



Our **Mission** is to prevent child sexual assault in our society.
Our **Vision** is to make Australia the safest place in the world to raise a child.

08th October, 2019

Committee Secretary
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane, Qld 4000
Email: lacsc@parliament.qld.gov.au

**Submission to: Police Powers and Responsibilities
and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019**

To Whom It May Concern:

Bravehearts is pleased to provide this submission in relation to the *Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019*.

As an agency that works with, and advocates for, survivors of child sexual harm, we welcome the Queensland Government's commitment to protecting children. With our extensive experience working with survivors of child sexual assault and exploitation, and lobbying for reform, Bravehearts strongly advocates for legislative responses that ensure, as far as possible, the protection of children, young people and the community more broadly.

As Bravehearts is specifically concerned with the protection of children and young people from sexual assault and exploitation, we fully support the amendments in the current Bill that strengthens and reinforces the capacity for law enforcement to effectively perform their duties.

Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000

Bravehearts fully supports clarifying definitions within the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* to resolve the ambiguity around the meaning of the term 'stored' in relation to 'information' to ensure that law enforcement are able to access all password protected information through any application on or through any electronic device.

In addition, we note and support the amendments, in line with recommendations through the 2015 Queensland Organised Crime Commission of Inquiry, to clarify necessary powers to allow police to access information on or through any electronic device.

Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004

As above, Bravehearts fully supports ensuring clarification of definitions to resolve the ambiguity

around the meaning of the term 'stored' in relation to 'information' within the *Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004*.

Criminal Code

Bravehearts supports both amendments to the *Criminal Code* to the offence provision relating to contravening an information access order. We are particularly pleased to see the incorporation of the 'reasonable excuse' element and the provision that contravening an order on the grounds that it may incriminate the person is not a reasonable excuse.

Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012

To ensure the safety and protection of those affected by domestic and family violence, including children and young people, Bravehearts fully supports the proposed amendment to enable selected civilian Queensland Police Service staff to share information between government agencies and/or relevant non-government organisations. As noted in the Explanatory Memorandum, findings from a number of inquests have identified the "lack of effective information sharing" as one of the contributing factors to the system failing to protect victims of domestic and family violence. Bravehearts believes this amendment will go a long way to enhancing the effectiveness of information sharing under the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act*.

In closing, we thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission. Please contact us on research@bravehearts.org.au if any further information is required.

Kind Regards,



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Founder & Executive Director



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