

**19 February 2022**

**R&CA Submission**

**Social Media (Anti-Trolling) Bill 2022**



Restaurant & Catering Australia (R&CA) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission for the inquiry into the Social Media (Anti-Trolling) Bill (the Bill).

R&CA is the national industry association representing the interests of more than 50,000 restaurants, cafés and catering businesses across Australia. The café, restaurant and catering sector is vitally important to the national economy, generating over \$37 billion in retail turnover each year as well as employing 350,000 people.

Over 93 per cent of businesses in the café, restaurant and catering sector are small businesses, employing 19 people or less.

R&CA is supportive of measures that would not only ensure that victims of online abuse and harassment are able to take proper action against perpetrators but also that this type of behavior is greatly discouraged in the community.

For the hospitality industry, much of this abuse and harassment comes from unwarranted and negative online reviews from customers seeking to cause harm to the owner.

Regardless of the reasons for the attack, the level of vitriol and targeted harassment, which is sometimes coordinated with multiple parties via social media channels, has a tremendous effect on business operators through the immense stress that these attacks bring as well as possible financial strain from a deluge of abusive reviews designed to hurt the owner's business.

Many of these accounts on social media platforms like Facebook or on a platform such as Google Review or Yelp, are anonymous accounts designed to hide the identity of the harasser. Laws that enable the victim of these anonymous attacks to uncover the identity of the owner would not only dissuade

people from committing this harassment but will give victims the recourse to seek avenues of legal action.

We thank you for this opportunity to make this submission. Should you wish to discuss this further, please feel free to contact Manager – Policy & Government, Mr Hugo Robinson at [hugo@rca.asn.au](mailto:hugo@rca.asn.au).



Restaurant  
& Catering