

ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE

Inquiry into the Impact of Social Media on Elections and Electoral Administration

Melbourne—Thursday, 19 November 2020

(via videoconference)

MEMBERS

Mr Lee Tarlamis—Chair

Mrs Bev McArthur—Deputy Chair

Ms Lizzie Blandthorn

Mr Matthew Guy

Ms Katie Hall

Ms Wendy Lovell

Mr Andy Meddick

Mr Cesar Melhem

Mr Tim Quilty

Dr Tim Read

WITNESSES

Ms Mia Garlick, Director of Policy, Australia and New Zealand, and

Mr Josh Machin, Head of Policy, Australia and New Zealand, Facebook.

The CHAIR: I declare open the public hearings for the Electoral Matters Committee Inquiry into the Impact of Social Media on Elections and Electoral Administration. I would like to begin this hearing by respectfully acknowledging the Aboriginal peoples, the traditional custodians of the various lands each of us are gathered on today, and pay my respects to their ancestors, elders and families. I particularly welcome any elders or community members who are here today to impart their knowledge of this issue to the committee or who are watching the broadcast of these proceedings.

I welcome Mia Garlick, Director of Policy, and Josh Machin, Head of Policy, for Facebook. I am Lee Tarlamis, Chair of the committee and a Member for South Eastern Metropolitan Region. The other committee members here today are Bev McArthur, Deputy Chair and a Member for Western Victoria; Katie Hall, Member for Footscray; the Honourable Wendy Lovell, a Member for Northern Victoria; Andy Meddick, a Member for Western Victoria; and Cesar Melhem, a Member for Western Metropolitan, and some other committee members may also be joining at some point during the session.

All evidence taken by this committee is protected by parliamentary privilege. Therefore you are protected against any action in Australia for what you say here today. However, if you repeat the same things outside this hearing, including on social media, those comments may not be protected by this privilege. All evidence given today is being recorded by Hansard, and you will be provided with a proof version of the transcript for you to check as soon as it is available. Verified transcripts, PowerPoint presentations and handouts will be placed on the committee's website as soon as possible. I now invite you to proceed with an opening statement, which will be followed by questions from the committee.

Mr MACHIN: Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you very much to the committee for the opportunity to appear virtually as part of your inquiry into the impact of social media on elections. We are really grateful for the opportunity to speak with you all. Before starting my opening statement I want to begin by congratulating Melbourne and Victoria on your resilience in combating COVID-19. I know the rest of the country has had you in our thoughts for many months, and we are celebrating with you the success of I think it is now up to 20 consecutive doughnut days.

To turn to the focus of the committee's work, we do appreciate the opportunity to engage on the very important issue of social media and elections. In Australia 17 million people use Facebook's services every month to connect with family and friends, grow their businesses and express their voice on topics that they care about. We typically see an increasing engagement around political causes and issues in election periods. As an example, in the 2019 federal election 10 million people had around 45 million interactions related to the Australian election on our services, on Facebook. Every day we see examples where social media makes it easier for people to express their voice on politics, discuss issues, organise around causes and hold political leaders accountable.

Our services also give elected officials like the committee a direct channel to their constituents, the ability to conduct two-way conversations and a vehicle to provide the public with essential information, and we did see a lot of great examples of our services used in beneficial ways by members of the Victorian Parliament during COVID-19. Through enabling this civic participation we see our services as helping contribute to a healthy democracy, but we are also very conscious of the risks that social media can be abused in ways that are not good for democracy through tactics such as misinformation or foreign interference campaigns. Influence operations can amplify distrust in the integrity of elections and undermine the community's confidence in democracy. It is a critical and a continuous challenge to combat these operations, and that is a challenge that is faced by tech companies, governments, the media, civil society and academia.

We are certainly committed to playing our part. The approach that Facebook brings to protecting election integrity is always improving. We are learning from each election that we help support around the world. Our integrity work is much more sophisticated and developed than in 2016, when concerns about influence operations on social media first arose, and I would like to briefly mention a couple of specific initiatives around

security, foreign interference, transparency of political advertising and misinformation. In protecting election integrity we are able to leverage the significant global investments we make in safety and security. Those efforts comprise employing more than 35 000 people globally and an annual investment on safety and security that is larger than Facebook's entire revenue when we publicly listed in 2012. As an example, globally we removed 3.2 billion fake accounts in the first half of 2020 and we blocked millions more at upload. Of the accounts that we detected and removed, 99.7 per cent were proactively detected by us via artificial intelligence due to the significant investment that we have made in that area. We have also increased our capacity to detect foreign interference, or the term that we use is 'coordinated inauthentic behaviour', or CIB. We have removed over 100 CIB networks globally since 2017, which comprises thousands of pages, groups and accounts, and we transparently publish these removals every month on our global blog, including attributing a source country to those CIB networks that we remove.

