Reset.
AUSTRALIA

An open letter calling for transparency on trending covid-19 content on social media

To The Australian Parliament,

Medical experts and health authorities face a range of serious challenges when it comes to keeping Australians safe from Covid-19, and the government has done much to support the efforts of health practitioners since the pandemic commenced.

There is one important area of vulnerability, however, where we respectfully urge the Australian Parliament to act immediately: the deadly and hidden spread of Covid-19 misinformation on social media.

We know that misinformation, spread via platforms like Facebook, is hampering the efforts of Australian medical authorities. The effects of this digital misinformation spread have been diverse, for example:

+ Growing distrust of a potential Covid-19 vaccine and vaccines in general

+ Australians ignoring public health about social distancing and lockdown measures because they believe the pandemic to be a government-led hoax

+ Growing fears about 5G being linked to Covid-19

Yet while we know these concerning developments are linked to misinformation circulated on social media, we collectively understand very little about this misinformation and what kind of demographics are consuming it.

The only people who currently enjoy a bird's-eye view on the spread of Covid-19 misinformation are the Big Tech giants themselves.

We are therefore urging the Australian Parliament to pass new laws that will force Big Tech platforms to share their vital perspective on Covid-19 misinformation with us all.

A 'Live List' of the most popular Covid-related material being shared on social media can and should be generated – and updated in real time – by the major Big Tech platforms. Such a Live List would help Australian medical experts identify and understand misinformation and to create community engagement responses.

As things stand, we are playing catch up with a misinformation machine that is two steps ahead of us.

Australia's Parliament should mandate transparency from the Big Tech platforms in the interest of public health and safety, and equip us with the data we need.

To learn about Reset Australia, go to **au.reset.tech/livelist**

ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTING THE LIVE LIST: