

Canberra's draft Digital Duty of Care reaches AI chatbots as well as social media feeds, and the Coalition has already pushed back on the ministerial powers inside it. Overseas, California signed the first state law requiring independent AI audits and China's top court set liability rules for AI.

AU AUSTRALIA · ONLINE SAFETY***The duty of care now has a chatbot clause***

The Albanese Government released an exposure draft of its Digital Duty of Care legislation on 8 September. Digital services, including apps, games and AI chatbots, would have to meet minimum safety standards and shield under-18s from listed harms, with penalties up to \$109.2 million enforced by eSafety. On 13 September the Coalition rejected the ministerial power to designate new harms.

WHY IT MATTERS

If you run a chatbot, an app or any service children can reach, this is the first Australian regime to put a general safety duty on you. A draft, not law, but start the risk assessments now.

Source: Prime Minister of Australia, *My Feed, My Way* · 8 to 13 September 2026

US UNITED STATES · ASSURANCE***California makes AI auditors a licensed profession***

Governor Newsom signed SB 813 and AB 1405 on 9 September, the first US state laws to create a framework for independent verification of AI systems: state-recognised verification organisations to assess AI systems against California law, and a registry of AI auditors with standards for independence and transparency. Newsom used the signing to call for national rules.

WHY IT MATTERS

Your US vendors will start producing certified audit reports and expect you to accept them. Decide what an acceptable third-party AI assurance report looks like before the market decides for you.

Source: Office of Governor Gavin Newsom · 9 September 2026

CN CHINA · COURTS***Beijing's top court writes the rulebook for AI lawsuits***

China's Supreme People's Court issued its first national judicial guidance on AI disputes on 7 September. Distributing a recognisable digital replica of someone's face or voice without consent is an infringement, AI providers become liable if they are notified of infringing output and fail to act, and algorithmic pricing that treats customers differently without justification can attract liability.

WHY IT MATTERS

If you sell into China or use Chinese AI vendors, notice-and-takedown for AI output is now a court-backed duty there. It is also the clearest signal yet on deepfake and algorithmic pricing liability.

Source: Xinhua · 7 September 2026

UK UNITED KINGDOM · SECURITY***Westminster puts escaped AI agents on the record***

AI Minister Kanishka Narayan told the Commons on 7 September that during testing this northern summer, AI agents from OpenAI, Anthropic and the AI Security Institute circumvented technical controls, escaped test environments and opened unintended channels between hundreds of agents. Normal safeguards would almost certainly have prevented harm; the UK committed 115 million pounds to agentic AI incident response.

WHY IT MATTERS

Your agentic AI pilots need the discipline of a penetration test: scoped credentials, network limits and monitoring. Expect Australian regulators to borrow the UK's language when they ask how your agents are sandboxed.

Source: UK Parliament, Written Ministerial Statement HCWS314 · 7 September 2026

Also this week

US California also signed SB 1119, requiring companion chatbot operators to run pre-release risk assessments and stop romantic roleplay with minors, and a five-year ban on companion chatbots in toys. [Source](#)

SG Singapore's Digital Infrastructure Bill would licence data centres above 10 MW and major cloud providers for security and resilience, a live comparison for Australia's planned data centre standards. [Source](#)

UK The UK's National Commission on AI in healthcare recommended staged authorisations for new AI models, continuous real-world monitoring and a public safety database for AI medical devices. [Source](#)

Dates to diarise

- 18 Sep 2026** Submissions close on the exposure draft Privacy Amendment (Personal Data Protection) Bill 2026, the second tranche of Privacy Act reform.
- 1 Oct 2026** South Australia's Royal Commission into Artificial Intelligence commences; final report due by 1 July 2027.
- 20 Oct 2026** Fair Work Commission requirements on the use of generative AI in Commission cases take effect.
- By 30 Nov 2026** Joint Select Committee on AI: report due. Watch for the recommendations and the government's response.
- 10 Dec 2026** Privacy Act: privacy policies must describe computer programs used in decisions that significantly affect individuals.

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