On political advertising, Facebook has invested in an industry-leading effort called our ad library, which is publicly available and accessible. It is at facebook.com/ads/library, and we have made it a requirement that anyone who wants to run a political ad on our services in Australia needs to have prior authorisation, has got to run the ad with a disclaimer indicating who has paid for it and has to agree that the ad will be available in Facebook's ad library for seven years after it finishes running. We have also recently launched new functionality that allows people to compare expenditure on political ads between different advertisers. That is available at facebook.com/ads/library/report. We saw this used extensively by commentators, researchers and journalists during the recent Queensland state election, which was the first election in Australia since we made the functionality available.

On misinformation, we have developed policies under our global community standards to remove misinformation from our services which causes real-world harm. So during COVID-19, for example, it has included a range of claims such as false cures, false prevention efforts or false information to discount the severity of the outbreak. For content that is not severe enough to warrant total removal—it does not cause real-world harm—we still have invested in a global network of 70 fact-checking organisations to help reduce the spread of misinformation. These are all independently certified by the International Fact-Checking Network, and we have two that operate in Australia: Agence France-Presse and Australian Associated Press. Once they tell us that a piece of content is false, we put a warning label on it that prevents people from seeing it unless they specifically click through and we rank it lower in people's Facebook newsfeeds, which means that fewer people see it and it is harder for the misinformation to go viral.

All that aside, we believe that there is more that needs to be done, and that is why we are here before you today. Our CEO, Mark, said last year that Facebook welcomes new regulation around elections and political advertising, and we support that call for modernising electoral laws in Australia too. We have made a number of suggestions globally and in Australia about how election laws can be modernised, and recently we published a set that we have called the 'Recommended Principles for Regulation or Legislation to Combat Influence Operations'. I am very happy to go into more detail about any of those proposals or suggestions for the committee today if that would be helpful.

In order to make sure that we are enabling those benefits of technology for democracy and managing the risks, we need collaboration across government, industry, media, NGOs and researchers about the best regulatory frameworks in this space. This is the spirit in which we have come before the committee today, so we thank you again very much for the opportunity to appear and we look forward to your questions.

The CHAIR: Thank you. I might kick it off with a question around truth-in-advertising laws. In particular South Australia has truth-in-advertising laws in place, and I was just wondering: have your platforms taken that into consideration and put any procedures or processes in place specifically in relation to those laws?

Mr MACHIN: Yes, great question. Perhaps I will talk a little generally about how we think about truth-in-political-advertising laws. I mentioned up-front that we have said that we are calling for new laws around elections and political advertising. We do not have a specific position on truth-in-political-advertising laws, but with our experience there are perhaps a couple of comments which I can offer which might be helpful for the committee's consideration.

I think it is important to acknowledge up front that truth in political advertising is a really challenging public policy issue because it can be really difficult to assess what claims are true. This was the challenge when truth

in political advertising laws were introduced and then repealed by the Hawke government in the 80s. We have seen examples of political ads within Australia where when it comes to a particular issue people do not necessarily make a claim that is verifiable—it is not possible to say whether it is true or false, but they may be expressing an opinion or they may be posing a question. And so as policymakers like yourselves are thinking about whether to consider something like truth-in-advertising laws I think those categories of claims are important to consider. Certainly if they are within scope of the laws, you can see the potential risk of disproportionate censoring of political debate, but if they are outside the laws, then the laws can be relatively easy to evade simply by turning a claim into a question. So it is really tricky to design that and get it right.

Then I think there are some debates about whether the best public policy outcome is to remove content that makes a false claim in a political ad or whether it should be made available to encourage scrutiny, debate and accountability of the person who is making the particular claim. And I think we are conscious that in many democracies the general principle is to encourage debate and discussion and scrutiny of the claims that people make and to only remove particular claims or pieces of content if they are inherently harmful for people to see them at all. Where to draw that line I think is an important consideration.

