

Questions on Notice from Senator Lundy at Melbourne Hearing

To the National Archives

1. *Has the National Archives been consulted about archiving electronic and/or paper records relating in any way to the proposed Access Card?*

Answer:

Yes; the National Archives has held one meeting with a representative of the Department of Human Services.

Can the National Archives provide the Committee with all records of correspondence relating to the Access Card?

Answer:

Yes; a record summarising the main points of discussion at the meeting referred to above is attached.

2. *Can the National Archives provide the Committee with all information regarding the application of archival policies such as E-Permanents to the management, security, privacy and storage of documentation that*

(a) *establishes identity for the purposes of the proposed access card*

(b) *modifies or updates identity details of access cards and the archiving policy that will apply.*

Answer:

The National Archives recommends to Commonwealth agencies that they complete a formal business and risk management analysis of their requirements to create, control, access, and keep or destroy records, in accordance with the international standard for records management (AS ISO 15489). The National Archives recommends that this analysis be conducted in the context of legal, business, and community requirements, including security and privacy issues.

Commonwealth agencies are then encouraged to design and implement strategies to address the issues revealed in the business and risk analysis. This might include implementing the Recordkeeping Metadata Standard for Commonwealth Agencies (which contains mandatory and optional elements relating to record security, access, and usage).

Decisions about the retention or disposal of Commonwealth records follow from a joint National Archives/agency appraisal process in which the Commonwealth agency's ongoing business needs are considered, as well as the longer-term whole-of-Commonwealth interests and risks, community interests, and future research needs.

In the case of all classes of identity records related to the Access Card, the National Archives would expect to collaborate with the registration authority in the usual way to arrive at a disposal authority under s.24.2(b) of the Archives Act.

3. *Can the National Archives advise the Committee on the subsequent accessibility of these files including the standard of the data (including metadata) in electronic form, and the cost of these systems, and data storage and management of these records?*

Answer:

Under the *Archives Act 1983* all records and their metadata are available for public access after 30 years unless they contain information that falls into certain exemption categories that are defined in section 33 of the Act. This applies regardless of whether records are held by an agency or by the National Archives.

Most exempt information is withheld to protect personal privacy. Defence, security, and intelligence sensitivities are the next most common reasons for exemption.

Agencies must ensure that their electronic records and related metadata are preserved and remain readable and usable for as long as required to meet their legislative, business and community obligations. This includes the development and maintenance of the necessary infrastructure to meet public and official access requests, and includes the implementation of controls to manage access to the records in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles of the *Privacy Act 1988* and any other obligations.

The National Archives' digital preservation approach is based on maintaining long-term data integrity by converting electronic records into open preservation formats. It is not possible to provide more specific information about preserving and providing access to records relating to the Access Card without knowing the type of file formats and/or datasets that are expected to be created. (Note also, the NAA would only be undertaking digital preservation action for records identified after appraisal as "Retain as National Archives".)

From a storage perspective, the National Archives' digital preservation facilities are secure and scalable so that storage can be added as required. Metadata for the preservation and management of the electronic records is captured and stored, based on international best practice.

The cost element of the question is difficult to determine without further information regarding file types and projected quantity (size).