

V Privacy in Diverse Victoria

October 2002

Attitudes towards information privacy among
selected Non-English speaking background
and Indigenous groups in Victoria



Office of the
Victorian Privacy
Commissioner

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PRIVACY COMMISSIONER'S FOREWORD

The Information Privacy Act establishes an office of Privacy Commissioner as the independent regulator for the collection and handling of personal information by Victorian government agencies and local councils. The functions of the Privacy Commissioner are outlined in section 58 and include:

- To promote an understanding and acceptance of ten Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) and their objects [function (a)]
- To promote privacy protection through awareness programs and public statements and by listening to the concerns of the public [functions (o), (p), (q), (r)]
- To conduct research and to advise on the effects on privacy of proposals [functions (l) and (m)]

Privacy Victoria has been informed by current research into attitudes towards privacy of what could be described as the 'mainstream' community.¹ Research shows high levels of concern. Clearly, privacy matters to Australians. But what do different groups in our community mean by privacy? And what specific issues concern them most?

Social research into understandings of, and issues related to, privacy amongst culturally and linguistically diverse (including Indigenous) communities is a vital tool to inform the Privacy Commissioner's work. It will condition advice. It may influence guidelines. It will assist the development of appropriate privacy awareness communications and information activities.

As this report shows, little research has been done into attitudes towards privacy of different community groups. To our knowledge, none has been done in Australia.

¹ 'Privacy and the Community', July 2001, prepared for the Office of Federal Privacy Commissioner by Roy Morgan Research.

The research has revealed many commonalities, and some differences, amongst the groups surveyed. Regardless of their background, people have aspects of their lives that they wish to keep private. However these aspects differ amongst communities. People realise that government and local councils have legitimate reasons for collecting information about them but they have varying degrees of trust in government.

Unsurprisingly, Privacy Victoria is not well known since it is very new. But there is also little awareness of an individual's privacy rights. Culturally appropriate mechanisms are needed to help people from different communities become aware of, and understand, their rights.

The report's findings present challenges for this Office and all who must communicate privacy issues effectively. Following the report's recommendations, Privacy Victoria is undertaking an integrated communications strategy for Victoria's special audiences throughout the remainder of 2002 and into 2003.

As with other aspects of practical privacy, the report illustrates again the subtlety of this precious aspect of Australian life, now increasingly taking legal form.

PAUL CHADWICK
Victorian Privacy Commissioner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Qualitative research was undertaken with representatives of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and Indigenous communities during June-July 2002 into issues of information privacy. This is the first research of its kind focusing on the attitudes of special audiences within an Australian jurisdiction.

The research aims:

- To investigate and report on the current understanding, knowledge, perceptions and attitudes to 'privacy' and 'information privacy' of Victoria's Indigenous and CALD communities
- To identify key issues for these communities
- To provide strategic input into the development of practical and creative solutions for integrated communication to Indigenous and CALD communities about information privacy and Privacy Victoria
- To identify key information channels, both traditional media and community specific

Nine target audiences were selected to form the basis of the research. Eight language groups – Italian, Greek, Chinese (Cantonese, Mandarin), Vietnamese, Arabic speakers, Turkish, Somali – and Indigenous communities, with a focus on rural locations. The fieldwork includes a mixture of one-on-one interviews with community and religious leaders, focus group discussions with community members and high level round-table discussions between the Commissioner and community advocates.

Key findings

Communities are similar in that:

- There are aspects of their lives that they wish to keep private
- They acknowledge the need for state and local governments to collect personal data
- They feel disempowered and want to control how data is stored and used

- They need reassurance that their cultural sensitivities will be understood and their data will be treated with respect
- They would like to be able to check data stored about them
- There is limited knowledge of complaints mechanisms
- There is very little knowledge of privacy laws
- There is virtually no awareness of Privacy Victoria
- They welcome the concept of Privacy Victoria
- They are interested in hearing about Privacy Victoria
- They need information to be in their own language

Communities differ in:

- The aspects of their lives which they regard as private
- Their attitudes towards, and level of trust in, Australian governments
- Their attitudes to the sharing of information, including criminal records
- The likelihood of lodging a complaint
- The most appropriate method of communicating with them

Collectively, knowledge and understanding of community attitudes to information privacy can be collapsed into a number of audience segments: community discrimination (concerns about discrimination and vilification by media and members of the wider community because of ethnicity, religion, colour etc); personal reputation (concerns about personal reputation being compromised); government discrimination (concerns about discrimination in the provision of services because of ethnicity, religion, colour etc); corruption / illegal use of data (corruption of government officials, selling or misusing data for their own personal gain).

In order to effectively educate and inform diverse communities about Privacy Victoria, its role and responsibilities, and to encourage people to use the services, there are various barriers that will need to be overcome. These include:

- Lack of English language proficiency
- Various levels of education and literacy in first language
- Suspicion of the independence of a body funded by government
- Lack of belief in the value of making complaints

- Reluctance to approach a large, anonymous organisation
- Reluctance to expose private information to further scrutiny
- Variability in the standard and availability of communication channels

Recommendations

- 1 That Privacy Victoria target special audiences, often those facing the greatest levels of disadvantage - specifically CALD and Indigenous audiences with tailored communication messages and approaches.
- 2 That a priority list of CALD audiences include as a minimum the following 10 language groups (in alphabetical order): Arabic speakers, Chinese speakers, Croatian, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish, and Vietnamese.
- 3 That a further list of CALD audiences be considered, subject to Privacy Victoria budget provisions to include: Polish, Russian, Somali, Assyrian, Bosnian, Cambodian (Khmer), and Persian (Farsi).
- 4 That a separate and tailored Indigenous communication campaign be developed and implemented.
- 5 That Privacy Victoria's communication approaches targeting CALD and Indigenous audiences take account of the following points:
 - Information material (written and oral) must be produced in relevant community languages. [Final number of languages to be negotiated]
 - Written information must be in a factual and straightforward tone, and must be concise, focusing on key messages and clear calls to action.
 - Privacy Victoria should make use of core and proven ethnic and Indigenous media to raise awareness of Privacy Victoria and its key messages.
 - Privacy Victoria at the very least, needs an identifiable "face", preferably one with whom the communities have had an opportunity to develop a relationship.

- Greater trust in the independence of the Commissioner will be developed if members of the communities are able to meet a representative and ask questions, preferably face to face, alternatively via the medium of the radio.
 - Having the support of community advocates will help significantly to break down any barriers. However, these advocates will need to be carefully selected, command a certain level of respect and authority in their various communities, or they will not be effective in building trust bridges to the Commissioner.
 - Privacy Victoria must show sensitivity to the needs of the different sectors of each community, eg older people, newer arrivals, women, the less well educated and literate in their first language, and the less English proficient.
- 6 That Privacy Victoria use the proposed campaign slogan – *Privacy. It's Real. It's a right. It's the law* – in English throughout its CALD communication. This will form part of the branding of Privacy Victoria and can be supported by non-literal language translations of the slogan to aid understanding and meaning.
- 7 That Privacy Victoria establish a Multicultural Advisory Panel to advise and resource the Commissioner's work with CALD audiences over the short-medium term. Membership of the Panel to be discussed with Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs as well as community and religious leaders consulted as part of the round-table discussions.
- 8 That Privacy Victoria train its operational and client contact staff with in two areas, as appropriate:
- Cross-cultural awareness training in CALD and Indigenous streams
 - Training in the use of professional or accredited language interpreters (both telephone and face-to-face interpreters) within the context of a conciliation environment

INTRODUCTION

The Office of the Victorian Privacy Commissioner (Privacy Victoria) appointed Cultural Partners Australia (CPA) to undertake social research to better understand issues related to privacy amongst Victoria's Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

The end purpose of the research was to help inform an integrated communication strategy to support the introduction of the Information Privacy Act 2000 throughout the Victorian public sector and the broader Victorian community.

Aims of the research

- To investigate and report on the current understanding, knowledge, perceptions and attitudes to 'privacy' and 'information privacy' of Victoria's Indigenous and CALD communities.
- To identify key issues for these communities.
- To provide strategic input into the development of practical and creative solutions for integrated communication to Indigenous and CALD communities about information privacy and Privacy Victoria.
- To identify key information channels in traditional media and community specific media.

METHODOLOGY

Selection of target audiences

In proposing target audiences, CPA suggested key criteria that were likely to impact on the attitudes of communities towards privacy, and the collection and storage of personal data. These criteria were:

- Size of the community – ensuring a cross section of large, mid-size and small communities, to investigate the significance of critical mass.
- Religious and cultural values – a mixture of Christian denominations and non-Christian religions.
- Racial background – including groups that may face higher risk of discrimination on the basis of misuse of personal information.
- Age – including older communities.
- English language proficiency – emphasising communities with poor English.
- Migration experience – to include communities with a high refugee component.
- Socio-economic status – to include communities over-represented among pension or welfare recipients who are likely to have frequent contact with government departments.

In consultation with Privacy Victoria, the following nine communities were selected:

Selected language and cultural groups

Target group	Size⁽¹⁾	Demographic characteristics
1. Italian	149,185	Large group, first generation aging (over 55 years)
2. Greek	122,351	Large group, first generation aging (over 55 years)
Chinese:		
3. Cantonese	60,583	Large group, some higher socio-economic status
4. Mandarin	38,880	Midsized group, includes new arrivals, very poor English
5. Vietnamese	63,816	Large group, many new arrivals, many refugees, very poor English
6. Arabic	47,182	Midsized group, Muslim/Christian mix, some new arrivals, poor English
7. Turkish	28,441	Midsized group, some new arrivals, Muslims, very poor English
8. Somali	3,870 ⁽²⁾	Small group, refugee background, new arrivals, poor English
9. Indigenous	25,078	Midsized group, younger population, some rural/remote communities

(1) Source: ABS 2001 Census, total Victorian population speaking language other than English at home.

(2) Estimate: based on 1996 figures plus estimate of new arrivals 1997-2000.

Research framework

The research consisted of three components:

- 1 Review of literature on the subject of data privacy and attitudes towards the collection and storage of personal information
- 2 In-depth discussions with key community leaders / information gatekeepers in the target communities
- 3 Focus group discussions in each of the target communities

In addition, the Commissioner, Paul Chadwick, met community leaders from three of the target communities: Vietnamese, Chinese and Arabic, for round-table discussions

of issues that are important to their communities. Feedback from these meetings is included in the research findings.

A summary of the literature review is at the next section, and the complete report is attached as Appendix A.

In-depth discussions

A total of 25 in-depth interviews with community leaders and information gatekeepers were held in late June 2002. Two or three were held in each CALD community, and four with Indigenous leaders. The respondents were men and women, and included community workers, business people and religious leaders. An extensive topic guide was developed in consultation with Privacy Victoria, covering a range of privacy and information collection, storage and maintenance issues.

All interviews were conducted in the language of choice (usually the first language) of the respondents by bilingual interviewers who also came from the target communities.

Focus group discussions

The in-depth interviews highlighted specific issues that needed further investigation, and a revised line of enquiry was developed. In most target communities, one mixed focus group was held, with 8-10 people typical of each community. For example:

- The Greek and Italian groups were of older people, over 55 years old
- The Cantonese speakers were young professionals
- The Mandarin speakers were newer arrivals

In the two communities with high proportions of Muslim members, two focus groups were held, one female and one male. They were held in the Arabic speaking community and the Turkish community. The Turkish groups were mini-groups consisting of four or five people each.

The following table illustrates the number and type of interviews and focus groups:

Community	No of community leader interviews	Focus group composition
Italian	3	1 mixed – over 55 years old
Greek	3	1 mixed – over 55 years old
Chinese: Cantonese	2	1 mixed – young professionals
Chinese: Mandarin	2	1 mixed – newer arrivals
Vietnamese	3	1 mixed – including refugee background
Arabic	3	1 women's group 1 men's group – Muslim
Turkish	3	1 men's mini group 1 women's mini group
Somali	2	1 mixed group
Indigenous	4	1 mixed group – rural
Total units	25	9 focus groups 2 mini groups

The focus group meetings were conducted in the participants' language of choice by bi-lingual moderators. The meetings were held in mid July 2002, in areas of high concentration of each group. The Indigenous interviews and group meetings were held in the Horsham area. An analysis of the findings from each target community is at Appendix B.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural Partners Australia conducted a review of literature on attitudes to privacy, available from national and international market research industry associations, university faculties, market research reports, journal articles and media releases. The search was conducted through Internet searches and the State Library of Victoria catalogues. The search criteria were broad, including any reference to 'privacy' or 'information privacy' and 'community attitudes'. A total of 45 articles were located from Australia, Canada, the United States of America and Britain.

There were numerous references to attitudes towards privacy in Australia from the mainstream population. However, data on attitudes of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and Indigenous communities was more difficult to obtain. It appears that little research has been conducted on this topic.

Information Privacy is a relatively new term. It refers to the interest an individual has in controlling, or at least significantly influencing, the handling of personal information or data about themselves. In today's world of global trade, the term information privacy refers to privacy of personal data. However, even the term information privacy is open to interpretation.

Factors that influence attitudes to information privacy

Key factors which influence attitudes toward and expectations of information privacy include:

- Level of education and awareness of privacy legislation
- Age
- Nationality / ethnic background

Advances in sophisticated technology with the capacity to collect, analyse and distribute information from individuals have created a new wave of fear in terms of privacy issues. Concerns are driven by the unknown impacts of existing information processing technologies, and perhaps of future, as yet unknown, technologies.

Concern is rising regarding internet privacy and the possible repercussions of on-line purchasing, on-line banking and on-line trading.²

Mainstream attitudes to privacy (Australia and overseas)

“There is a general understanding that collection of personal information is appropriate for effective planning and is in many instances necessary and beneficial.”³

However, the community wants more control over how personal information is collected, stored and used. This desire is consistent across research samples from Canada, the United States of America and Britain.

The Australian community is not particularly well informed about existing safeguards. According to the Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner’s research findings, just over 43% of people surveyed knew that the Federal privacy laws exist, with 13% knowing to which types of organisations these applied. In general, research suggests that people from lower socio-economic groups register more concern about protecting their privacy.

However, this high level of concern amongst lower socio-economic groups does not necessarily translate in to active behaviour to protect information privacy. In contrast, high income earners and those who are aware of their privacy rights display less concern, yet they are more likely to take action when they feel their privacy rights have been breached.⁴

² Conclusion based on findings from ‘A Growing Threat’, Business Week, 20/3/2000, Issue 3673, p 96, 1 p

Summary of ‘1992 Harris-Equifax Consumer Privacy Survey’, Marketing News, 8/16/93, Vol 27 Issue Council For Marketing... pA18, ¼ p

‘E-commerce gets a vote of confidence’, Computing Canada, 6/8/98, Vol 24, Issue 22, p 29, 2 p

³ ‘Privacy and the Community’, July 2001, prepared for the Office of Federal Privacy Commissioner by Roy Morgan Research.

⁴ Conclusion based on outcome of ‘Privacy and the Community’, July 2001, prepared for the Office of the Federal Privacy Commission by Roy Morgan Research, as well as findings from ‘Access to information about government services among CALD audiences’, Report to Premier and Cabinet prepared by Worthington Di Marzio and Cultural Partners Australia, October 2001.

Attitudes to privacy among Australia's CALD and Indigenous communities

Naturally, CALD and Indigenous community members will share many of the attitudes to privacy with members of the wider Australian population. Shared characteristics include:

- generally low level of awareness of privacy laws and their function (women have a lower awareness than men in this instance);
- general reluctance to provide more confidential information (eg income, health); and
- attitudes to information depend very much on education and experience.⁵

CALD communities

An individual's willingness to exercise his or her privacy rights seems to differ according to a range of issues such as: their country of origin, gender, age, religion, socio-economic background, history of government mistreatment of citizens, exposure to war and civil unrest in their country of origin, etc.⁶

CALD community members (for example Vietnamese) who have experienced first hand misuse of personal information by government, may find it difficult to trust a government or government-funded body.

It is worth noting that CALD communities are over-represented among lower socio-economic groups.⁷ In general, CALD community members are less likely than the mainstream community to be aware of privacy legislation. CALD communities that

⁵ Conclusion based on findings from 'Privacy and the Community', July 2001, prepared for the Office of the Federal Privacy Commission by Roy Morgan Research, and 'Patient Privacy Concerns', *The Australian*, 11/8/2001.

⁶ Conclusion based on outcome of 'Access to information about government services among CALD audiences', Report to Premier and Cabinet prepared by Worthington Di Marzio and Cultural Partners Australia, October 2001, and 'NESB Community Obstacles to Reporting Suspected Public Sector Corruption' Report to The Independent Commission Against Corruption, prepared by Cultural Partners Australia, June 2001.

⁷ Based on statistics from the 1996 Census provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

have been in Australia for longer are more likely to be aware of the local laws and less influenced by their prior experiences. The more recently arrived communities will be less aware of privacy legislation and their legal rights.

CALD communities and complaint mechanisms

CALD community members may not proactively complain when they feel their rights have been breached. Evidence suggests that there is considerable under-utilisation of complaint mechanisms by CALD community members.⁸ Reasons for this include:

- cultural reasons;
- language difficulties;
- fear – of reprisals, of ‘getting into trouble’, of loss of entitlements;
- minority group stigma – feelings of powerlessness, that they will not be believed or taken seriously, that no-one will take any notice of a migrant reporting problems;
- a belief that complaint mechanisms do not work; that it will not achieve any substantive result;
- fear of bureaucrats;
- fear of racism from the person receiving the complaint; and
- fear of being identified, particularly of having to appear in court

Indigenous Australians and privacy legislation

Indigenous communities are extremely diverse and pluralistic. There is no single ‘Indigenous culture’. However, there are regions that can be characterised by reference to their histories, politics, cultures and demographics, for example:

- ‘settled’ Australia, where most provincial towns and all major cities are located; and
- ‘remote’ Australia, where most of the ‘tradition-oriented’ Indigenous cultures can be found.

⁸ Conclusion based on findings of ‘NESB Community Obstacles to Reporting Suspected Public Sector Corruption’ by Cultural Partners Australia report to the ICAC.

“In a very general sense, the cultural practices and productions of Indigenous Australians in these two regions are quite different. They are grounded in different cultural bases, histories and socio-political conditions.”⁹

Indigenous law versus Australian 'white law'

Given their unique culture, and the history of oppression and prejudice towards Indigenous Australians, it is no surprise that among some Indigenous communities, ‘white law’ is considered less relevant than tribal law.

“There can be no doubt that for the vast majority of Aborigines, Australian law and its agencies act as instruments of coercion rather than protection...At the present time the situation is not good for blacks.”¹⁰

Attitudes towards privacy amongst Indigenous communities in Australia

There is very little data available on Indigenous communities and their attitudes to privacy. In general, like CALD communities, Indigenous community members are less likely than the mainstream community to be aware of privacy legislation due to their lower literacy and education levels.¹¹ Additionally, Indigenous community members may not proactively complain when they feel their rights have been breached. The full report on the review of literature is at Appendix A.

⁹ ‘Aboriginal Australians’, Minority Rights Group, Report No. 35, New 1982 edition.

¹⁰ ‘Valuing Cultures: Recognising Indigenous Cultures as a Valued Part of Australian Heritage’, Council For Aboriginal Reconciliation, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1994.

¹¹ 1996 Census statistics provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section incorporates information gathered during the three stages of community consultation:

- One-on-one interviews with community leaders
- Focus group discussions with community members
- Round-table discussions between the Privacy Commissioner and community and religious leaders from selected communities

The research highlighted some similarities and significant differences between the target communities. Communities are similar in that:

- there are aspects of their lives that they wish to keep private;
- they acknowledge the need for state and local governments to collect some personal information;
- they feel disempowered and want to control how data is stored and used;
- they need reassurance that their cultural sensitivities will be understood and their data will be treated with respect;
- they would like to be able to check data stored about them;
- there is limited knowledge of complaints mechanisms;
- there is very little knowledge of privacy laws;
- there is virtually no awareness of Privacy Victoria;
- they welcome the concept of Privacy Victoria;
- they are interested in hearing about Privacy Victoria; and
- they need information to be in their own language.

Communities differ in:

- the aspects of their lives which they regard as private;
- their attitudes towards, and level of trust in, Australian governments;
- their attitudes to the sharing of information, including criminal records;
- the likelihood of lodging a complaint;
- the most appropriate method of communicating with them.

Personal privacy

All matters relating to the family and what goes on within the family need to be kept from the outside world.

Race, ethnicity and religion are particularly sensitive because of fears of discrimination or vilification.

What is regarded as private

What people regard as 'private' is highly influenced by their culture. There is a great deal of sensitivity about what happens within the family. All aspects of family life, particularly activities that could bring shame to the family or the community, are regarded as 'private'.

'Family affairs are very private and the information should be kept in the family.'

Turkish

In addition, a wide range of aspects of people's personal lives were nominated as 'private', including:

- Personal details

'If someone has this information, particularly a photograph, they may do something illegal, like use our identity.' Vietnamese

- Age
- Health status

'If you want a marriage partner or job, keep your age private, and keeping quiet about health conditions can make more new friends because many people don't like to make friends with people who suffer from poor health.' Chinese Mandarin

- Number of children
- Kinship ties
- Financial affairs

'Yes there is privacy about what you earn, we don't usually talk about that.'

Italian

- Contact details
- Religion
- Country of birth
- 'Race'
- Political leanings

'Any information that can potentially lead to vilification or victimisation, or distort our culture and our religion.' Arabic

Why it should be kept private

These respondents were quite specific in their reasons for wanting to protect information about themselves. Some had first hand experience of the consequences of others knowing 'their affairs', either in their birth country or here in Australia.

- Fear of discrimination
- Fear of vilification
- Fear of interference

'We don't want anyone to interfere with our lives.' Somali

- Fear of misuse of information

'Our children and wives can suffer, and misuse can effect family and our standing with the Government.' Arabic

- Fear of identity theft

- Shame

'People look down on you if they know certain things.' Indigenous

Race, religion, country of birth and language

These issues were very sensitive for many participants, but some communities had no problem about others knowing these details. Overall, although most could see benefits in terms of planning appropriate services, they would rather not give information about their religion, country of birth or language spoken at home. There were two main reasons:

- Concerns about discrimination against themselves

'Race information shouldn't be collected because the information can be discriminating for the people – especially if it identifies a person's colour.' Somali

- Concerns that it divides society

'A question on race or religion appears to be more political than sensitive to a person's background.' Arabic.

'No, it should not be collected. It is personal information, that has no value in any planning that we can see, and does not assist with any of the functions that government undertake.' Greek

Some people are more sensitive about their ethnicity being recorded, others are more concerned by questions about their religion.

'You can be discriminated against or judged by the religion you believe in, or your colour, especially after September 11, we are more suspicious and don't trust the government' Somali

'Country of birth and language spoken at home can also define the changing nature of the society, which might be perceived to be dominated by certain ethnic groups.' Arabic

Conversely, the two Chinese and the Italian groups were quite happy for information about their origins to be collected, and could see no reason to keep it private.

'Race and religion are not a form of personal activity; there is no need to keep these private. The government will be able to learn what kind of service for which cultural groups should be planned ...' Chinese Mandarin.

'Yes, the information should be collected, so that after hours schools can be provided to teach English to the more mature residents who haven't had the opportunity to learn the language previously; to plan for interpreters, bilingual community workers etc.' Italian

Providing information to Government departments

The quantity and frequency of information collection is resented.

It is understood that certain details are essential for planning of services.

It is common to omit requested information on forms, if the questions are seen as intrusive or there is a lack of understanding of the questions, but incorrect information is not given.

The Census was not completed fully – too demanding, too complex, too sensitive.

What is collected

The common feeling about information sought by Government departments was that it was too much, too often. The Somali community were particularly critical.

'Why do we have to give the same information so many times?' Somali

The types of data they commonly have to provide are all the types of information they regard as private:

- Personal details (eg age, marital status)
- Contact information
- Country of birth
- Year of arrival
- Language spoken at home
- Health status, drug & alcohol use
- Citizenship / residency status
- Level of education
- Employment status
- Financial affairs

What is essential for state and local governments to collect

Participants consider that state government departments should only collect what is directly relevant to the services they provide, and that only the barest minimum is essential.

'Any information should be relevant to the department, and departments should only collect that information and no other.' Turkish

The Indigenous group, while understanding the need for the collection of specific information for each department, felt nothing should be kept for any length of time. Few participants had experienced many dealings with local councils. To the list of basic details which would be essential for any department (contact details, sex, date of birth etc), for local government they suggested adding pets, cars, property information, language spoken at home, number of children.

Several groups would be reluctant to reveal the number of children, or family structure of the household, consistent with the desire to keep all family affairs private.

