



MEDIA RELEASE

EFA supports call to avoid criminalisation of cryptologic research

Canberra, 16th July 2015

EFA supports the call by the International Association for Cryptologic Research (IACR) for amendments to the Defence Trade Controls Act to include clear exemptions for scientific research and for education.

Australia's Defence Trade Controls Act was recently updated and now prohibits the "intangible supply" of encryption technologies, and hence subjects many ordinary teaching and research activities to unclear, potentially severe, export controls.

EFA Chair David Cake said today, "while it is obviously an important technology in the national security context, cryptography is also vital for the privacy and security of individuals, and is critical to commerce in the digital age. Not only is civilian cryptographic research a necessary component of a vibrant digital economy, it is also a vital tool for protection of our privacy against illegal and unethical surveillance and criminal attacks."

EFA believes that the situation created by this legislation is absurd and needs to be rectified urgently. If not, Australia's capacity to deal with future cybersecurity challenges will be severely constrained and a whole category of highly-skilled digital economy jobs will simply not exist in this country.

The IACR petition is available at: <https://www.iacr.org/petitions/australia-dtca/>

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