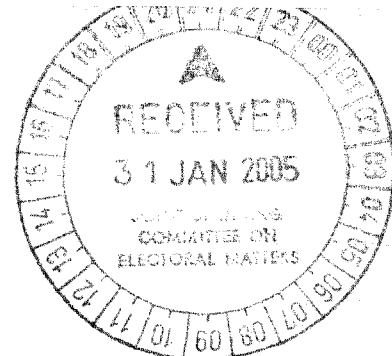


Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters	
Submission No.	113
Date Received	31-1-05
Secretary	<i>[Signature]</i>

28 January 2005

L. Milburn

The Committee Secretary
 The Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
 Department of Representatives
 Parliament House
 CANBERRA ACT 2600



To Whom It May Concern,

I am currently on the electoral role and I am proud to say I have been on the role since 18 years of age. I am now 30 years of age. I have never missed voting whether it be a local, state or federal election.

The purpose of this letter is to address electoral role information being used by marketing companies sending their advertising paraphernalia via the post. I along with family, friends and other members of the community are very frustrated with this marketing intrusion especially when you make efforts not to have your personal details available to such companies. Eg Not by entering free competitions at shopping centres etc.

Recently I received advertising material for a credit card, which contained the credit card application etc. I telephoned the company and asked where they obtained my details from and their response was to read a code located in a corner of the application. This code revealed my details were from a marketing company called Baycorp (02) 92364800 and this code enabled the telemarketer to inform me that my details were obtained from the electoral role.

I telephoned Baycorp who informed me that they had obtained my details from the electoral role, along with thousands of other members of the community details, by a person they employed to go to the electoral office and sit there for hours looking up and writing names of people off the electoral role. This was perfectly legal for them to do to succeed in their network marketing strategies to send out thousands of marketing paraphernalia in the hope to have a small percentage of members of the community to purchase/sign up for their product/services. I was informed I could have my name removed from their advertising data base, to which I did, and have my name also removed from the Australia Direct Marketing Association's (ADMA) database, to which I also did.

I then telephoned the Electoral Office in Sydney on (02) 93756333 and spoke to the Acting Director of this office and voiced my complaint. The Acting Director listened and empathised with me on this topic, quoting that he himself has the same problem and that many members of the community complain in respect to marketing companies utilising the electoral role for marketing intrusion. He also advised me to document my complaint to your committee for any real success, as employees of the electoral office had in the past forwarded such recommendations/complaints onto the committee without any success of the problem being rectified.

My complaint is as follows: That I, along with many others, diligently maintain our personal details with the electoral commission. I/we understand and endorse that this document is available for viewing to display openness, impartially and integrity. What I/we are frustrated with is that any person, without any accountability can access others personal details without explanation or reason; can blatantly sit at an electoral office for hours and not be questioned to why they (marketing employee) are there for so long, then we as law abiding citizens have to be subjected to marketing paraphernalia being sent to our home addresses constantly. Furthermore, to rectify the situation I/we have to first telephone these companies (wasting our time and money), secondly when I wish to voice my complaint verbally to the electoral role office, I am informed that many people have done this previously but this either falls on 'deaf ears' or nothing is done to rectify the problem. Thirdly I have to write such an extensive letter of complaint outlining such issues, when as common sense would prevail, for you people to implement a system that the electoral role could still be viewed in an open, impartial and integral way but to stop marketing companies just accessing people's personal details for their own financial purposes.

On a parting note I find it amusing that the Electoral Commission spends a substantial amount of money on advertising to members of the community to obtain compliance in having electoral role details updated/correct, I am now comprehending the motivation of why some people don't comply.

Yours Sincerely



Lawrence Milburn