



# ACMAsphere

Australia's regulator for broadcasting, the internet,  
radiocommunications and telecommunications

[www.acma.gov.au](http://www.acma.gov.au)

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## New NetAlert – Protecting Australian Families Online initiative launched



**A new NetAlert – Protecting Australian Families Online website and information campaign was launched recently by the Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Senator Helen Coonan, as part of the Australian Government's NetAlert – Protecting Australian Families Online initiative.**

The initiative, which is managed by the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, includes:

- an internet safety information campaign to promote an holistic approach to protecting Australian families online through supervision, education and internet content filters, with Kieren Perkins as the Parent Ambassador for the campaign
- the National Filter Scheme to provide every Australian household and public library with access to a free internet content filter to help block unwanted content

- a new website and national helpline to provide advice about protecting children online, as well as access to the free filters, and information about how they work. The National Filter Scheme provides free access to internet-filtering technology for families and public libraries, with a choice of access to a PC-based filter for installation on the home computer or an ISP-filtered internet service.

Accredited and tested filters can be downloaded from the new NetAlert website at [www.netalert.gov.au](http://www.netalert.gov.au). The telephone hotline operates seven days a week from 8.00 am to 10.00 pm on 1800 880 176.

### **ACMA'S NETALERT ROLE**

ACMA is responsible for the NetAlert Outreach and Research program which includes:

- providing information on current trends in internet safety
- undertaking targeted awareness raising campaigns and activities—including the Cybersafe and Cybersmart kids programs in schools
- the continuing review of filtering technology, including another trial of ISP-level filtering technologies in Tasmania
- reporting annually to the government on internet filtering technologies to ensure Australian families are offered the best available filtering.

Since 2005, NetAlert's outreach function has taken the internet safety message to more than 3,400 school and community groups. The government will provide more than \$11.7 million over four years to ACMA to increase its outreach activities to all Australian states and territories.

ACMA is also responsible for dealing with complaints and investigations in regard to illegal or prohibited content under the online content scheme in the Broadcasting Services Act 1992.

The government announced further funding for ACMA of \$2.2 million in 2007–08 to respond to increasing complaints about internet content, requests for internet safety advice and continuing management of the online content scheme.

Australia's take-down regime, established in 1999 and managed by ACMA, has been recognised as an effective regulatory measure in relation to removing illegal online content from the internet.

In addition to extra compliance funding, proposals are being considered to extend the ACMA Blacklist to cover material which may be crime related but not covered by the National Classification Scheme.