

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**[ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES 2010-2011]**

[Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio]

**Department/Agency:** Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

**Outcome/Program:**

**Topic:** Aviation Security

**Senator:** Heffernan

**Question reference number:** 71

**Type of question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 15 April 2011

**Number of pages:** 1

**Question:**

I refer to the 2010-11 Budget that provides \$28.5 million to help the industry introduce a range of new technologies at passenger screening points, including the latest body scanners. I understand that from early 2011 body scanners will be introduced progressively at screening points servicing international departure passengers.

- 1) What are the views of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner?

**Answer:**

The Office of the Privacy Commissioner was integrated into the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (the OAIC) on 1 November 2010.

The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (the OAIC) has been providing privacy advice to the Office of Transport Security (the OTS), in relation to the development and implementation of body scanning technology in Australian international airports. That advice is being provided under a Memorandum of Understanding between the OAIC and the Department of Infrastructure and Transport.

The introduction of body scanners clearly raises privacy issues. Where a project incorporates new security technology and practices that have the potential to be privacy intrusive, the OAIC considers that every effort should be made to minimise the impact on the privacy of individuals. The OTS is conducting a Privacy Impact Assessment in order to examine the potential impacts of the proposal on privacy and to develop strategies to mitigate against them.

The OAIC considers that the selection of certain forms of body scanning technology, such as the auto-target recognition (ATR) models which display a generic avatar, may address some of the privacy concerns raised by the public, including concerns regarding revealing body features and the dissemination of 'nude' body scan images. The OAIC considers that it is essential that the scanning machines do not have the capability to save or transmit scanned images.