Just a couple of other brief things we have been thinking about is we would suggest any consideration of truth in political advertising laws should not establish an onus on the advertising provider to determine whether the claim is true or not. Certainly Facebook does not want to be the arbiter of truth when it comes to claims by political activists, not just because of some of the practical difficulties there but because we do question whether that would be a good outcome for democracy within Australia. For a privately owned US company to have that level of power in picking sides in a political debate would raise a lot of questions and needs to be carefully thought through. We would suggest instead models where those decisions are entrusted to an independent decision-maker so people could have confidence in the process and the decisions that are made, and then naturally any responsibility given to a decision-maker like that should include design features like transparency, avenues for appeal and commitments of human rights just to make sure that whichever party may be in government at the time is not able to abuse a system like that. Finally, I think to make sure that the requirements cannot be easily evaded we would suggest applying it to all types of advertising rather than just a particular media.

It is certainly a concept where I know there is an increasing debate within Australia. We are very happy to be part of that debate, to continue to contribute suggestions based on our own experience with political advertising, but I hope some of those initial comments might be helpful to the committee.

The CHAIR: I guess by way of an example, recently in the Queensland election \$100 000 was spent on a particular ad by Clive Palmer where he admits that he did not have any information for that ad to back that up, which would have been in breach of the South Australian laws had it have been run in South Australia. Would Facebook have run that ad in South Australia where those laws are in place?

Mr MACHIN: Yes, well, as a general principle of course we observe the laws of the jurisdiction in which we are operating. So when someone sends us a referral about a particular ad that they are concerned about we firstly review it against our own ads policies and our community standards and then if it does not violate those, then we review it in the context of local law. A requirement of our ads policies is that the ads are lawful in the jurisdiction where they are run, and so if an ad would violate a law like truth in political advertising, then we would remove it.

The CHAIR: Thanks. I might give Deputy Chair Bev McArthur a question.

Mrs McARTHUR: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Mia and Josh. This whole issue raises many questions. Unfortunately the independent arbiter is appointed by government, so that can be construed as also not independent. And who checks the fact checkers? This inquiry has received numerous submissions from witnesses recommending fact-checking of political speech on your platform. However, other witnesses have warned of the danger of censorship that can arise from fact-checking bias. There have been major concerns about this internationally and the performance of third-party fact checkers on social media and the inappropriate policing of political expression. So if fact-checking was a realised outcome of this inquiry, how would Facebook implement this and ensure that bias was never an issue with fact-checking? And I have a couple of other questions, Chair, if possible.

Mr MACHIN: Thanks, Deputy Chair. I am happy to begin with some opening comments, and Mia might have more to add from the global perspective as well. It is certainly something we are very conscious of. Just to re-emphasise that Facebook does already have a fact-checking program, which is global, so perhaps I can reflect on how we have addressed concerns about bias through that existing program rather than what we might do in future.

In establishing our fact-checking network we only partner with organisations who have been certified by the International Fact-Checking Network, which is housed within the Poynter Institute, and they set a number of requirements in order to meet—it is essentially the gold standard of fact checkers. They set a number of requirements, including that any organisations who get that certification are non-partisan; any partisan fact checkers will not qualify for getting that level of certification. They are also required to have avenues for appeal if there are individuals who would like to raise concerns about a particular fact check. If they do think that there has been bias in relation to a particular fact check, then there needs to be avenues by which members of the public, including anyone covered in the fact check, could potentially escalate those to the fact checker.

So the approach that we take in working with fact checkers is we give them full discretion, full independence over which claims they choose to fact-check on our platform. We provide them access to posts that are going viral, and they are able to select from a queue themselves. We do not influence them. Facebook does not direct them one way or the other in order to preserve that independence. Then we will apply labels once they have undertaken their proper editorial standards. If they find a piece of content is false, that there are a number of steps that we take in response to that, which I am happy to provide in more detail. But those are the structures that we put in place in order to try and help preserve the independence of fact checkers, but my colleague Mia might have more to add there as well.

Ms GARLICK: Also just to note that we also pay the fact checkers, so they are undertaking the work and bringing their journalistic integrity to that process. And then also the appeal is obviously an important part of it. So I think it would depend on, if this committee were considering it, what kind of fact checkers you would be establishing, because if there was a determination by, say, a government fact checker, then we might treat that differently as sort of a determination of law where we would geoblock in the country out of respect for that determination. It would just depend on how that was implemented. But I think you said you had follow-up questions.

Mrs McARTHUR: Thank you. This goes to fake accounts. In your submission you mention you take measures against fake accounts, and I assume this includes things like verification of political figures, profiles et cetera. So I am wondering: can you explain why many Facebook pages of Victorian MPs remain unverified by Facebook, and will your platform make a greater effort to verify the pages of Victorian politicians and political organisations before the next election?

