

## Media Release: National privacy survey: ID theft, ID scanning and online privacy concerns are on the rise

28 August 2007

A [national survey](#) commissioned by the Office of the Australian Privacy Commissioner has found that technological developments have increased Australians' privacy concerns.

Among the findings are:

- **ID THEFT:** 9% of Australians claim to have been victims of ID theft and 60% are concerned about becoming a victim. 45% believe ID theft is likely to occur as a result of using the Internet.
- **ID SCANNING:** Only 18% of Australians believe that it is acceptable for their ID to be copied or scanned when entering a pub or club, but 80% believe it is acceptable to *show* ID.
- **ONLINE PRIVACY:** 50% of Australians are more concerned about giving personal information over the Internet than they were two years ago and 25% of Australians claim they provide false information in online forms as a way of protecting their privacy.

"It is understandable that Australians hold concerns about the impact technology can have on their privacy, particularly given the rapid pace at which technology has evolved in recent years," Ms Karen Curtis, the Privacy Commissioner, said.

"The best way to address these concerns is for people to arm themselves with knowledge of the privacy safeguards built into technologies, as well as an understanding of their rights under the Privacy Act."

The survey results were released today by Ms Curtis as part of Privacy Awareness Week (26 August - 1 September 2007). The survey measures changes in public attitudes towards and awareness of privacy-related concerns relating to areas such as health, work, business, and government, and issues such as ID theft, CCTV, and the Internet.

Conducted by the Wallis Consulting Group on behalf of the Office, the survey consisted of telephone interviews with a representative sample of 1500 Australians nationwide. It follows on from previous studies commissioned by the Office in the early 1990s and in 2001 and 2004.

Other findings in the survey include:

- **BUSINESS TRUST:** 36% of Australians would not deal with a company or charity because of concerns over its protection or use of their personal information.
- **TRUST IN HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS:** 91% of Australians rate health service providers as trustworthy with regard to handling their personal information, up from 89% in 2004, 84% in 2001 and 70% in 1994.
- **EMPLOYEE PRIVACY:** 86% of Australians think employees should have access to information that employers keep about them. Most also believe that employers should be entitled to monitor employees in the workplace in certain situations.
- **SENDING INFORMATION OVERSEAS:** 90% of Australians are concerned

about businesses sending their personal information overseas.

- **TRUST IN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES:** 73% of Australians consider government departments to be trustworthy, an increase from 64% in 2004 and 58% in 2001.

"The survey is part of my Office's efforts to ensure that its regulatory, policy and educational work both reflect and address public attitudes towards privacy in contemporary society," Ms Curtis said.

***For media inquiries, contact 02 9284 9806 or 0407 663 968.***

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