Filling in forms

There were several different approaches to filling in forms. Although only one person admitted providing incorrect information, most said they would leave blanks for one reason or another. Generally, the three Asian groups were more compliant, wishing to provide the information sought.

'We are willing to provide the information as long as we know what the information is to be used for and the questions are relevant. I would give true answers as I have to sign the form and be responsible for my answers.' Chinese Cantonese

The Vietnamese would not leave blanks for fear of someone else entering false information. Chinese Mandarin community leaders would also not leave blanks.

'I never leave spaces blank or fill in incorrect information because the government will investigate what we have filled in the forms.' Chinese Mandarin

If the information sought was seen as irrelevant or intrusive, many participants would not provide it, and would leave the questions blank.

'Yes, usually when filling in Centrelink forms – I am often unsure of the meaning, because of lack of English and I'm scared to be caught out by my past misleading answers.' Somali

'I am sick of filling out forms, particularly if I don't think it's relevant information, what they're asking.' Indigenous

Reaction to the Census was also mixed.

'I don't do the ABS Census form – it asks too many questions – it's thicker than a Tax Pack.' Indigenous

'I don't have a problem with the questions – I just worry that the collector will look at the form, and there are so many questions I don't think many people will bother to do it right.' Indigenous

Many disliked some of the questions, but the offending questions varied.

'Don't like the term 'race' because we feel that as a minority, we can be looked down upon and segregated.' Somali

'Don't like questions like place of origin and those defining race / ethnicity – don't want to be put into little boxes for political expediency.' Arabic

'Don't like the questions about income, working history and ancestry.' Italian

'I didn't want to answer the questions about my mother and father, residency history, transport use, financial information, race and ethnicity.' Turkish

Sharing, storing and maintenance of personal data

Participants can see the reasons for information sharing, but fear the loss of control over their data.

It is important for ground rules to be set between community and government.

Regard sharing as inevitable, but want to be able to check stored information for accuracy, and give permission before it is exchanged.

Information should not be retained indefinitely, but should be discarded after use or kept no longer than five years.

The risk of data being illegally accessed through modern technology is alarming.

Sharing

The suggestion that information could be shared is a sensitive one. Most groups felt uncomfortable about it, although there was some cynicism that it happens anyway, despite what individuals may want.

'It is most unlikely for the departments NOT to swap information.' Italian

'They are already swapping ...' Arabic

The general reaction was that if it is inevitable that information is exchanged, they want control. They want to:

- know why the departments need to exchange information;
- know what the information is to be used for;
- be able to check for accuracy; and
- give permission.

'If they specify clearly the circumstances and the information links between departments, it would give a better sense of security.' Chinese Cantonese

This desire for control is reflected in the Indigenous group's recommendation for an agreed framework for collecting, storing and sharing information. This should be developed in consultation with the community so that everyone knows what is kept and how it will be used.

Community leaders interviewed tended to take clearer positions, and were split between those who supported and those who were against the idea. Chinese Cantonese, Vietnamese, Italian supported a framework if it would benefit the community. Chinese Mandarin, Somali, Arabic speakers were strongly against it.

Participants can see the benefits that can be gained from exchange of information.

'I have no problem in dobbing in people who are ripping off the system.'

Indigenous

'Sharing could help to track down dole fraud, tax evasion and to offer more efficient services.' Italian

There are significant differences in attitude between the communities. Even the two Chinese language groups had differing views:

- The Chinese Cantonese expect departments to swap and compare information for the purpose of law enforcement and for the protection of public interest.

- The Chinese Mandarin believe departments should respect individual's privacy, and that departments have a duty to keep information confidential.
- The Vietnamese group would agree to sharing (within certain boundaries) if they thought the information would benefit the country.
- The Indigenous group was relaxed about the sharing of information particularly if it would benefit them or help protect children.
- The Somali group was concerned that it could 'get out of hand and become public to anyone'.
- The Turkish group wanted only criminal records to be shared, as all other information should be department specific, although the women agreed that health information could be shared between hospitals.
- Greek participants were not concerned because they could see the benefits of preventing abuse of the system, targeting service more efficiently and saving the government money.
- Arabic participants have little confidence in the security of shared information because of ASIO's new powers to intercept communications and a general mistrust of electronic information storage.
- Italian participants were split between those who worried that the information might end up in the wrong hands and others for whom it would be acceptable if they were asked.

Storing

There is widespread concern about leakage of stored information, either through deliberate misuse or carelessness. Indigenous participants were particularly concerned about false profiles being created and provided to other departments.

'Centrelink has income, address, family ties, mother's maiden name, the whole organisation worries me.' Indigenous

The length of time respondents felt personal data should be retained by a government department varied from:

- Destroyed immediately after it has been used, is invalid or is no longer relevant (Arabic)
- to
- Kept indefinitely (Greek)

'The government will update people's information regularly, therefore it will not be destroyed, it will be updated' Chinese Mandarin.

The majority felt data should be kept no longer than 10 years, with most suggesting it should be destroyed after five or seven years.

The Somali group was more cautious, wanting data destroyed after two years. Many community leaders expressed concern about information being stored.

'With the internet today, you can search for information about people and find items we didn't even know were collected.' Greek

'I am worried about my information being sold to companies for advertising, and it can be used for intelligence purposes – there is discrimination building up against Muslim communities because of the Government's so called border protection, and war against terrorism policies.' Turkish

Maintenance

Participants recommended that materials should be kept secure through:

- limiting access to data;
- using client numbers rather than names;
- ensuring a good filing system;
- developing good policies in collaboration with the community; and
- having serious penalties for the misappropriation of information.

All would like to be able to check the accuracy of personal data kept about them...

'...after all, the information belongs to us.' Italian.

The Indigenous participants were concerned that incorrect information could be stored about them, an incorrect profile developed, and that they have no control over what is stored.

'A profile can be developed on you that may not be true.' Indigenous leader.

'You can't change any of it, you are either accountable, or being watched, there is a feeling of helplessness.' Indigenous.

These Indigenous participants would like to have one central point where they could check their personal data, instead of going to each department.

Participants in other groups commented on the difficulty of organising a checking facility.

The Vietnamese would also feel reticent about asking for permission to check their information, and would need help from the department to translate it into Vietnamese.

'I would like to be able to check the information kept about me, as long as no other member of the public has access to it.' Arabic

Criminal records

Criminal records should be shared, but not with all departments.

The length of time they should be retained, varies according to the severity of the crime.

Records of serious crimes should be retained indefinitely.

There was more readiness for criminal records to be shared between departments, although some suggested that it is unnecessary to share this information between every department, and others thought that only records of serious crimes should be shared.

'Yes, it is better to be aware and safe from major criminals – but not if only a minor crime.' Somali

'Yes for serious crimes eg murder, rape, child abuse, but not for every department, and not for acquittals or minor crimes.' Arabic

The Somali participants and Chinese Mandarin leaders were more reluctant for criminal records to be shared.

'It can be discriminating and unhelpful to that person...' Somali

'No because it will affect the person's future...' Chinese Mandarin

There was much more consistency in the length of time records should be kept. Nearly all participants indicated that records of serious crimes should be kept 'for life'. Serious crime is regarded as: murder, sexual crimes, crimes against children. Records of minor crimes should be kept for around five years.

'I suppose it depends on what the person has done to better themselves, they could be a totally different person now.' Indigenous

Attitudes towards, and level of trust in, government

Experiences in the country of birth influence their attitude to Australian governments, in some cases positively and in others negatively.

There is no trust in non-government organisations not to misuse information.

The policies of governments are generally trusted, but not the officials staffing the departments.

People are concerned about 'outsiders' gaining access to their information.

Asian communities feel more trust in 'government' to protect their information.

Non-Asian groups feel departments are insensitive to their culture or beliefs.

Experience in birth country

The participants had widely differing experiences before they came to Australia. In most cases their control over the collection of information was minimal, but their reactions to this also differed. In many countries information was collected both directly and indirectly about citizens, and participants often expressed mistrust in the way the data was treated. Some Vietnamese and Turkish participants reported bad experiences, to the extent that Turkish men were reluctant to discuss what had happened.

'In Vietnam the government can do what it likes. The policeman knocks on your door to check your household members at night, without any reason, because they are only interested in money and corruption.' Vietnamese

'In Turkey the government collects a lot of information involuntarily. They usually use it for political and military purposes. No privacy exists between departments, all information is shared without asking.' Turkish

The Chinese Cantonese were far more accepting of the way they were treated:

'Where we come from, the government's rights are above individual rights. It is mandatory that citizens cooperate fully in providing any information required by the government. It is easy enough for all departments to exchange information about individuals with the use of an individual identity number. On the other hand, people generally have less awareness of privacy because of the way they have been brought up and their culture.' Chinese Cantonese

In the round-table discussion, the Chinese community leaders discussed 'Smart' ID cards, which are familiar to recent Chinese arrivals, from their home country. It was suggested that they would therefore be more ready to accept the introduction of such identity cards in Australia. The Somali group preferred the situation in Somalia:

'It was better, with fewer hassles than in Victoria, it was not regularly required and not detailed. It's annoying, why are they constantly demanding all these details?' Somali

Because of their experiences in their country of birth, most other groups felt more trust for the way their information is likely to be treated by Australian governments. Several groups referred to the collection of information in their country of birth. This often occurred through third parties, such as neighbours. Participants described feeling vulnerable, as they did not know what had been recorded about them, or how accurate the data was. In these countries, governments were seen as wishing to control rather than support their citizens.

Government versus non-government entities

Compared with non-government organisations there is generally more trust of government departments. But even this is tinged with caution:

'There is no privacy lately, because of computer links, nothing stays private. Everything should be private, I keep everything to myself.' Italian

'There is no difference, they still have your information. Employment agencies are the worst; they ask so many questions. Anybody can use your information against you.' Indigenous

'I generally feel a bit more cautious about commercial enterprises which may not put the interests of the individual first. In either case, if I have any doubts about why the information is required, I would ask before I provide it.' Chinese Cantonese

Vietnamese participants were particularly wary of non-government organisations:

'I have no trust in non-government organisations, I am worried about credit card fraud and theft of my identity.' Vietnamese

Cultural sensitivity of departments

The groups were asked if they felt government departments were sensitive to their culture and beliefs, and whether, if they did feel respected, they would be prepared to provide more details.

Although the three Asian groups felt comfortable about the way they have been treated, and were willing to give whatever information was required, none of the others believed there is any true understanding of their culture. The Somali group made a telling comment :

'No, government departments don't understand our privacy values, because they never ask.' Somali

'We are just numbers, they are too bureaucratic; people should be treated equally no matter what their background – there are political motives behind government departments and we have been victimised before.' Arabic

'Medical clinics are worst – they talk really loudly and show little tact.'
'Some people in the departments are real pigs – they reckon that it's their money (Newstart Allowance).' Indigenous

Naturally, they would feel more comfortable about providing information if they felt their cultural beliefs were respected, although several commented that they could not provide much more information, because so much is currently demanded.

Trust in government departments

‘Governments’ as entities are given greater respect, but there is considerable wariness of people who work in the offices.

‘...they can make mistakes or there are some people that can misuse the information they have access to, for their own personal gains. Departments have to have good security mechanisms to protect the info.’ Turkish

‘It’s the individuals within the departments that are of concern – gossip is misused, water cooler talks that lead to uninformed judgements’ Indigenous

Complaints mechanisms

There is very little awareness of laws to protect privacy of information.

Participants are likely to complain if suspicious, but few would go spontaneously to an Ombudsman or Commission.

Awareness of Privacy Victoria is very low.

Awareness of other complaints mechanisms mixed.

Independence of a complaints body is essential.

Making a complaint

There is very little knowledge amongst these participants about legislation protecting privacy of information. However, there are strong feelings about privacy and the misuse of personal data, and the majority would want to make a complaint somewhere if they felt their information had been abused. An Ombudsman is respected and is generally regarded as independent, but would not be the place thought of first in this situation.

'The Ombudsman is fair and independent.' Arabic

If participants believed their information had been misused, they would go first to local sources of assistance. English language difficulties and intimidation of approaching an official organisation act as effective barriers.

'The name Ombudsman or Commission is so scary – it seems like a big government body. I'd much rather go to a Migrant Resource Centre for help.'

Vietnamese

'An Ombudsman or Commissioner is likely to be some bloke dressed in a suit, wouldn't go to him unless he was recommended by someone I respect.' Indigenous

Rather than go directly to an official complaints organisation, most would rely on third parties. Those with poor English would seek assistance from a community worker or intermediary who could speak their language, such as a lawyer in their community. Those in more established communities, or with better English language skills, would go to:

- the head of the offending department;
- a Citizens Advice Bureau;
- legal aid; or
- local MP.

