

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE
OFFICE OF THE PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

Question No. 163

Senator Stott-Despoja asked the following question at the hearing on 31 October 2005:

Has the Privacy Commissioner given advice to DFAT on the ePassport currently being introduced? In particular, how has the Office of the Privacy Commissioner satisfied itself that DFAT can comply with the security principle (IPP4) in relation to preventing access to information on the computer chip by unauthorised third parties?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

The Office has provided privacy advice to DFAT on the ePassport. The advice suggested that DFAT consider introducing safeguards to ameliorating the risk of skimming of the electronic information in the ePassport. The Office understands that measures have been taken to increase the data security controls built into the chip technology.

The Commissioner considers that these changes have significantly reduced the risk of unauthorised and covert access to the information retained on the chip in the ePassport. The Office will be undertaking further work in relation to the ePassport in the first half of 2006.