Online Safety Commission

Is Fiji's current approach to Cyber Safety empowering users or policing them?

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Today's flow

- Why this debate matters for a connected Pacific
- What 'empowerment' and 'policing' look like in practice
- Where Fiji is now: strengths and gaps
- A balanced pathway: Empower • Enable • Enforce (the '3E' model)
- What government, platforms and businesses can do next

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Why this matters right now

- Digital transformation is accelerating in Fiji and across the Pacific.
- Online spaces are inseparable from work, school, culture and commerce.
- Harms are real: image-based abuse, cyberbullying, hate and harassment, scams, and child protection concerns.
- Trust is fragile over-reach can chill speech; under-reach leaves people unsafe.
- We need solutions that work for Fiji’s context, languages and communities.

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Framing the debate

- Empowering users
  - Build skills and confidence
  - Offer remedies and rapid support
  - Design safer products and processes
- Policing users
  - Over-criminalise speech
  - Block, ban or surveil as a first resort
  - Opaque processes with little recourse
- Fiji's goal: safety with rights lawful, necessary, proportionate, transparent and accountable

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How harm shows up in Fiji (everyday patterns)

- Image-based abuse and intimate content sharing without consent
- Sustained harassment, doxxing and pile ons
- Scams and financial fraud targeting workers and SMEs
- Mis/disinformation that inflames tensions or exploits emergencies
- AI-assisted harms: deepfake sexual imagery, synthetic profiles

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OSC's current approach (simplified)

- Support
  - Trauma-informed triage and victim support
  - Assistance with takedown pathways on major platforms
- Education
  - School and community outreach, workplace programmes
  - Practical guidance: reporting, privacy controls, digital citizenship
- Partnerships
  - Fiji Police CID Cybercrime, MoC, MoJ, MoE, NGOs
  - Regional and global partners (e.g., NCMEC, HSI, platforms)
- Enforcement (last resort)
  - Targeted offences (e.g., image-based abuse, threats, child safety)
  - Referrals and evidence support

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What's working (signals of empowerment)

- Faster takedowns when escalation pathways work
- Communities increasingly report incidents earlier
- Schools and workplaces requesting proactive education
- Survivor-centred language shifting norms and expectations

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Where it can feel like ‘policing’ (risks to avoid)

- Defaulting to bans, blocks or surveillance instead of user remedies
- Over-broad offences that chill legitimate speech and journalism
- Opaque decision-making and limited user recourse
- Slow or complex processes that re-traumatise victims
- Weak local representation from major platforms

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Guardrails for a balanced system

- Legality, necessity, proportionality—clear statutory tests
- Due process and clear appeals
- Transparency reporting and public metrics
- Privacy and data-minimisation by design
- Co-design with communities, including Fijian cultural lenses

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The ‘3E’ model: Empower • Enable • Enforce

- Empower (people)
  - Digital literacy and bystander skills
  - Easy self-help guides, templates and helplines
- Enable (systems)
  - MOUs and SLAs with platforms and telcos
  - Rapid takedown protocols; safe-design nudges
  - Local points of contact and training
- Enforce (behaviour)
  - Targeted, clear offences and calibrated penalties
  - Restorative pathways where appropriate
  - Swift, fair processes to reduce harm

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Legislative refresh—practical priorities

- Clarify definitions of ‘harm’ and ‘serious emotional distress’
- Introduce or strengthen notice-and-action with safe-harbour rules
- Address doxxing and deepfake sexual imagery explicitly
- Modernise evidence and data-sharing with safeguards
- Expand civil remedies and protective orders alongside criminal tools

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Working with platforms—what Fiji needs

- Dedicated Fiji/Pacific escalation channels and local representation
- Training for frontline responders on community standards and evidence needs
- Agreed service levels on urgent harms (e.g., child safety, image-based abuse)
- Co-created safety content and outreach campaigns
- Regular transparency updates for Fiji (takedowns, response times)

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Measuring what matters

- Time-to-takedown for priority harms
- Victim satisfaction and re-victimisation rates
- Uptake of safety tools (reporting, privacy controls)
- Repeat-offender reduction
- Community trust metrics (surveys, outreach reach)

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A quick vignette (anonymised)

- Report received: persistent harassment with non-consensual images
- OSC support: evidence capture, platform escalation, safety planning
- Outcome: content removed, support services engaged, follow-up scheduled
- Lesson: early reporting + clear pathways = faster, kinder outcomes

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What organisations can do this quarter

- Adopt a simple incident-response playbook for online harm
- Run a 60-minute staff safety micro-programme (OSC can help)
- Nominate a single point of contact for escalations
- Review workplace social media and doxxing protections
- Join a Fiji/Pacific safety working group

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Call to action

- Let’s build a Fiji model that keeps people safe, protects rights, and helps business thrive.
  Connect with OSC Outreach to partner on training, protocols and practical support

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