Ms GARLICK: I am happy to open on that one. I think the first point to note is that verification is not necessarily related to whether or not we determine an account to be fake. We have over a decade's worth of experience of what inauthenticity looks like and we have trained up machine learning and artificial intelligence to be able to identify that. We are always happy to work more closely with the political parties to ensure that all sitting MPs are verified, so I am certainly happy to do that before the next election, but that should not have any bearing on the broader integrity measures that we take.

Mrs McARTHUR: Finally, you have obviously taken extensive action to ensure transparency, including making known the location of page administrators and providing a public repository for ads run by pages, and you have a strict protocol for allowing pages to advertise politically in Australia with the 'paid for' disclosure. So do you believe these protocols are sufficient to maintain integrity in political discourse on your platform?

Mr MACHIN: I think, Deputy Chair, one of the things I mentioned in my opening remarks is we do see election integrity as a continuous challenge. I think where the company is now versus where they were at the last Victorian election or even a couple of years before that is really quite a different place. I do not think it is ever quite job done. So it is really important I think for us to continue to evaluate and seek feedback on the measures that we currently have in place in order to look for opportunities for improvement or to see what more we can do. Certainly between now and the next Victorian election I think there is probably a pretty good chance there may be additional measures in order to ensure election integrity.

We do support a number of elections around the world, and after each one we take the lessons about which types of mitigations we think have worked best. Then in preparation for future elections we undertake a risk assessment, particularly in relation to that election in that location, and then think about what mitigations will be most effective given the environment for that election at the time. So, for example, at the last Australian federal election, after the assessment that we had done and engaging with stakeholders we came to the decision that one of the really good things that we could do in order to protect election integrity was to have a total ban on foreign ads during the course of the Australian election campaign. Certainly in light of our engagement with security agencies and other stakeholders and concerns about potential foreign interference, that was a measure that we had implemented for that particular election that we thought might be helpful. Now that we have additional transparency and disclosure requirements, perhaps a measure as stringent as that may not necessarily be relevant. But I think it is fair to say that certainly we have an ongoing commitment in this area, and I am sure we will continue to look at what interventions we can put in place that are going to be proportionate and also effective.

Mrs McARTHUR: And, sorry, just—

Ms GARLICK: I might just jump on that—sorry, Deputy Chair—and say I think we would also never say that our measures should be the conclusion of this. That is why we have been actively calling for regulation around election integrity and political advertising, because we recognise that private companies should not necessarily be the sole arbiters of some of the rules in this space.

Mrs McARTHUR: I think a focus has been so far on political parties and perhaps candidates, but the issue emerging I think is third parties and non-conventional political players that emerge into the political sphere, especially at election time. How do you deal with that?

Mr MACHIN: Great question. So those requirements that we talked about in relation to political advertising on our services apply to any organisation, not just political parties, who runs a political ad. So if we take the recent Queensland election, for example—just because it is a recent example—you could see in our ad library advertisements that were being run not just by political parties of candidates but also by not-for-profit organisations, lobby organisations, unions, companies. All were captured by this particular requirement because they were advertising about political issues. We know that goes beyond most electoral laws within the country and provides transparency about how much those entities are spending on advertising on our services. Certainly I think we will continue to evaluate how effective that is and see if any other measures are required after that.

The CHAIR: Okay. Ms Hall.

Ms HALL: Thank you. Look, I am very interested in the impact of trolling on democratic processes and trolling in particular as a disincentive for women or minority groups to nominate for public office. I want to refer to a recent example I read about in the paper where Facebook apologised to a National Party MP for months-long delays in responding to reports of abuse she received saying that she was linked to a paedophile group. She has recently won a court settlement with regard to that. I do not think there would be one member of this committee who has not experienced online trolling and abuse, and I just want to find out what steps Facebook and Instagram are taking to respond to these sorts of threats and whether Facebook would consider perhaps appointing someone who the political parties could contact in instances of this sort of abuse. I know personally I have received violent threats in the past, and not having someone that you can pick up the phone and talk to I think is a very challenging thing for candidates and MPs.

