

## Intermediate B, Round Two

**TOPIC:** *that Australia should ban TikTok.*

### 1. Type of Topic

This is a normative/model debate. This means that the Affirmative should propose a 'model' (a policy on how this idea would be implemented). This model should be clearly described to outline what changes the Affirmative team will make to the status quo, and how these changes will be enacted. The Negative team can either support the status quo or propose a counter-model. This counter-model must be different from the status quo, but also different from the model the Affirmative team is suggesting. The Negative team should ensure they clearly identify whether they are supporting the status quo or proposing a counter-model.

### 2. Background / Context

TikTok is a popular social media platform owned by ByteDance, a Chinese company. It is used by over 8.5 million Australians and 350,000 businesses. The app collects usage information, IP addresses, a user's mobile carrier, unique device identifiers, keystroke patterns, and location data, among other data, like many other social media companies. The company says that it employs access control and approval process overseen by a U.S.-based team. TikTok pledged to migrate American user data to US-based Oracle Cloud though there are concerns they have failed to fully do this.

Concerns have been raised about the potential control and influence of the Chinese government over TikTok's owner, ByteDance, in particular the extraterritorial implications of China's 2017 National Intelligence Law. The Australian government has banned the app on government devices.

This has received particular attention in the United States, where in late March 2024 the US House of Representatives said ByteDance must find a buyer for the immensely popular video app, or face a nationwide ban in the U.S. President Biden has indicated he would sign the law, but first it must clear the Senate, where it faces an uncertain future. Peter Dutton has called for Australia to follow suit.

### 3. Questions for Consideration

- What information should social media companies be allowed to collect on consumers? Is TikTok comparatively harmful in this respect?
- What measures can be taken to prevent leaks of data?

- How does ByteDance's ownership of the platform affect Australia's information security, and how should this be weighed against consumer popularity?
- Does TikTok have any other extraneous harms/benefits to its users that would warrant government intervention?
- What capacity does the Australian government have to influence and lobby TikTok to make other changes, if a ban is not the right answer?

© The South Australian Debating Association, Inc. 2024 This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced by any process without prior written permission from the South Australian Debating Association, Inc. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be directed to the President, The South Australian Debating Association, Inc., GPO Box 906, Adelaide, SA 5001.