A few of the community leaders would go to the Ombudsman directly, and may also act as intermediaries for other members of their community. Not all would be prepared to complain because of fear of reprisals or a belief that complaining will achieve nothing.

'We are worried about reprisals - don't believe any good will come of it - we would never seek help to complain, it is not possible.' Turkish, with poor English

'I wouldn't complain, because I don't have faith in complaints procedures, they lead to nothing, lead to nowhere.' Arabic

Awareness of Privacy Victoria and other complaints mechanisms

There was practically no awareness of Privacy Victoria, although considerable interest was generated amongst the participants as a result of the focus groups. Other complaints mechanisms were only marginally better known. The Chinese Cantonese participants had the greatest knowledge. Somali, Greek, Vietnamese and Turkish focus groups knew of none, although their community leaders were able to nominate one or two. Agencies mentioned by Chinese Cantonese, and other community leaders included:

- Banking Ombudsman
- Telecommunications Ombudsman
- Health Commissioner
- Police Integrity Commission
- Equal Opportunity Commission
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
- Legal Ombudsman

There is no consensus on whether these are independent, part of the government or part of the industries they regulate. However, it was felt that such organisations should be completely independent.

'At the end of the day, they are just public servants – I wouldn't know what separates the good from the bad.' Indigenous

'...one that is not paid by the government.' Arabic

The slogan for proposed community education campaign

The slogan “*Privacy. It’s real. It’s a right. It’s the law*” –

- does not work for people with poor English
- needs to be re-worked in other languages, as a direct translation is unlikely to be appropriate
- is unclear and ambiguous in some languages (the phrase “it’s real” is problematic)
- is effective for those with better English, but is still brief and unexciting.

As part of the research, participants were shown the proposed education and information campaign slogan developed by Privacy Victoria. Participants were asked to comment on the slogan’s effectiveness in English, and whether it would work if translated into their own language. It was difficult for those with poor English, and all the CALD groups agreed that they would need something in their own language to reach all members of their communities.

‘We don’t understand the meaning in English, but we do once it’s translated.’

Somali

The three Asian groups disliked it, feeling that:

‘...it is too brief, vague and not striking enough, especially for those who have not heard of the subject before.’ Cantonese

The Vietnamese thought it needed the addition of phrases such as:

‘Treat my information like yours’ or ‘Everyone deserves their privacy’.

Vietnamese

The phrase ‘It’s real’ is problematic. It has no meaning for either the Vietnamese or the two Chinese groups, they noted that it does not translate effectively into either language. In Chinese, it has two meanings and it does not make sense in this context. The Vietnamese also found it confusing in English. The Arabic women’s group could not understand the use of the phrase. Arabic women felt the whole slogan needed

more clarification and recommended that 'It's a right', should be amended to read 'It's your right'.

Among those with better English it was seen as:

'...conveying an effective message, telling people that privacy exists and that it is the right of every citizen to expect his or her information to be protected by the law. It makes you feel at first glance that there is protection of your privacy. It has a ring of confidence and authority ...' Greek

Getting the message out

Need to provide some fundamental information and reassurance about privacy.

A multi-layered approach is necessary to reach all sectors.

Communities want discussions into all aspects of data collection and storage, and what they don't want shared or revealed.

Information needs to be in-language, simple and using accessible terminology.

Ethnic media is effective in raising awareness – print and radio.

Some ethnic media available in all languages, although extent and coverage varies.

Privacy Victoria needs to build relationships with community organisations and advocates as go-betweens, to ameliorate the fear of a big institution.

Communities would prefer to have a person to relate to, who can help if needed.

Promoting the concept of privacy

The concept of privacy has slight differences in meaning and relevance among each of these communities. However, members of all communities have some aspect of their lives that they want to keep private (or secret) from others. For example:

- Privacy is very important to the Chinese community, especially in relation to a person's standing within the community, and to their business dealings.
- The Vietnamese community is similarly protective of their family affairs, because of the potential shame through others knowing their business.
- In the Arabic culture, traditionally, people will keep an open house, with visitors arriving unannounced. In these circumstances, individual privacy tends to take second place to the needs of the community or family.

In order to reassure people when they are asked for these personal details, government departments will need to be more open about:

- their practices for the collection / maintenance of data;
- the reasons for seeking this information; and
- how it is to be used.

'Many people believe it is part of Australian culture to breach privacy.' Somali

Many groups commented that they would like to have a community discussion of the issues – across the broader community, not just in their community. This would give people an opportunity to express their differing attitudes to personal information and what they regard as private.

The discussions would also establish policies for:

- reasons for collection;
- what should (and should not) be collected;
- needs of different departments / agencies;
- standards for storage;

- limitations on sharing;
- limitations on access;
- maintenance; and
- protocols for destroying data.

'An individual's culture has a lot to do with what is perceived as private. This is another reason why policies regarding personal information should be discussed publicly, so people can have a say about what they regard as "private".' Greek

'There should be an agreed and open framework for collecting, storing and sharing information. This should be developed in consultation with the community, so that everyone knows what is kept, and how it will be used.'

Indigenous

Local level discussions also need to be held so that community members can discuss issues of concern:

'It needs to be tackled at local level, so that residents can approach people in their area and discuss any concerns. Community groups can play the same role to inform their members of the issues.' Greek

Somali participants want more fundamental information:

'Explain what privacy is, the consequence of breaching it, and explain that it is not part of Australian culture to breach privacy ...' Somali

Information channels

Information needs to be provided via two streams:

- through *traditional media* (ethnic and mainstream); and
- at *community level* (through community advocates, leaders and organisations, and religious leaders and organisations).

Ethnic radio is an important information channel. All groups expressed interest in having information on radio, particularly using talk-back, in-language interviews with the Privacy Commissioner or community advocate followed by talk-back. This was strongly recommended by the community leaders at the round-table discussions.

Older people in all communities will be less likely to complain, through experiences gained in their country of origin, mistrust of authority, fear of being singled out, are all reasons they would be reluctant to approach a Commission or similar complaints mechanism. For this reason, one or more community advocates or go-betweens to represent the Commissioner in the community would be a vital link for people who would prefer to approach a less intimidating source of help.

The advocates could also conduct information seminars, appear on radio and be the human face of Privacy Victoria in each community. Information also needs to be displayed in areas where information is demanded, eg Centrelink and Medicare offices; and in areas frequently visited by community members.

'Turkish coffee shops, video shops and milk bars...' Turkish

Material provided through these streams needs to be in relevant community languages other than English, and the terminology needs to be clear and simple.

'Some of the material you get from organisations on privacy and privacy policies is written using difficult words and very long paragraphs.' Italian

'...user friendly, plain English pamphlets ...' Indigenous

Many participants, particularly older people, the less literate and women want to have face to face information sessions with Privacy Victoria representatives or community advocates for the Commissioner.

'Verbally, in Italian, at public meetings where there could be questions and answers with bilingual speakers or interpreters.' Italian

'The best way would be to have a visit from someone from Privacy Victoria. Then we can develop a relationship with that person, and then when we need help, we know someone to go to.' Indigenous

'... have road shows in the areas of high concentration of Arabic-Australian suburbs, and functions sponsored by Privacy Victoria.' Arabic

Appropriate media

All participants requested information via their own language media. A few nominated specific outlets. The following media would be appropriate for Privacy Victoria to use:

Arabic media

Print media	Radio
Many titles available, including:	SBS Radio
El Telegraph	3ZZZ
An Nahar	3CR
Al Bairak	3SER
Al Siyaseh	3WRB
Arab World	Islamic Voice
El Massry	2ME
Television: Channel 31	

Chinese media

Print media	Radio
Many titles available, highest circulation:	SBS Radio
Australian Chinese Age	3ZZZ
Sing Tao	China Radio
Chinese Herald	3CW
The Tide	2AC
Melbourne Chinese Post	3GR
Television: Channel 31	

Greek media

Print media	Radio	
Many titles available, including:	Stations with all day Greek:	Stations with Greek programs:
Greek Herald	2MM	SBS
Greek Times	3AB	3MDR
Kosmorama	3BM	3RIM
Melvourni	3XY	3RPP
Neos Kosmos		3SER
New Country		3CR
Ta Nea		3GCR
		3HOT
		3WRB
		3ZZZ
Television: Channel 31		

Italian media

Print media	Radio	
Il Globo, La Fiamma	SBS Italian, Rete Italia, 3CR, 3ZZZ	
Television: Channel 31		

Somali media

Print media	Radio	
None	Limited programming on: 3CR 3ZZZ	
Television: Channel 31		

Turkish media

Print media	Radio
Turkish Report	2MM 3ZZZ
Gunes	3AB 3MDR
Dunya	3BM 3RIM
Yeni Vatan	3XY 3RPP
Zaman Australia	SBS 3SER
	3CR 3GCR
Television: Channel 31	

Vietnamese media

Print media	Radio
Several titles, including:	SBS Radio
Dan Viet,	3WRB
Human Rights (Nahn Quyen)	3CR
Tivi Weekly	3HOT
Tivi Tuan San	3MDR
Viet Luan	3ZZZ
Television: Channel 31	

Indigenous media

Print media	Radio
No Victorian publications, three national available:	3BBB
ATSIC News (Quarterly)	3CCC
Koori Mail (Fortnightly)	3CR
Deadly Vibe (Monthly)	3GCR
	3HOT
	3MDR
	3PVR
Television: Black Sugar	

CONCLUSIONS

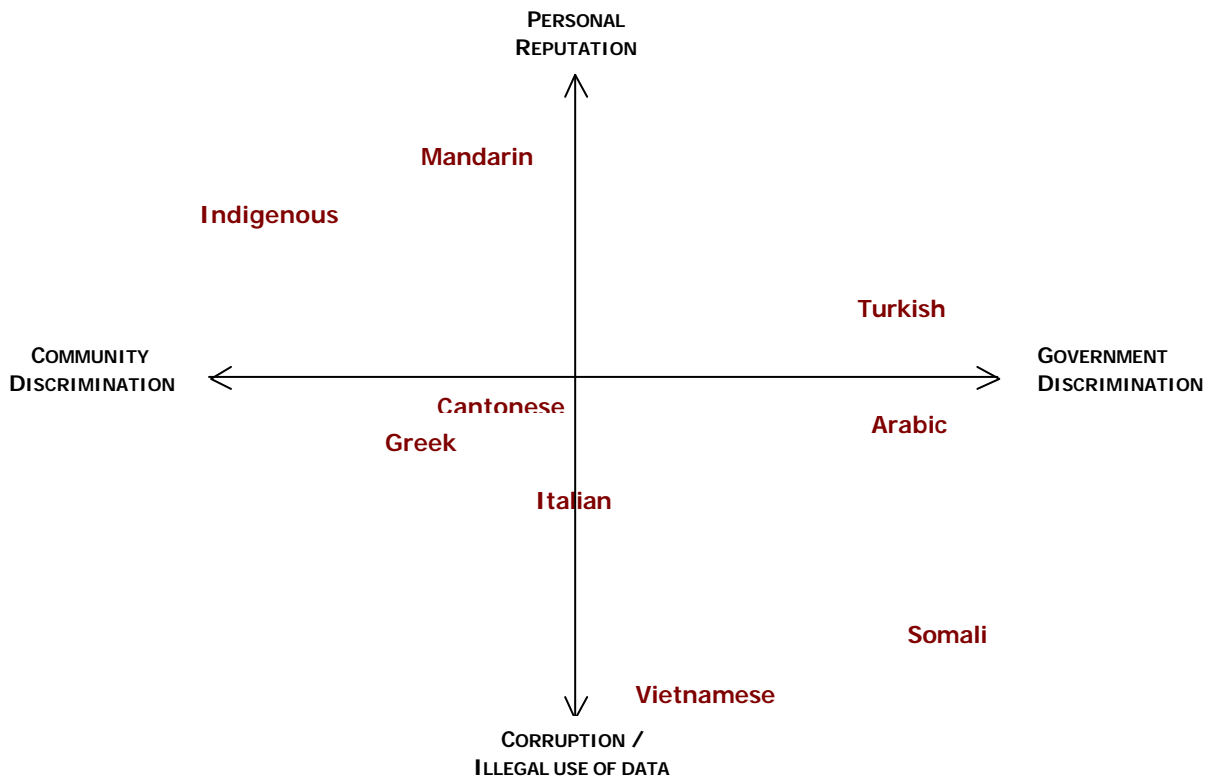
Segmenting the target audiences

The nine target groups researched all expressed concern about the way in which their personal data is used, stored and protected. However, there were marked differences in what is regarded as private, the reasons for their concern and the relative degree.

