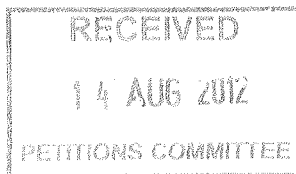


660/1066



**THE HON BILL SHORTEN MP
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS
MINISTER FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND SUPERANNUATION**

The Hon John Murphy MP
House of Representatives
Standing Committee on Petitions
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



06 AUG 2012

John

Dear Mr Murphy

Thank you for your letter of 21 May 2012, reference number 660/1066, alerting me to the petition regarding financial sector companies sending jobs and customer information off-shore. I apologise for the delay in responding.

I expect businesses in the financial sector to look after their employees like all other Australian businesses. Businesses must endeavour to utilise the talent and hardworking spirit of Australian workers, and manage costs by investing in the training and productivity of their employees.

The finance and insurance services sector remains strong in Australia and continues to employ more Australians. It is encouraging to see that employment in the financial and insurance services sector increased by around 42,700 jobs (up 11 per cent) in the last two years. This compares with an additional 270,300 jobs for the rest of the economy (up 2.4 per cent).

Regarding the protection of customers' information, the *Privacy Act 1988* regulates the sending of personal information overseas. Banks and financial institutions are permitted to transfer personal information to an overseas recipient under certain conditions. These conditions include the individual consenting to the transfer, or the transfer being necessary for the performance of a contract between the individual and the organisation.

You may be aware that the Government is undertaking comprehensive reforms to Australia's privacy laws. The reforms will ensure that individuals must be made aware of how and why personal information is, or will be, collected and how the entity will deal with that personal information. Among other things, agencies and organisations will be required to notify individuals whether their personal information is likely to be disclosed to overseas recipients.

Thank you for bringing this petition to my attention. I trust this information will be of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

BILL SHORTEN