

SUBMISSION ON POLICY ISSUES RAISED IN ROUND 5

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Submission for: My Self

Name of other person, business or organisation:

Do you agree to your submission being published: Yes

Do you agree to your full name being published: No

Your submission:

Hon Stuart Robert MP and Hon Josh Frydenberg MP Submission to the Banking Royal Commission I realise that this submission may arrive late with regard to the inquiry currently being run, but my concern and that of thousands of community members are the horrible practices and financial and emotional costs of telemarketers/scammers. The elderly are particularly at risk. Even using the ATO's own media release, the number of scams targeting community members is breathtaking i.e. for the months of July and August 2018, the ATO received 7000 scam reports worth around \$190,000 – which equates to over 40,000 scams worth \$1.1M pa. This figure is only the scams reported to the ATO – what about other agencies such as the ACCC (Scamwatch), etc?? If you include all of the scams reported and also an estimate of the scans that are not reported, the financial cost to the community could be literally billions of dollars pa. Furthermore, these fraudsters would not be declaring these incomes, the GST and PAYG withholding amounts on that income would be foregone as well as superannuation guarantee not paid by their employer i.e. they could be living on our welfare system or working contrary to their visa conditions. Also, what are the chances that these call centre staff/bookers are registered/licensed to do such work? Whereas I personally haven't been scammed, there is a noticeable increase in the number of attempts - strange missed calls with no voice message left i.e. where they ring on the presence of conducting a 'survey' which is what happened with my wife whose intellectually disabled and who didn't understand why she had to provide them with personal details such as our occupations, incomes, address, whether we owned a house, etc and with them then insisting that we must meet with them to discuss investment/insurance etc. I have now reported this instance to the ACCC (ref accc-scamwatch [REDACTED] which involves me receiving a call from [REDACTED]. Last night there was another attempt on [REDACTED] (didn't answer it) and there have been a number of recent earlier attempts as well in which the guy insisted that we had to have a meeting when I clearly told him to !@#%\$*&^ away and don't call again in the first instance. This is a clear invasion of privacy. I have now changed our home phone number and insisted that it be unlisted. If you believe what's reported about the practices and behaviors of the banks etc these telemarketers/scammers are much worse with no ethics, morals and no bounds and with total disregard for the victim. I would ask that such operators also be somehow included or investigated with some recommendations made so as to clean up their dirty practices such as stricter regulations, standards, ethics, governance, etc. I have outlined what happened with us in the ACCC referral but it staggers me how they could be allowed to operate at all. When I Googled these phone numbers there was many similar complaints about their practices and behaviors so it is a real problem that needs to be addressed and this inquiry would seem to be the perfect opportunity to do something as this concern has been ongoing for sometime with very little done about it. Even when you block the number after they ring on your mobile, they then ring you from another number knowing that you'll answer it in fear of you loosing a potential new client. And of course, they never leave a message. It's got to the point that if someone calls that isn't listed on my mobile phone's directory, I will not answer it. Also, whose to say that they wont then on-sell our details to other scamming networks? Why should I be forced to change my numbers when these people have no ethics or standards to abide by!! Where is the fairness and the natural justice for the victims of such crimes? Government agencies such as the ATO and ACCC have been collecting the Intel for years such as on the practices followed and who are the participants but nothing appears to have been done with that information about such operators. Again, this inquiry presents a real opportunity for the government to grill these operators and to introduce tougher regulations so as to clean up this industry. Thank you