



Office of Hon Steven Joyce

Minister of Transport
Minister for Communications
and Information Technology

Associate Minister of Finance
Associate Minister for Infrastructure

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Thomas Beagle
email: thomas@thomasbeagle.net

Dear Thomas

Thank you for your letter dated 13 July 2009 regarding Internet filtering in New Zealand. You have asked some questions relating to New Zealand's plans around Internet filtering and a National Business Review article from earlier this year in which I am reported as opposing Internet filtering along the lines of what was being proposed in Australia.

I would like to say first off that the voluntary website filtering system being proposed in New Zealand by the Department of Internal Affairs is significantly different in design and scope from the mandatory system proposed in Australia. The New Zealand system is:

- a voluntary system;
- an extension of a trial website filtering system which functioned successfully over a two year period and which had the support of many ISPs, Internet NZ, ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Traffic in Children) NZ and Save the Children;
- limited to blocking known sites containing images of child sexual abuse;
- a method of filtering which involves no identifiable degradation to the performance of the Internet; and
- viewed as part of a solution to address the problem of access to images of child sexual abuse on the Internet.

The Department of Internal Affairs is currently in the process of preparing for consultation a draft Code of Practice on how the system will work, its objectives and what will be blocked. If you have any further questions concerning this issue then I suggest you contact Steve O'Brien, the Manager of Censorship Compliance at the Department of Internal Affairs, on phone 04 495 9371.

Yours sincerely

Steven Joyce
Minister for Communications and Information Technology