Ms GARLICK: Well, Ms Hall, thank you so much for your question, and apologies that we are meeting in a committee hearing and you have not met us previously, because we are very happy to connect you with the teams that work to support political parties and political candidates. We certainly have dedicated teams that can assist with account management questions. We run best-practice training. We have been engaged with the main political parties for each of the past several elections and also the electoral commission, so we are very happy to make sure that that contact is established to assist you. We also have a strong relationship with law enforcement so that if there are concerns about threats we can work with them to ensure that those are addressed in a timely fashion. With respect to the broader questions around the way in which our policies work, for the most part we have policies that are very clear in prohibiting bullying and harassment and other forms of abusive behaviour on our services. We do draw a slight distinction between private figures and public figures. However, over years of consultation with particularly female public figures, we have narrowed the amount of speech that we

will allow in relation to female public figures—well, it is actually all public figures really, but it has been driven by feedback from female public figures—in relation to gendered cursing and other types of abusive behaviour that we have seen public figures get that do not seem to be connected with political debate.

In relation to the specific case that you are referring to, that was related to defamation. The person in question who had made those posts had a number of those posts removed and ultimately their account removed. Then in relation to some of the posts that were removed, it related to defamation, and I think some of the delay came from the fact that we do allow people to use our services to make certain claims. I think the #MeToo movement is probably a great example of the ways in which people have used social media to sort of call to account institutions and some public figures. But where we get a complaint relating to defamation, we do take some time to get legal advice on whether this does match a defamatory claim under the law, and there can be some time in terms of identifying whether the defence of truthfulness will out. However, in that particular case obviously the experience took longer than it should have taken, even in terms of the time it takes to assess a defamation complaint. In those instances I think that improving the connections between the political parties and candidates and our teams that can work on these issues can only help matters.

Ms HALL: So just further to that, this member of Parliament was accused of supporting a paedophile ring. Why is that not instantly removed by Facebook? That seems like an extraordinary thing to have to sort of prove by Facebook.

Ms GARLICK: Where we have drawn the line in terms of our policies, we are trying to ensure that people are able to share their views about a wide range of topics, and we work with different experts both internally and externally to look at these. That is why we have made the changes in terms of the amount of conversation people can have around public figures. But I think we have seen many instances over recent years where people have used social media to make claims, and it takes time to assess whether some of those claims are defamatory.

Ms HALL: Right, okay. Thank you.

The CHAIR: Mr Meddick.

Mr MEDDICK: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Mia, and thank you, Josh. I have a question that really runs in two parts—very, very pointed, and I suspect the answers should not need to be convoluted. First of all, you spoke about the fact that you have peer relationships with what we would term traditional media organisations. Well, when they are guilty—and I do not mean guilty in a court of law; I just mean guilty in a broad sense—of publishing what they then find out at a later date is false information or incorrect statements, under the law they have to print a retraction. You are a peer organisation. Once you are made aware by your peer organisations that some of these statements or claims or whatever they might be are indeed completely false and you are under no illusion that they are not completely false, because your peer organisations have said so, why would you not remove them immediately instead of hiding them under layers so that people can still find them? Surely there should be an onus on you to remove them absolutely 100 per cent immediately as soon as you know that they are completely false.

And the second thing goes to the thing about legal cases as well. Those organisations are legally bound when they find out that there is a legal case going on—and in particular I refer to what Ms Hall was talking about there. As soon as you are made aware that there is a legal case pending, surely you should be removing everything to do with that at that point, because to allow further comment in a public realm on a thing that is subject to legal proceedings is highly irresponsible and just promotes more speculation, and that can be damaging to the reputations of the people involved. Surely there should be a legal requirement for you to adhere to exactly the same regulation that applies to other media in that instance. The *Herald Sun* would be absolutely skewered if they continued to report on something like that that is in the courts, so why shouldn't Facebook be held to the same accountability?

Mr MACHIN: I am happy to begin, Mr Meddick, and then perhaps Mia will be able to add any more. Perhaps I will begin with your second question, which is: do we observe the law in the jurisdiction? Yes, absolutely we do. We respect suppression orders in state jurisdictions and, as Mia outlined, we do review content against defamation law as well. In instances where any of that content violates local law, we will

geoblock it out of respect for local law. So we are absolutely observing the local legal requirements of any piece of content on our platform.

One of the key distinctions to make though in relation to defamation is that a media organisation faces different obligations to a digital platform because of the difference between primary and secondary publishers. So an organisation that creates a piece of content or puts a claim out there has a different responsibility to a platform which hosts a place where other people are able to make those claims, and the reason the law is drafted in that way is so that people continue to be accountable for the claims that they make. So users on our platform, whether they are organisations or individuals, continue to be responsible for the claims that they make, but certainly in instances where there are concerns raised with us about particular pieces of content, we will not just review against our global community standards but we will review against local law and geoblock it if it violates local law.

