

As democratic governments of the world, we are committed to protecting the health of our populations in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and to upholding our democratic values and the rights of our citizens.

To this end, we have all put our best minds to building COVID-19 contact tracing apps that augment existing health processes and give our health officials the best chance to do their jobs well and save lives.

We have individually developed our digital responses while working within the constraints of the functionality offered by the iOS and Android operating systems. At a very difficult time for the world, everyone is learning how to best manage their responses to the crisis particularly as the epidemiological knowledge continues to improve. No-one is finding it straightforward: you may also have experienced these difficulties with the development efforts your companies have undertaken.

We are pleased that Apple and Google have come forward with your own Exposure Notification Framework to support contact tracing apps. The world needs the genius and capability of your companies mobilised in the fight against COVID-19.

We are all keen to work with Apple and Google in a spirit of cooperation. COVID-19 is a shared challenge, and everyone must mobilise in partnership to tackle it. We need to find a way to enable the Framework's technology to be used to save people's lives, within the contact tracing approaches put in place by us as sovereign and democratically elected governments. We need to work together to maximise the technical effectiveness of our contact tracing apps.

We are concerned that your Framework places conditions on democratic governments that remove their ability to manage their health response. We ask that you consider allowing more flexibility on the adoption of the Exposure Notification Framework. This will allow governments to respond in a manner tailored to the conditions within their own sovereign jurisdictions and in line with their own domestic laws.

We are agreed in our view that democratically elected governments must determine their own public health responses to the pandemic. This response may involve the Bluetooth technology that you are offering in a hybrid model. This model should bring together the best of the Framework and our own contact tracing models to protect the health and privacy of our citizens. We cannot adopt a model that would fundamentally change the way we operate our public health responses.

For example, it is important to all of us that our public health officials have access to epidemiological information about the spread of the virus to inform our public health responses. The virus keeps surprising us in real time, and we need this information to stay ahead of this evolving pandemic.

We would like to invite you to discuss with us how we can work together, including the approach that we need to manage our response to the pandemic, in a closed-door multilateral meeting to be conducted as soon as possible.

As with all other responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, time is of the essence and we look forward to your assistance to achieve a quick resolution of this matter.

On behalf of,



**Australian Government**

**Minister for National Disability Insurance Scheme**

**Minister for Government Services**

Section 33

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Released under FOI Act