	42%	45%	38%	42%	38%	43%	44%	34%
This does not concern me at all	21%	25%	24%	24%	24%	23%	24%	19%	24%	34%
Base (n)	353	275	220	91	103	731	360	545	276	230

	Federal Voting Intention (Lower House)				Household Income*			Household Composition	
	Labor	Liberal + National	Greens	NET: Other	NET: Lower Income	NET: Mid Income	NET: Higher Income	Dependent Children	No Dependent Children
This is very concerning	38%	24%	44%	49%	37%	34%	30%	37%	35%
This is slightly concerning	44%	44%	39%	33%	39%	40%	49%	44%	40%
This does not concern me at all	18%	32%	16%	17%	24%	25%	21%	20%	26%
Base (n)	331	391	92	144	406	293	258	336	755





## Concern due to changes in access to digital information legislation

Q In recent years, changes to legislation has made it easier for the Government and law enforcement agencies to access digital information of individuals in the interest of national security. To what extent are you concerned with the following implications of these changes?

**Law enforcement agencies have the power to break into encrypted communications systems (such as Whatsapp, Messenger or Viber) in the investigation of relatively minor offences**

	Total	Gender		Age			Education		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Secondary Education	Professional Qualification	University Education
This is very concerning	<b>34%</b>	35%	33%	36%	34%	31%	33%	32%	37%
This is slightly concerning	<b>37%</b>	35%	38%	41%	40%	31%	31%	39%	40%
This does not concern me at all	<b>29%</b>	30%	29%	23%	25%	38%	36%	28%	23%
Base (n)	<b>1,091</b>	538	553	348	358	385	297	401	358



	State					Location		Employment Status		
	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Capital City	Non-Capital City	In paid employment	Not in paid employment	Retired
This is very concerning	35%	33%	31%	24%	43%	35%	31%	36%	29%	30%
This is slightly concerning	37%	37%	40%	47%	27%	38%	35%	38%	42%	29%
This does not concern me at all	28%	30%	30%	28%	30%	27%	34%	25%	29%	41%
Base (n)	353	275	220	91	103	731	360	545	276	230

	Federal Voting Intention (Lower House)				Household Income*			Household Composition	
	Labor	Liberal + National	Greens	NET: Other	NET: Lower Income	NET: Mid Income	NET: Higher Income	Dependent Children	No Dependent Children
This is very concerning	39%	25%	45%	42%	36%	30%	33%	33%	34%
This is slightly concerning	39%	37%	34%	35%	31%	42%	40%	42%	35%
This does not concern me at all	23%	39%	21%	23%	33%	27%	26%	25%	31%
Base (n)	331	391	92	144	406	293	258	336	755



## Appendix: Household income definitions\*

NET: Lower Income	Up to \$51,999 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)
NET: Mid Income	\$52,000 to \$103,999 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)
NET: High Income	More than \$104,000 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)

## Appendix: Methodology, margin of error and professional standards

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a fortnightly online omnibus conducted by Qualtrics.

Every two weeks, the team at Essential considers issues that are topical, and a series of questions are devised to put to the Australian public. Some questions are repeated regularly (such as political preference and leadership approval), while others are unique to each week and reflect current media and social issues.

The response rate varies each week, but usually delivers 1000+ interviews. In theory, with a sample of this size, there is 95 per cent certainty that the results are within 3 percentage points of what they would be if the entire population had been polled. However, this assumes random sampling, which, because of non-response and less than 100% population coverage cannot be achieved in practice. Furthermore, there are other possible sources of error in all polls including question wording and question order, interviewer bias (for telephone and face-to-face polls), response errors and weighting. The best guide to a poll's accuracy is to look at the record of the polling company - how have they performed at previous elections or other occasions where their estimates can be compared with known population figures. In the last poll before the 2016 election, the Essential Report estimates of first preference votes averaged less than 1% difference from the election results and the two-party preferred difference was only 0.1%.

The online omnibus is live from the Wednesday night and closed on the following Sunday. Incentives are offered to participants. Essential Research uses the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to analyse the data. The data is weighted against Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data.

All Essential Research staff hold Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) membership and are bound by professional codes of behaviour.

