

From: ric hingee
Sent: Saturday, 3 March 2007 11:53 AM
To: FPA, Committee (SEN)
Subject: SENATE INQUIRY INTO ACCESS CARD

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to forward a short submission to the above inquiry as follows:

I am extremely concerned about the introduction of the "access card" which I regard as the thin edge of the wedge to the introduction of an identity card along the lines of the old Australia Card proposal.

In the event of terrorist attacks within Australia, I see the move to introducing an identity card almost inevitable. If an access card exists, the temptation to extend it to a identity card could not be resisted. Even in the ACT, we have the situation where it was not compulsory to carry your drivers licence on you as long as you could produce it within 24 hours. This proviso has now disappeared and you can receive an on-the-spot fine if you do not have it in your possession if stopped by the police. If this can happen to a drivers licence then it can certainly happen to an access card with a simple change in legislation or regulations associated with legislation.

Undertakings by the government on restricting the scope of an access card can not be trusted. One needs only to look at government statements on the introduction of the GST and its views on "non-core promises" to see that.

I am very concerned about the increasing attacks on peoples' rights to privacy. These rights have been whittled away over the years. I worked for many years as the Privacy Contact Officer (for the Privacy Commission) in the "mega-Department" Department of Primary Industries and Energy. I have seen at first hand many breaches of privacy and there have been large numbers of cases reported in the press of serious breaches of the privacy law and its 10 "principles". I have no faith whatsoever in a Government of any persuasion being able to prevent breaches of the access card requirements or an extension of its purpose. For example, with respect to the provision and use of tax file numbers we have the situation where these numbers are now provided legally to many other federal departments such as Treasury and Social Services. We now have the ridiculous situation where tax file numbers are actually used as a file reference number on notices by the Child Support Agency. These notices are sent out in the ordinary mail in large numbers!

The use of an imbedded computer chip in the proposed access card is also a problem. There will be large numbers of chip-readers situated in insecure locations which would be readily accessible to criminals and the like. Furthermore, it has been often demonstrated that computer hackers will eventually crack the security. My wife works in the IT area of the Australian National University and that organisation has constant and immense numbers of attacks by hackers. The same would happen with the Access Card which would act like a magnet for hackers.

We have already seen the government dismiss some of the recommendations of the committee examining the feasibility of the proposal. On the basis of my long years in government, including working with various Ministers, I can see a continuation of this trend. I have been involved with the response to the Coroner's Inquiry into the 2003 bushfires. We

have seen here important recommendations of both the Coroner and McLeod Report dismissed out of hand by the Stanhope Government.

I have a degree from the Australian National University with majors in Economics and Politics. I also have qualifications from the Australian Graduate School of Management (Uni of NSW) in Business Management. These qualifications, along with many years of experience in Commonwealth Government working on Cabinet Submissions, Ministerial briefing and speeches with particular relevance to foreign investment, industrial relations, the environment, commodity and energy related issues and aboriginal issues and social justice matters, gives me a wide span of exposure to many areas of government which has resulted in me becoming extremely suspicious about the motives associated with the introduction of an "access card". I have been proven right many times before and I have no doubt whatsoever that it will be just a matter of time before any access card will face pressure to be extended into an identity card. After all, the Australia Card proposal didn't die, it simply changed its name and has taken a different form.

Yours sincerely

Cedric (Ric) Hingee

Tax File Number ??????

Access Card Number ??????

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