There are several ways in which the target groups can be segmented, including:

- The types of information considered private
- The areas of concern
- The influences on their attitudes and levels of trust
- The types of messages / information they will need
- The communication methods needed to get the messages out effectively

The following diagram illustrates the level and area of concern felt by the different communities. The further from the centre the communities appear, the greater the level of concern.



(This diagram is an approximation only. It merely serves to illustrate the points of difference between the target communities.)

Community discrimination includes concerns about discrimination and vilification by media and members of the wider community because of ethnicity, religion, colour.

Personal reputation includes concerns about personal reputation being compromised.

Government discrimination includes concerns about discrimination in the provision of services because of ethnicity, religion, colour.

Corruption / illegal use of data includes corruption of government officials, selling or misusing data for their own personal gain.

In addition to these complexities, some sectors of these communities have experienced severe discrimination as minority groups in their birth country. For example Kurdish people born in Iraq or Turkey will be recorded as Arabic or Turkish, but regard themselves as neither. Therefore the question of country of birth becomes immediately discriminating, and does not allow for their true origins to be recorded.

Issues to be addressed in community education and information

In order to effectively educate and inform diverse communities about Privacy Victoria, its role and responsibilities, and to encourage people to use the services, there are various barriers that need to be overcome.

- Lack of English language proficiency
- Various levels of education and literacy in first language
- Suspicion of the independence of a body funded by government
- Lack of belief in the value of making complaints
- Reluctance to approach a large, anonymous organisation
- Reluctance to expose private information to further scrutiny
- Variability in the standard and availability of communication channels

Recommendations in full

Target audience identification and targeting

Recommendation 1: That Privacy Victoria target special audiences, often those facing the greatest levels of disadvantage - specifically CALD and Indigenous audiences with tailored communication messages and approaches.

Recommendation 2: That a priority list of CALD audiences include as a minimum the following 10 language groups (in alphabetical order): Arabic speakers, Chinese speakers, Croatian, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish, and Vietnamese.

Recommendation 3: That a further list of CALD audiences be considered, subject to Privacy Victoria budget provisions, to include: Polish, Russian, Somali, Assyrian, Bosnian, Khmer (Cambodian), and Persian (Farsi).

Recommendation 4: That a separate and tailored Indigenous communication campaign be developed and implemented.

Targeted communication approaches

Recommendation 5: That Privacy Victoria's communication approaches targeting CALD and Indigenous audiences take account of the following points:

- Information material (written and oral) must be produced in relevant community languages. [Final number of languages to be negotiated]
- Written information must be in a factual and straightforward tone, and must be concise, focusing on key messages and clear calls to action.
- Privacy Victoria should make use of core and proven ethnic and Indigenous media to raise awareness of Privacy Victoria and its key messages.
- Privacy Victoria at the very least, needs an identifiable "face", preferably one with whom the communities have had an opportunity to develop a relationship.

- Greater trust in the independence of the Commissioner will be developed if members of the communities are able to meet a representative and ask questions, preferably face to face, alternatively via the medium of the radio.
- Having the support of community advocates will help significantly to break down any barriers. However, these advocates will need to be carefully selected, command a certain level of respect and authority in their various communities, or they will not be effective in building trust bridges to the Commissioner.
- Privacy Victoria must show sensitivity to the needs of the different sectors of each community, eg older people, newer arrivals, women, the less well educated and literate in their first language, and the less English proficient.

Recommendation 6: That Privacy Victoria use the proposed campaign slogan (*Privacy. It's Real. It's a right. It's the law*) in English throughout its CALD communications. This will form part of the branding of Privacy Victoria and can be supported by non-literal language translations of the slogan to aid understanding and meaning.

Supporting strategies

Recommendation 7: That Privacy Victoria establish a Multicultural Advisory Panel to advise and resource the Commissioner's work with CALD audiences over the short to medium term. Membership of the Panel to be discussed with Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs as well as community and religious leaders consulted as part of the round table discussions.

Recommendation 8: That Privacy Victoria train its operational and client contact staff with in two areas, as appropriate:

- Cross-cultural awareness training in CALD and Indigenous streams
- Training in the use of professional or accredited language interpreters (both telephone and face-to-face interpreters) within the context of a conciliation environment.

APPENDIX A: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Social research into understandings of, and issues related to, privacy amongst culturally and linguistically diverse (including Indigenous) communities is a vital step in the development of appropriate and effective privacy awareness communications and information activities targeted at these communities.

Cultural Partners Australia has conducted an extensive literature review into attitudes towards information privacy, both in Australia, and around the world in countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada and New Zealand, where privacy legislation has been introduced fairly recently.

Findings regarding the attitudes towards privacy in Australia from the mainstream population were easily accessible, as the Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner has commissioned in depth research into this topic. However, data on the attitudes towards privacy among the Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) communities as well as the Indigenous communities was more difficult to attain, as very little research has been done on this topic. Therefore an informed assessment has been made based on anecdotal evidence and data from indirect sources.

Definition – what is privacy?

‘The world’s leading experts are still unable to agree on a single definition of privacy despite decades of academic debate.’¹²

Privacy is difficult to define, as it is an abstract notion. According to Roger Clarke, Principal of Xamax Consultancy Pty Ltd, Canberra, privacy is the interest that individuals have in sustaining a ‘personal space’, free from interference by other people and organisations.

In 1928 US Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis described privacy as the “right most valued by civilised people” and defined it as “the right to be left alone”

On a deeper level, privacy has several dimensions :

- Privacy of the person, sometimes referred to as ‘bodily privacy’ This is concerned with the integrity of the individual's body. Issues include compulsory immunisation, blood transfusion without consent, compulsory provision of samples of body fluids and body tissue, and compulsory sterilisation;
- Privacy of personal behaviour. This relates to all aspects of behaviour, but especially to sensitive matters, such as sexual preferences and habits, political activities and religious practices, both in private and in public places. It includes what is sometimes referred to as ‘media privacy’;
- Privacy of personal communications. Individuals claim an interest in being able to communicate among themselves, using various media, without routine monitoring of their communications by other persons or organisations. This includes what is sometimes referred to as ‘interception privacy’; and
- Privacy of personal data. Individuals claim that data about themselves should not be automatically available to other individuals and organisations, and that, even where data is possessed by another party, the individual must be able to exercise a substantial degree of control over that data and its use. This is sometimes referred to as ‘data privacy’ and ‘information privacy’. ¹³

What is personal information?

The Privacy Act (Commonwealth) defines personal information as “information or an opinion... about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion”.

¹² ‘The Bedrock of Civil Liberties’, UNESCO Courier, March 2001, Vol 54 Issue 3, p 21, 1/3p

¹³ <http://www.anu.edu.au/people/Roger.Clarke/DV/Intro.html> (Roger Clarke’s privacy website)

Information privacy is a relatively new term. It refers to the interest an individual has in controlling, or at least significantly influencing, the handling of personal information or data about themselves.

In today's world of global trade, the term information privacy refers to privacy of personal data, as defined above. However, even the term information privacy is open to interpretation. According to House Energy and Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection Subcommittee Chairman Cliff Stears (R-Fla) of the United States, survey findings suggest that "people mean different things when they talk about information privacy. He noted "for some Americans, information privacy means anonymity, [while] for others [it] means confidentiality".¹⁴

Like the concept of freedom, privacy means different things to different cultures. "In France, it equates most closely to liberty. In America, it is an inseparable component of government. Many European countries interpret privacy as the protection of personal data."¹⁵

"Many European languages do not have exact equivalents of the terms 'private' and 'privacy'. Differences in denotation or connotation do not invalidate the argument that concepts of privacy exist in equivalent ways among different language groups. Few English-speakers would wish to claim on linguistic grounds that concepts of privacy in the Netherlands, Sweden or Finland are radically different. If, as argued by Steven Pinker, mental life goes on independently of particular languages, concepts of privacy can exist equally in cultures despite lexical differences." 16*

¹⁴ 'Panel Hearing on Internet Privacy Finds Conflicting Preferences', Congress Daily AM, 5/9/2001, p 6, 1p.

¹⁵ The Bedrock of Civil Liberties, UNESCO Courier, March 2001, Vol 54 Issue 3, p 21, 1/3p

¹⁶ 'The Privacy Project', Workshop on Chinese Concepts of Privacy held at the University of Leiden and the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study, 31 May – 2 June 2001

* 'The Language Instinct: The New Science of Language and Mind' by Steven Pinker, p 82.

What factors influence attitudes to information privacy?

Key factors which influence attitudes and expectations of information privacy include:

Level of education and awareness of privacy legislation

Naturally, levels of education and awareness of privacy legislation will have an impact on one's attitude towards information privacy. One could argue that community members familiar with privacy issues, the existence of privacy legislation and the law enforcement mechanisms set in place, are more likely to trust that their personal information will not be misused, or used for a purpose other than its original use. Following the same argument, community members *not* aware of privacy laws and their function may be more likely to fear the worst, and therefore be reticent to release personal information when requested.

“People less likely to trade their personal information in return for particular benefits (eg discounts on products or services) were those from the 50+ age group, those with a household income of under \$30,000, and those with lower levels of education. Hence, this and other findings support aspects of earlier research which suggests that people from lower socio-economic groups register more concern about protecting their privacy.”¹⁷

The following study supports this argument:

National interview data obtained in 1994 from 646 respondents in the United States was used to test the following hypothesis:

For individuals who are informed about data-sharing processes, confidence in the US Census Bureau's claim of confidentiality is more important than trust in the government as a predictor of compliance to share data.

¹⁷ ‘Privacy and the Community’, July 2001, prepared for the Office of the Federal Privacy Commission by Roy Morgan Research.

It was found that the respondents' willingness to provide personal information was not significantly related to their general attitudes toward government. This supports the notion that one's level of awareness of privacy issues and privacy laws may dictate their willingness (or lack of it) to provide personal information.¹⁸

Age

“Generally younger people showed higher levels of trust towards more organisations than other age groups which perhaps indicates a correlation between inexperience and high levels of trust.”¹⁹

“Although differences across age groups were fairly small, Canadians aged 65 and older were consistently least likely to be willing to carry medical smart cards for any purpose.”²⁰

In general, the issues of information privacy are considered more relevant to adults than children. Parents or guardians usually handle the administrative needs of children (eg medical records, legal records, etc), and the child's right to information privacy may not be emphasised as would an adults'.

There is evidence to suggest that parents do not perceive privacy (used in a general sense) to be as important for young children as it is for adults.²¹

Nationality / ethnic background

Attitudes and beliefs relating to information privacy rights may have a traditional cultural or religious basis. 'While the idea of privacy as a fundamental human right

¹⁸ 'Public Attitudes Toward Data Sharing By Federal Agencies', International Journal of Public Opinion Research, 1997, 9, 3, autumn, 277-285

¹⁹ 'Privacy and the Community', July 2001, prepared for the Office of the Federal Privacy Commission by Roy Morgan Research.

²⁰ Canadian Medical Association Journal, 6/12/2001, Vol 164 Issue 12, p 1739, ½ p

²¹ 'Space, Body and Mind', Journal of Family Issues, Jan 1998, Vol19 Issue 1, p 75, 26p

still raises eyebrows in many developing countries, the concept is familiar to the citizens of those cultures.’²²

*“An argument which seeks to establish the essential difference between the East and West is the relative importance of rights and duties in the two cultures. In brief, the argument is that the West emphasises rights and the East stresses duties. Rights-based regimes are said to promote confrontation and conflict while duty-based regimes are said to advance harmony and consensus.”*²³

*“We in the West have certainly encountered important analyses of the effects of the deprivation of privacy in total institutions (Goffman) as well as theories of totalitarianism that place the project of destroying public and private space, public and private autonomy at the conceptual core of such regimes (Arendt).”*²⁴

Technological progress

Advances in sophisticated technology with the capacity to collect, analyse and distribute information from individuals have brought about a new wave of fear in terms of privacy issues. Concerns are driven by the unknown impacts of existing information processing technologies, and perhaps of future, as yet unknown, technologies.

Concern is rising over internet privacy, with a clear majority (57%) now favouring some sort of laws regulating how personal information is collected and used.

