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Privacy a right, not an option

The Western Australian Liberal Party Spokesperson for Innovation, Tony Simpson has criticised the Federal Labor Government's cavalier attitude towards the privacy of millions of Australian workers.

"Australians have an expectation that when they send an email, either from work or home, their boss, or the Government will not be reading it without a pretty good reason," said Mr Simpson.

These comments followed an announcement by Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard, who stated that the Federal Government was planning to amend the Telecommunications Act to allow employers to read their worker's emails, without obtaining their permission.

"There are times when the Government may need to monitor an individuals emails, I think all sensible people would agree to that," Mr Simpson conceded.

"However, this should be handled in the same way as law enforcement authorities handle phone taps and other intrusive electronic monitoring, with a warrant.

"The Liberal Party in Western Australia strongly supports the individual's right to privacy and my colleagues and I are shocked and disappointed that the Federal Labor Party is willing to give up these important rights, and in the process abandoning the workers that their party was founded to protect to give employers a power that they do not really need.

"The Labor Party should be looking at actual ways to protect our IT infrastructure, instead of grandstanding to grab headlines."