Ms GARLICK: If I can also just build on that, in relation to content that is fact-checked we do send notifications to the people who have shared that to let them know that it has been fact-checked as false, and in relation to pages we can remove their monetisation ability so that they are not able to further promote those claims. And certainly if there are orders in place that certain content is interfering with a particular case before the courts, then we will also take action, as Josh said, to geoblock it to ensure that it is not interfering in the court's process.

Mr MEDDICK: I guess my question is: why the delay? We talked about that instance, and you said that that month delay was inappropriate by your own admission, but surely the moment that you are aware that there is a legal case pending—there is an application through the court—surely it should be removed then and there. Do not wait, do it then and there, because that protects both sides of the argument in that respect. Surely there should be an obligation for you to do that.

Ms GARLICK: I think the challenge is us becoming aware of it. This is why we work to have strong relationships with law enforcement, particularly in relation to name suppression orders and other court orders that are made, so that as we become aware of content that violates those orders, we can take swift action. But I think, as we have seen from some of the conversation in this committee, there is more work that can be done to improve those points of contact so that we can work to both enforce our policies more swiftly and also respect legal orders more effectively and swiftly.

Mr MEDDICK: I will pass on to somebody else. Thank you, Chair.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Mr Meddick. Ms Lovell.

Ms LOVELL: Thank you. I am going to be quick, because we are way over time. I just wonder why you allow faceless accounts—like, no names, they are just a nickname—so people can say whatever they want and no-one knows who they are or how to contact them.

Mr MACHIN: Perhaps I can begin, and Mia can jump in with further information. Certainly on Facebook we actually have long had a policy of authenticity. We have a real-name policy where we require users to have one account and that it is their real name, and we invest pretty significantly in artificial intelligence in order to detect instances where people may be impersonating someone else, where they are a particular fake account. I mentioned at the beginning we have removed more than 3 billion in the first half of this year. There are authenticity requirements that we have on Facebook, but I would also pick up on the point of your question, which is about bullying and harassment on our platform. Whether or not someone has an authentic profile, we prohibit bullying and harassment on our platform. We have a set of community standards where we have engaged with a range of experts about the types of claims that can be said and cannot be said by anybody, regardless of whether they have got a profile picture or what their account might look like. We are constantly taking feedback about those policies and improving those, but from a safety perspective it is something that we are really committed to. I think identity and authenticity are part of that, but I did want to mention it is not just for accounts that may not have a profile picture or may not use a particular name; our bullying and harassment standards apply across all accounts.

Ms LOVELL: They still sneak through, believe me.

Mr MACHIN: Absolutely, and I think we understand that. There is some proactive detection we are able to do in this space, but we always do benefit from users reporting content to us or, certainly in the political realm, people contacting us to let us know about posts or content that they are concerned about. Certainly for you, Ms Lovell, or Ms Hall or other members of the committee, any content that you are concerned about you are always very welcome to report to Facebook or send to us for review.

Ms LOVELL: I wonder if the contacts for those people who you say work with members of Parliament could be distributed to the committee, because I have never had anyone contact me either, so it would be great to be able to connect with those teams.

Mr MACHIN: Of course, we are very happy to. And also you have eyeballed Mia and me today, so you are always welcome to contact us.

Ms LOVELL: It is notoriously hard to contact Facebook.

Mr MACHIN: Well, I am pleased that we can be here virtually so you can confirm that it is possible to get in touch with us. It is a pleasure to be here with you all.

The CHAIR: No worries. Thank you, Mia and Josh. I am just conscious that we have gone well over time, and there were a number of other questions that we did not quite get to. So I am just wondering if it is possible, when we send out the transcript, that we could maybe send some additional questions that we did not quite get to today, because I know there were some questions around the number of fake accounts that have been deactivated or taken off the platform in Victoria, the differences between platforms, how you operate, conditions on accounts between different jurisdictions like the US and Victoria and why there are those inconsistencies and other things. But maybe if we could provide those to you on notice and you would be able to provide answers to us, that would be very helpful as well.

Mr MACHIN: Of course, yes. We are very happy to. I think we will also put in a submission to supplement our appearance today, which might provide more information that is helpful.

The CHAIR: No worries. Thank you very much for your time today and your submission also.

Mr MACHIN: Thank you.

The CHAIR: That ends this session.

Witnesses withdrew.