63% of internet users are “very concerned over the use of personal information”.²⁵

According to the ‘1992 Harris-Equifax consumer privacy survey’, 76% of the public agree that consumers have lost all control over how personal information about them is circulated and used by companies, up from 71% in 1991.²⁶

²² ‘The Bedrock of Civil Liberties’, UNESCO Courier, Mar 2001, Vol 54 Issue 3, p 21, 1/3p

²³ ‘The Privacy Project’, Workshop on Chinese Concepts of Privacy held at the University of Leiden and the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study, 31 May – 2 June 2001.

²⁴ ‘Social Research’, Spring 2001, Vol 68 Issue 1, p 235, 2p

²⁵ ‘A Growing Threat’, Business Week, 20/3/2000, Issue 3673, p 96, 1p

²⁶ *Summary of ‘1992 Harris -Equifax Consumer Privacy Survey’, Marketing News, 16/8/93, Vol 27 Issue 17, Council For Marketing... p A18, ¼ p

According to a study by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) Task Force on Assurance Services, 70% of online users said their internet purchasing would increase if they were given some assurance about security and privacy of their personal information and the delivery of the right product.²⁷

In the 1994 Roy Morgan survey for the Office of Federal Privacy Commissioner, nearly 80% of respondents think computers have made it easier for confidential personal information to fall into the wrong hands.

What are the mainstream attitudes to privacy? (Australia and overseas)

“There is a general understanding that collection of personal information is appropriate for effective planning and are in many instances necessary and beneficial.”²⁸

According to Federal Privacy Commissioner Malcolm Crompton, survey results on how the community, businesses and governments view privacy revealed that “more than 80% agreed it was appropriate for the government to assign unique identifiers to track health services. But 60% qualified this by saying inclusion in a national database should be voluntary.”²⁹

However, the perceptions and beliefs underlying the results of the July 2001 Office of Federal Privacy Commissioner research “reveal a significant disparity between what people think *should* happen and what they believe *does* happen with their personal information.”³⁰

²⁷ ‘E-commerce gets a vote of confidence’, Computing Canada, 6/8/98, Vol 24, Issue 22, p 29, 2p

²⁸ ‘Privacy and the Community’, July 2001, prepared for the Office of Federal Privacy Commissioner by Roy Morgan Research.

²⁹ ‘Patient privacy concerns’, The Australian, 11/8/2001

³⁰ ‘What is privacy?’, Privacy and Security in the Information Age Conference, 16-17 August 2001

The community wants more control over how personal information is collected, stored and used

“Overall, respondents of the OFPC research, while exhibiting a low level of knowledge and understanding in relation to privacy, show a high, and increasing level of interest in their own privacy...”

Attitudes reflected a desire among the community to gain control over how their personal information was used with more than 9 in 10 people wanting businesses to seek permission before using their personal information for marketing...

People were reluctant to provide this information (ie. personal information) as they felt that often it was “none of their business” (ie. none of the business of the requesting organization). Other reasons given for not wanting to hand over particular types of information included the belief that the information could be misused and/or used in a way that would result in personal financial loss, or passed on without their knowledge. Fear of discrimination was also mentioned in relation to the provision of health information.”³¹

“Over 90% of the adult population regarded these practices (ie. business practices of transferring information without the individual’s knowledge or using personal information beyond the purpose for which it was originally collected) as an invasion of privacy...”

“91% of respondents declared that they would be concerned (including 79% very concerned) if a business they supplied their information to for a specific purpose used it for another purpose”³²

“91% of those surveyed said they don’t want this information shared with others without consent.” (Canadian survey about market research processes)³³

³¹ ‘Privacy and the Community’, July 2001, prepared for the Office of Federal Privacy Commissioner by Roy Morgan Research.

³² ‘News From the Office of the Privacy Commissioner’, Issue No. 42, Sept/ Oct 2001, New Zealand

³³ Business Quarterly, Autumn 1996, Vol 61, Issue 1, p 16, 2p, 1c.

In a survey in Saskatchewan, Canada, 62.9% of respondents said that for them “to receive informed consent, health professionals would need to provide details of every anticipated use of health information”.³⁴

“Results suggested that across all professions people favoured a greater degree of confidentiality than they believed actually existed.”³⁵

“Nearly two thirds of Americans are concerned that their medical information is being seen by organisations other than those providing health care.”³⁶

“As customers become aware of the potential of such databases to house specific information about their individual behaviour, they are becoming more squeamish about how the information is used...”

More than 80% of respondents believe merchants are not entitled to exchange consumer information with other merchants. Consumers believe this to be an unacceptable invasion of privacy.”³⁷

The community is not particularly well informed about existing safeguards.

According to Office of Federal Privacy Commission’s research findings, just over 43% of people surveyed knew that the Federal privacy laws existed, with 13% knowing which types of organisations these applied to.

“Awareness of the privacy laws was lowest in the 18–24 year age group (25%), and highest among those aged 40–49 years, with almost half knowing about the laws. Awareness was slightly higher among people in capital cities (46%) and lower in rural locations (35%). When asked directly how knowledgeable they felt about their privacy rights, more than half of the population (52%) said they knew very little or nothing at all.”³⁸

³⁴ ‘The Privacy Paradox – Laying Orwell’s Ghost to Rest’, Canadian Medical Association Journal, 8/7/2001, Vol 165 Issue 3, p 307, 3p

³⁵ ‘Public Perceptions About Confidentiality In Mental Health Services’, Journal of Mental Health, Aug 1999, Vol 8 Issue 4, p 413, 9p.

³⁶ ‘Results from an Equifax poll’, Behavioural Health Management, Jul/Aug 1994, Vol 14 Issue 4, p 10.

³⁷ ‘Study finds consumers view database marketing as an invasion of privacy’, Direct Marketing, April 1997, Vol 59 Issue 12, p 11.

³⁸ ‘Privacy and the Community’, July 2001, prepared for the Office of Federal Privacy Commissioner by Roy Morgan Research.

In general, research suggests that people from lower socio-economic groups register more concern about protecting their privacy.

However, amongst lower socio-economic groups this high level of concern does not necessarily translate in to proactive behaviour, which is more common among high income earners and those who are aware of their privacy rights. “Those with lower levels of knowledge and understanding of the issues are possibly less sure of how to actively protect their privacy (and possibly feel more concern because of this), and less able to discern which practices are more harmful or harmless than others.

When dealing over the internet the majority of people (57%) had more concerns about the security of their personal information.”³⁹

“There is a general public perception that more and more information is being stored in computer databases, and that it is possible, to access and search through all of this information, to find out things about us that could be to our disadvantage...”

There is general understanding that collection of personal information is appropriate for effective planning and in many instances data collection is necessary and beneficial. The community wants to have much more control of how personal information is collected, stored and used...

About 75% of respondents ranked ‘confidentiality of personal information’ as being very important. This was ranked ahead of the economy and the environment, second only to education in a list of social issues...

In 1994, 90% of respondents wanted to know when their personal information is being collected, what use it would be put to and whether it would be transferred to anyone else. 90% thought they should be asked for permission before their personal data could be passed from one organisation to another.”⁴⁰

³⁹ ‘Privacy and the Community’, July 2001, prepared for the Office of the Federal Privacy Commission by Roy Morgan Research.

⁴⁰ Paper presented by Liane Ringham, National Chairman (1999-2000) at the MRSA IIR Connect ’98 Conference, Sydney, August 1998

What are the attitudes to privacy among Australia's CALD communities?

Naturally, CALD and indigenous community members will have similar issues as those facing the wider Victoria population:

- generally low level of awareness of privacy laws and their function;
- women have less awareness than men in this instance;
- general reluctance to provide more confidential information (eg income, health);
and
- attitudes to information will depend very much on education and experience.

An individual's privacy rights may be exercised differently in different source countries based on gender, age, religion, socio-economic background, history of government mistreatment of citizens, war and civil unrest, etc.

There will most likely be variance of tolerance towards what constitutes information privacy. This may cause a dilemma for some citizens (such as those from the People's Republic of China) who have grown up in an environment where state rights are vastly more important than the individual's rights. For some, they may have a different take on what constitutes information privacy; what is personal information, whether it is private/not private; people's rights to keep it private from public authorities; for what purpose and by whom. In other communities (for example Vietnamese) that have experienced first hand misuse of personal information by government, trust becomes a major issue and the provision of personal information may cause fear.

*“Working models of voice, exit, and negative word-of-mouth complaining behaviours suggest that, as compared with consumers of collectivist cultures, consumers of individualist cultures are relatively less loyal, more likely to voice consumer complaints, less likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth communications, and more easily retained as customers.”*⁴¹

High levels of contact with government authorities

CALD and Indigenous community members have above-average levels of contact with a range of government departments of which the provision of personal information is a fundamental requirement to registering for and accessing services. Some trends worth noting here are:

- CALD and Indigenous communities are over-represented among lower socio-economic groups
- CALD and Indigenous communities are over-represented in numbers of welfare / pension recipients per percentage of population (form filling is extensive)
- Some CALD communities are over-represented in the number of over 55s in Victoria (eg Italian, Greek)
- Indigenous communities are over-represented in the health services system
- Immigrants / citizens have already provided a great deal of personal information as part of the process of migrating to Australia / becoming a citizen
- Refugee and new arrival groups seek out a range of immediate post-arrival settlement services (housing, education, health, income security, etc) from government organisations

⁴¹ ‘Collectivism, Individualism and In-Group Membership: Implications for Consumer Complaining Behaviours in Multicultural Contexts’, *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 1996, 8, 3-4, 69-96.

Key community findings from NESB community obstacles to reporting suspected public sector corruption⁴²

The collective major barriers against reporting instances of corruption for community groups interviewed (Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Croatian, Greek, Italian, Russian, Serbian, Turkish and Vietnamese) were:

- Cultural
- Fear of reprisals, of “getting into trouble”
- Fear of making the situation worse
- Language difficulties
- Minority group stigma and feelings of powerlessness
- A belief that “complaints cannot make a change”
- A belief that complaint mechanisms do not work
- Fear of bureaucrats

When asked whether he had heard of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, one Russian respondent said:

“I know of no such organisation, and would not come anywhere near it. By the sound of it, even if you paid me a million. People that catch crooks are often crooks themselves.”

A Vietnamese respondent said:

“I have little belief in the effectiveness and fairness of the investigation.”

- Fear of racism from the person receiving the complaint
- Fear of being identified, particularly of having to appear in court

⁴² Key Community Findings from NESB Community Obstacles To Reporting Suspected Public Sector Corruption, Report To The Independent Commission Against Corruption, prepared by Cultural Partners Australia, June 2001.

- Apathy generated by the feeling that no-one will take any notice of a migrant reporting problems:

“We’re just the little people. Like they’re going to believe us over some government person?” Croatian respondent

The Vietnamese respondents in particular were reluctant to give specific information. One Vietnamese respondent said:

“Vietnamese people prefer not to put their nose into someone else’s business – to keep their mouths shut, rather than to buy misfortune for themselves.”

There was a clear difference in the attitudes of people who have lived in Australia for many years, and those who are recent arrivals, as well as those who are from communities which are well established compared with relatively newly arrived communities.

People who lived in Australia for longer, are aware of the laws against bribery, and are less influenced by their prior experiences. The more recently arrived tend to be cynical about the situation here, believing that corruption is endemic in all societies.

Migration and settlement experiences (for CALD)

The resettlement process following migration can have severe social and economic impacts on life in Australia and exacerbate dealings with government authorities.

These impacts include:

- Cultural and religious conflict (more entrenched traditional beliefs and values)
- Lack of English language proficiency (reinforcing alienation and isolation)
- Economic stress (including unemployment)
- Fear of government, particularly in some refugee groups
- Lack of knowledge and use of relevant complaint mechanisms

Dispossession and loss (for Indigenous)

Many factors working together have also exacerbated social and economic life for Indigenous communities, including:

- Colonisation, institutionalisation and incarceration
- Loss of self-esteem
- Experienced generations of control by government
- Isolation (for many rural and remote)
- Lack of trust of government (stolen generations)
- Discrimination
- Loss of land, language and culture
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Unemployment
- Poverty

Many community members may mistrust government motives in the collection of information, particularly health information.

Under-utilisation of complaints mechanisms

Evidence suggests that there is considerable under-utilisation of complaint mechanisms by CALD and Indigenous community members. Fear is a major deterrent:

- Fear of loss of entitlements
- Fear that they will not be believed or taken seriously
- Fear that will not achieve any substantive result
- Fear of reprisal

What are the attitudes towards privacy amongst Indigenous communities in Australia?

