

Preface

I first became interested in the topic of unauthorised disclosures by public servants after reading about Clive Ponting, the civil servant who leaked information alleging that the government had covered up the circumstances surrounding the sinking of the Argentinean cruiser, *General Belgrano*, during the Falklands conflict. He was acquitted of breaching the former Official Secrets Act 1911, section 2. The Act which replaced section 2, the Official Secrets Act 1989, is still in force today, however the momentum for unauthorised leaking and the methods used to disseminate the material are changing. In the new age of leaking, how can whistleblowers raise concerns in the public interest without breaching the law? What is the public interest and who should determine it? Are the accountability mechanisms in place adequate to provide an alternative to unauthorised disclosures? This book based, in part, on my Ph.D thesis, aims to answer these questions.

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