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For Immediate Release**

## **Pirate Party Australia: Moving Forward**

With Julia Gillard calling the election for August 21 it is with some regret that we must announce we will not be able to contest this election as a Party. Our application to register is before the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), however a Party cannot be registered once an election has been called.

This does not mean that you won't hear from us this election. We'll continue to highlight important issues that have been largely neglected by other political parties, and to lobby and campaign for a better policy direction with respect to transparent governance, the Internet and civil liberties. We will continue to work to grow the Party, build a stronger base and be better placed to campaign for the next federal election. You may even see us at a state election. As with any start-up organisation, we are still finding ourselves, and our first National Congress occurs on July 31 in Sydney, where our members will formally adopt our first statement of platform, and our first manifesto — and discuss the future of the Party, the future of the democracy in Australia, and how we plan to make it better.

In the short time we've begun formally organising the Party, we've created what we believe has been a positive effect on political discourse — we've worked to highlight the issue of Internet censorship to many different community groups through various actions. We've highlighted the importance of access to information with Exit International, we've worked with other groups to show the ineffectiveness of the proposed mandatory Internet censorship regime of the Australian Labor Party.

The issue of file sharing, and how copyright should function in the digital paradigm, the importance of our civil liberties and network freedom, is increasingly becoming a topic of discussion and we hope to continue in making this a topic of national debate. Access to information, knowledge and culture, and how we relate to them, is quickly becoming the most important debate. The information society demands an information party — we are that party. We will continue to be that voice.

The deceptively named Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) threatens freedom, access to pharmaceuticals and threatens the democratic process. The prospect of blanket data retention that represents a wholesale invasion of privacy is looming. These are the issues about which we should be asking lawmakers in this campaign — make them accountable, make them promise they will not marginalise civil liberties, and think about where your vote will go. It is the most important and powerful mechanism you have as a citizen in a democratic nation such as ours.

We won't tell you how to vote — there are other parties that have some overlap. We may provide an analysis of other parties and their policies, possibly including some recommendations, however we hope you examine each party's formal and written policies before casting your vote. Choose a party with policies that you are comfortable with, place your own preferences, and use the power that preferential voting provides to direct preference flow.<sup>1</sup> Also, make certain that you are enrolled!<sup>2</sup>

Choose a minor party that you think will do great things for this country. Our preferential voting system means a vote for a minor party is not a vote wasted!

We regret that we cannot represent you as candidates at the forthcoming federal election, but we will not be giving up, and we will still work to make these issues election issues, and topics of public debate and concern.

### **About Pirate Party Australia**

The Pirate Party Australia is a forming political party, with an application before the Australian Electoral Commission.

Pirate Party Australia has an interest in reforming legislation and policy surrounding culture, innovation and the protection of civil liberties, with sister organisations fully registered, seeking registration or otherwise active in over 30 countries throughout the world.

The Swedish Piratpartiet have two elected sitting Members of the European Parliament, after the 2009 European Elections, in which they attained 7.1% of the vote.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://blogs.abc.net.au/antonygreen/2010/07/how-to-vote-guide.html>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling\\_to\\_vote/Update\\_enrolment.htm](http://www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/Update_enrolment.htm)