Background

“Indigenous communities are extremely diverse and pluralistic. There is no one kind of Indigenous Australian or community which has an ‘Indigenous culture’. But there are regions which can be characterised by reference to their histories, politics, cultures and demographics...

The first region is ‘settled’ Australia. This area is where most provincial towns and all major cities are located, and where a myriad of small indigenous communities and populations reside with a range of histories and cultures...

The second region is ‘remote’ Australia, where most of the tradition-oriented Indigenous cultures are located...

In a very general sense, the cultural practices and productions of Indigenous Australians in these two regions are quite different. They are grounded in different cultural bases, histories and socio-political conditions.”⁴³

Indigenous law versus Australian ‘white’ law

Given their unique culture, and the history of oppression and prejudice towards Indigenous Australians, it is no surprise that there would be some lack of respect for ‘white law’ among some Indigenous communities.

“There can be no doubt that for the vast majority of Aborigines, Australian law and its agencies act as instruments of coercion rather than protection... In most towns and cities the police are blatantly racist in operation... In addition, many communities would like to see Aboriginal Law, as embodied in the decisions of the elders of the tribe, given at least equal status with federal and state law within tribal groups. This would enable the communities to preserve traditional cultural mores and taboos, and to administer justice in a meaningful context. At the

⁴³ ‘Aboriginal Australians’, Minority Rights Group, Report No. 35, New 1982 edition.

Appendix A

present time the situation is not good for blacks. It is only an occasional case that comes to public attention which highlights their situation.”⁴⁴

“Over the last few decades government policy on Aboriginal Affairs has moved through several phases. From physical extermination in the 19th century to extermination through excessive and paternal welfarism; from genocide and cultural rape to the ‘smoothing of the dying pillow’ approach. In the last few years policy has focused around concepts like integration, assimilation, and self-determination, all of which seem to be used interchangeably by those in and outside Aboriginal Affairs...

Related to this point is the final assumption that where, a degree of acceptance exists, Aboriginal development is permissible providing it is controlled by the predominantly white society. What this means is that Aboriginal people are often considered to be quite different from white Australian people, quite incapable of self-determining their own lives.”⁴⁵

“White Australians actually regard Aborigines as over-privileged, in receipt of overly generous government handouts, and living in the benefit of undeserved concessions. ‘They get heaps. The government builds them houses... they pay them to go back to school... they get houses given to them and all they do is burn the floors out of them and wreck them.’”⁴⁶

“Recently the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) was very scathing of the ABS and questioned whether the figures were accurate. While the bureaucracy may view this as a technical exercise, Aboriginal people in both community control and bureaucracy must be involved at all levels. If they are not, many will be reluctant to participate.”⁴⁷

“What I think for my part the old people need a bit more help from the young people than they can do it for themselves. Say they’re trying to teach the young people how to run the Law, work with the Law. It’s the both-way Law. The

⁴⁴ Valuing Cultures: Recognising Indigenous Cultures as a Valued Part of Australian Heritage, Council For Aboriginal Reconciliation, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1994

⁴⁵ ‘Aborigines in Australia today’, by Chris Mullard, commissioned by National Aboriginal Forum, Australua, plaza Print Nov 1974.

⁴⁶ ‘They Get Heaps: A Study of Attitudes in Roebourne Western Australia’ by Mary Edmunds, Aboriginal Studies Press, 1989

⁴⁷ ‘Indigenous Identification in Administrative Data Collections; Best Practice & Quality Assurance’, Australian Bureau of Statistics

Aboriginal Law and the white community law. They want to try to keep all the one in, all together...

See what made it different was that blackfeller Law was a bit more harder than white man law. I said in the white man law the police come along and pick you up and put you in jail. If the blackfellers wanted to do it the hard way they killed that man. That was their Law. But they sort of cut it off that. They don't want to do all those cruel things. They want to try to get it sort of even-even next to the white man law.”⁴⁸

Data collection to date

“The Victorian Registry has been collecting data on the births and deaths of Indigenous persons for the Australian Bureau of Statistics since 1987. This information is collected through questions appearing on birth and death notification forms and on medical certificates relating to deaths. However, while being careful in the recording of information received, the Registry does not take any action where the informant does not answer the question on the form.”⁴⁹

Identification of target audiences

Based on findings from the *Privacy and the Community* research conducted for the Federal Office of the Privacy Commissioner, and also based our analysis of 1996 ABS Census statistics and Department of Immigration & Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) data for settler arrivals during 1996-99, it is suggested that segmentation occur based on the perceived levels of understanding, current attitudes towards information privacy issues, and identified demographic indicators as highlighted in the Federal research.

⁴⁸ Quote from Michael Dinkum, ‘When The Dust Come In Between: Aboriginal Viewpoints In The East Kimberley Prior to 1982’ as told to Bruce Shaw, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra 1992

⁴⁹ Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages’, Report on data collection relating to indigenous persons, by Ian Bowler, Registrations Manager, Australian Bureau of Statistics

Comparison of mainstream and CALD/Indigenous attitudes towards information privacy

Mainstream research findings	CALD/Indigenous issues
Nine out of ten thought it was important that organisations advise them of who has access to their information, and how it may be used.	For those people who arrived as refugees, were fleeing persecution, or who have an earned mistrust of government will, these sentiments will possibly be stronger.
People between the ages of 40 – 49 and with higher income, were more likely to be more pro-active and aware of the privacy laws.	Some CALD groups have aging populations and many fall into lower income brackets than the mainstream. Welfare, less education low English language proficiency could lead to less pro-active behaviour and less assertive behaviour.
Those with lower education levels, youth and those living in rural areas were less likely to assert privacy related behaviour.	Indigenous audiences may be accentuated in this regard.
There is a general reluctance to provide details about financial, health and home contact details. Reasons given were that it was none of their business, they do not want their information misused resulting in financial loss, or discrimination regarding health.	These experiences and feelings will be magnified if the person comes from a country where they have, or know someone who has experienced discrimination. Questions such as religion, and race may also cause apprehension in CALD groups.
Those who are over 50 are more cautious about providing financial details than those who are younger	CALD communities with significant aging population will be highlighted
People from lower socio-economic groups register more concern about protecting privacy, although they are less sure how to approach the issue.	CALD communities have a larger proportion in the lower socio-economic bracket. This is also magnified by lower English language proficiency, and lower levels of understanding of Australian laws and government systems
Awareness levels of the privacy laws is low with more than half the mainstream sample responding that they knew little or nothing at all about privacy laws, with men knowing more than women.	This is expected to be lower among CALD groups, with an emphasis on women who tend to be less information rich than mainstream women.
There is a low awareness of the deeper privacy issues surrounding the allocation of unique numbers and data matching.	This is expected to be even lower among CALD groups.
Internet users are concerned with the use of their personal information and one third of them attempted to protect their privacy by setting their browser to reject cookies. One third however did not know what cookies were.	This is relevant for those CALD groups who have embraced the use of Internet technology, such as Chinese speakers.

Victorians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds face a number of potential issues that may affect their understanding and behaviour in relation to information privacy.

- Language/concept/understanding of privacy, respect, respect of privacy
- Experience in Australia and country of origin with government and privacy issues
- Current knowledge/understanding/perception & attitudes in relation to privacy rights
- Current behaviour in dealing with government agencies ie forms, Internet, etc
- Key issues within CALD groups (that may affect attitudes to privacy, ie religious issues)
- Communication methods (most appropriate way to simplify and communicate potentially intricate information)

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APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY SUMMARIES

The following are brief summaries of the reactions of each target community, and analysis of the findings from each community's focus group(s).

Arabic speaking

The Arabic speaking community is very diverse, its members coming from many different countries, with different migration experiences (including refugee) and different religious backgrounds (including Muslim and various Christian backgrounds). There is a high proportion of the community with poor English language skills (20%), particularly the women, and there are high levels of unemployment.

- There is a wariness and resentment in this community of providing information that could potentially lead to discrimination, particularly their religion and language spoken at home.
- The collection of such information is regarded as a means of segregation.
- Sensitivity to these issues is more acute since 11 September 2001 and the potential increase in ASIO's powers.
- Although there is a degree of trust in 'governments' as entities, participants were concerned about the potential for misuse of information stored electronically, and harm resulting from the widespread exchange of information.
- The people within departments are not trusted.
- Women participants were less trusting of government departments, and had less awareness of complaints mechanisms.
- Experiences of discrimination in their birth country (eg Kurds) impact strongly on their attitude towards providing certain information, and their trust of governments. May believe that 'the government' is watching them, and be reluctant to use the telephone.
- Despite these fears and suspicion about the misuse of their information, they are willing to cooperate if they believe it to be for the benefit of the community.

- There is cynicism about the exchange of information, participants are sure it is occurring, and feel helpless about the control of their personal data.
- They would like to be able to exert some control or, at least, be informed about when, why and what is being shared.
- Would like to be able to check their data, as long as no one else has access to it.
- The men are more likely to complain than the women. People are more likely to seek assistance first through community organisations and leaders.
- Issues of trust, fear of authority and fear of being 'singled out' may act as barriers to making a complaint.
- The Ombudsman is seen as fair and independent, but there was little knowledge of other complaints mechanisms.
- Older people are less likely to be aware of their rights and less likely to feel comfortable about making a complaint.
- Information in Arabic is needed, there are several newspapers serving the Arabic community, and radio stations, but links with community organisations and leaders will ensure greater penetration.

Findings from Arabic focus group discussions

Issues raised	Arabic
Composition of the group	Two groups were run, one with women and one with men. The women were aged 17-53, and had been in Australia 12-26 years. The men were aged 33-49 and had been in Australia 1-22 years.
What is regarded as private	<p>The women were concerned about family records, financial, health, bank accounts and investments, sexual privacy and marital status.</p> <p>The men were concerned about home and personal information, workplace, religion to some Muslims and personal family history.</p>
Personal privacy	<p>The men looked at a broad picture: any information that will potentially harm or lead to vilification, victimisation or distort our culture and our religion.</p> <p>Women were more interested in personal details: health, family situation, marital status, home address; what happens within the family, financial information and investments, age; tax file number; medical records; bank accounts.</p>
Why keep this private	<p>Fears of victimisation, <i>'our children and wives can suffer, and misuse that effects family and employment, and our standing with government'</i>. Men</p> <p><i>'For protection – there are a lot of perverts; there is no justice within the law if you are stalked so it is better to keep one's address private and not listed in the directory.'</i> Women.</p> <p>Health and financial information should remain private because they do not concern any one else. Age, race and ethnicity should remain private because of discrimination.</p> <p>Some information needs to be given in certain circumstances like when applying for a job.</p>
Attitudes to government versus non-government organisations	<p>People feel more secure with government; but have little confidence of information not being exchanged between departments; mistrust because of ASIO's new powers to intercept communications; general mistrust of electronic information. Are more prepared to provide information to government because of the use that is made of it.</p>
Information sought by government departments	<p>Banking, immigration, mother/ family relations, for sponsoring; giving same information more than once, health, diseases and sickness levels, assets</p> <p>Centrelink just about ask you everything: name, address, country of birth, education, schools attended, drivers licence number, place of work, place of study, credit card number, age, Medicare number, telephone number, year of arrival, who I live with.</p>
Essential information for gov depts	<p>The things that are relevant to the department; eg family, marital status, number of people living in a particular area, criminal record, age, gender, language spoken, country of birth, Whatever is currently in the census is sufficient information.</p>

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Issues raised	Arabic
Essential information for councils	Depends on their planning & service needs, generally the same information as the Census
Race and religion	Participants felt uncomfortable about this being collected, that it should be optional, and they would need to know the purpose for its collection. It is more relevant to local councils, for planning purposes, or other organisations serving the needs of emerging minority groups. The question of race or religion is seen as political, rather than sensitive to a person's background.
Language spoken at home or birth country	<p>Birth country is not relevant – needs to be more specific eg Kurdish rather than born in Iraq. Language spoken at home is only relevant to Census.</p> <p><i>‘Country of birth and language spoken at home can also define the changing nature of the society, which might be perceived to be dominated by certain ethnic groups.’</i></p> <p>The reason for collecting this information needs to be communicated and when this information is sought, the person seeking it needs to identify who they are.</p>
Filling in forms	Generally no blanks, except for personal information such as income, age etc, none would admit to entering false information.
Census questions	<p>There were concerns about place of origin and those defining race / ethnicity to better describe the way they wish to be identified <i>‘...not put into little boxes for political expediency.’</i> Men.</p> <p>Women had problems with income and religion.</p>
Should gov depts share info?	<p><i>‘They are already swapping.’</i> Women generally thought it a good thing to prevent financial fraud, to swap information, and criminal records between tax, Centrelink and immigration, for efficiency and security.</p> <p>The men were less sure. Some had no problem with it, others want only information specific to a department kept. <i>‘so why exchange and potentially jeopardise opportunities from elsewhere?’</i></p>
Should they ask?	Participants in both groups agreed they should be asked each and every time departments want to share information, <i>‘they should ask each time. It is our information, we would like to be aware of what the government has done with any information.’</i>
Sharing & storing criminal records	<p>Records of serious crime, defined as murder, crimes against children should be shared. The men thought records of minor crimes need not be shared.</p> <p>Retention of criminal records depends on crime and age of perpetrator. For minor crimes: 3-5 years, for more serious crimes, 10 years to life.</p>

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Issues raised	Arabic
Level of trust in gov depts	There is a degree of trust in 'governments', but not of the people working in departments. The women are less trusting.
Sensitivity of gov depts – how this impacts	<p>The men are very suspicious: <i>'We are just numbers, they are too bureaucratic; people should be treated equally no matter what their background; there are political motives behind government departments and we have been victimised before'</i></p> <p>The women commented: <i>'Governments may understand, but people are still careless.'</i></p> <p>The men would feel more comfortable about providing information if they felt understood, and that it was to benefit society, but would still only provide what they thought relevant.</p>
Storage & maintenance of info	<p>There was a consensus on storage and maintenance: both groups felt data should be destroyed as soon as it has been used, it is invalid or is no longer relevant. It should be kept a maximum of 7-10 years.</p> <p>They would like to be able to check their information as long as no other member of the public has access to it.</p> <p><i>'Would like to be able to see what goes on behind the scenes.'</i></p>
Experience in birth country	Information was not collected as extensively or reliably in participants' birth countries. Governments were not trusted not to abuse the information, particularly for those who belonged to ethnic minorities in their birth countries (eg Kurds).
Influence on attitude to Australian governments	Although experiences in the birth country clouds their opinions of governments, they trust Australian governments much more in comparison.
Awareness of Privacy laws	Most were not aware of any, although one man referred to confidentiality clauses in certain documents.
Where seek help in cases of abuse of info	Participants would go to the Department of Justice, EOC, a solicitor or the Ombudsman.
Likelihood of complaint to Ombudsman org	<p>The women were split, some would definitely go to the Justice Department, others do not understand the system, and commented: <i>'There is a need for a body to control the process.'</i></p> <p>One woman commented: <i>'No, I wouldn't, because I don't have faith in the complaints procedures, they lead to nothing, lead to nowhere.'</i></p> <p>In comparison, the men see the Ombudsman as <i>'fair and independent.'</i></p>
Awareness of Privacy Victoria	The women had no knowledge of PV. The men had heard recently, but had limited knowledge of its origins, function or how it works, commenting that more information in their language is needed.

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Issues raised	Arabic
Other complaints mechanisms	Both groups are aware of the Ombudsman, believing it is not part of the government, and men commented that every department has its complaints mechanism, but none had heard of the Banking or Telecoms Ombudsman.
Attitude to slogans	<p>The slogan is acceptable, but the women could not understand the use of the word 'real'. They considered it needs to be phrased as 'It's your right'.</p> <p>The men commented that it conveys the idea of protection, and is believable.</p>
Best way to inform	Every way possible: daily newspapers; Arabic media campaign, including radio first, then press and television; representation at function sponsored by Privacy Victoria; ethno-specific outlets; mediating information through schools eg Victorian Arabic Social Services programs that are targeting teens and parents and the wider Arabic community; short term programs and road shows in the areas of high concentration of Arabic-Australian suburbs.
Who most trusted	They felt that the new Privacy Commissioner would be trusted because of its independence.

Chinese community

Cantonese speakers

Cantonese speakers tend to have better English skills than many other migrant communities. It is a large and growing community, with a high proportion of higher socio-economic status.

Although the Chinese community is diverse, and originating in many different countries, there tends to be a cohesion of attitudes and background culture which influences attitudes and behaviour. Many have come from countries where there is a dominant and controlling government and the culture is one of obedience to authority and compliance with rules and regulations. This influences their reaction to information provision, and requests from government departments.

- Participants are willing to cooperate with government departments, but prefer to know why information is being collected.
- Generally trust government departments to preserve their information, but suspect that there are 'corrupt officials' who may use the information.
- Would like to protect information about the health status of their families, and their financial situation. (Poor health or disability can be a cause for discrimination within the community). Privacy is very important, particularly in relation to a person's standing in the community.
- Do not feel the need to check their data for accuracy.
- There is some knowledge of complaints mechanisms, although not for these issues. No knowledge of Privacy Victoria.
- The participants would want to complain if they suspected their data had been misused, but would not know how.
- Would like more information about Privacy Victoria, in Cantonese and written in Chinese.
- Newspapers are very popular medium for receiving information, although radio is increasing in popularity.

- Participants would trust the government to provide information, especially through seminars to professional groups or intermediaries who could then pass on the information.

Mandarin speakers

Mandarin speakers are more recent arrivals in Victoria, following increased migration from mainland China. There are lower levels of English language skills than amongst Cantonese speakers, and lower rates of employment.

This community sector is still going through the process of establishment in their new country, and consequently have frequent contact with government departments.

Age is a significant influencing factor in both language groups. Older Chinese tend to fear dealing with government, and have greater concern for their privacy, but are more likely to 'let it go' and not complain. They are reluctant to draw attention to themselves or cause trouble.

- Mandarin speakers prefer to keep personal details such as health status, marital status, income, age and personal problems confidential. Privacy is very important, particularly in relation to a person's standing in the community.
- As with Cantonese speakers, health is a particularly sensitive issue.
- Participants are willing to provide information to government departments, and trust them not to misuse their information.
- The collection of race and religion is not an issue for this group, and they can see the benefits of governments knowing language spoken at home.
- However, they do not want departments to exchange information, seeing that as a breach of their privacy. There are no circumstances where it would be considered permissible.
- Criminal records can be shared, so that every department knows if a person has committed a crime.
- They trust departments to keep information up to date, but would prefer to be able to check it.

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- In comparison with their birth country government, they trust Australian governments far more.
- There was no awareness of privacy laws or Privacy Victoria, but they welcome an independent organisation that could help them.
- The meaning of the slogan was unclear, when translated it is ambiguous, and does not work for them in English.
- To communicate with this group – written materials in Chinese, radio sessions in Mandarin, community discussions with a Privacy Victoria representative through an interpreter.
- A multitude of print media serve the community, and are read avidly.

Findings from the Chinese focus group discussions

Issues raised	Cantonese	Mandarin
Composition of the group	A mixed group with equal numbers of men and women, ranging in ages from 20 to mid 40s. All are employed, most in professional or semi-professional positions.	All of this group had been in Australia for less than five years, there were equal numbers of men and women, aged between 25 and 80 years. There was a mixture of backgrounds including retirees, a student, teacher, business person.
What is regarded as private	Any information that does not contribute to the public interest. Personal information such as name, age, address, telephone number, 'pin' numbers, income, medical history; any unique information about an individual, eg personal wealth characteristics. Information that affects personal reputation, or that others can use or manipulate to your disadvantage.	Everything that belongs to the individual and that the individual does not want others to know including name, address, telephone numbers, occupation, income, assets, marital status, date of arrival, country of birth and sex.
Personal privacy	Pin number, personal wealth, credit card number, religion.	Health status marital status, family income, age and personal problems.
Why keep this private	For fear that personal information can be misused, abused or exchanged for commercial purposes.	Participants were concerned that revealing age and health status may impact on their ability to make friends or get jobs. <i>'...because many people do not like to make friends with people who suffer from poor health conditions.'</i>
Attitudes to government versus non-government organisations	Generally feel a bit more cautious with commercial enterprises, which may not put the interests of the individual first. In either case, if they had any doubts about why the information is required, they would clarify before providing information.	Participants all agreed that government departments, local councils and non-government organisations require similar details. Generally, non-government organisations such as banks or Telstra will not ask their clients' income. They get asked for this type of information on a daily basis.
Information sought by government departments	For Government Departments personal information will be collected. The Group is more relaxed with the questions asked by Government Departments. They would try to cooperate as much as possible as they trust the Government would not collect information unnecessarily. Questions asked by local councils relate to the local environment and property. They have no experience of other services from Council	Age, name, marital status, country of birth, assets, occupation, reasons for stopping work.
Essential information for gov depts		Information relating to family or individual income, living conditions, the kinds of elderly services required, work opportunities required.

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Issues raised	Cantonese	Mandarin
Essential information for councils		Environment of the local residential area, accident black spots and crime spots.
Race and religion	The group has no objection to questions of race, but one member felt strongly that information on religion is very private and is not essential in any circumstances other than the census.	Race and religion are not regarded as a form of personal activity and therefore there is no need to keep them private. Also, governments can provide relevant services if this information is collected.
Language spoken at home or birth country	Participants had no problems with providing information about language spoken at home and country of birth.	Participants felt that this information should be collected, and could see no reason to keep it private. They believe that the government needs to know the size of different language groups so that they can adjust ethnic broadcasting plans for the ethnic communities or activities.
Filling in forms	The group is willing to cooperate as long they are fully aware of the purpose of information collection, and the questions asked are relevant. As much as possible, they would give a true answer, as they have to sign and be responsible for their answers.	Participants will always fill in all the spaces, because they feel that the government will investigate what they have put on the form. This is not a problem for them.
Census questions	The purpose of Census is obvious so they expect more personal information to be sought.	They had no issue with the census questions because they regarded them as reasonable for a national survey.
Should gov depts share info?	Participants expect departments to swap and compare information for the purpose of law enforcement and for protection of public interest. If they specify clearly the circumstances and the information links between different departments, it would give the public a better sense of security, and enhance trust in government.	No, departments should not swap or compare information, because they should respect people's privacy. Participants felt that departments have a duty to keep information confidential, and there are no circumstances when it would be OK.
Should they ask?	The Group does not expect to be asked each time their information is shared.	This is not relevant as information should not be shared: ' <i>... government departments should ask people directly if they have any queries.</i> '
Sharing & storing criminal records	Not all departments should have information on criminal records eg. Custom, Employment Services should, but it is not relevant for the Health Dept. They believe records are kept for five years. How long they should be kept depends on the type of crime. A traffic offence is different from act of inflicting bodily harm. Record of serious crime should be kept for life.	Participants felt that criminal records should be shared, so that every dept knows if a person has committed a crime. In this way ' <i>they can keep an eye on him.</i> ' Except for small crimes such as the theft of small amounts of money, criminal records should be for life. For small crimes they should be destroyed after five years.

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Issues raised	Cantonese	Mandarin
Level of trust in gov depts	<p>The Group trusts all government departments and believes they are committed to protecting individual privacy.</p> <p>Participants believe that there would be staff training programs in all departments, but suspect that there are likely to be corrupt officials who may misuse the information they guard.</p>	<p>Participants feel complete trust in government not to misuse their personal data, and that the <i>'image of the government is trustable.'</i></p>
Sensitivity of gov depts – how this impacts	<p>Yes, the Group feels no violation on their privacy so far. With the new Privacy Act, individuals will have a better protection across the board.</p>	<p>Yes, they trust the government very much. They would be prepared to provide more information if the government required them to.</p>
Storage & maintenance of info	<p>Participants felt that any number would be arbitrary, ten years is too long, five years is too short, so they agreed with the ATO that records should be kept for five years.</p> <p>They don't currently feel the need to check their records, although they thought it would be a good idea if there were a system in place that would enable people to do so.</p>	<p>Participants think that the government will update people's information regularly, therefore it will not be destroyed, it will be updated.</p> <p>They therefore trust government departments to ensure that information kept about them is accurate, but they would like to be able to check it.</p>
Experience in birth country	<p>In the countries they have come from government rights are greater than individual rights. It is mandatory that citizens cooperate fully in providing any information required by the government. It is easy for all departments to exchange information about individuals because everyone has an individual identity number.</p> <p>People generally have less awareness of privacy because of the way they have been brought up and of cultural difference.</p>	<p>In participants' country of birth, there is a compulsory census every 10 years, but the government will collect information from other sources as well, such as neighbours, friends or other family members.</p>
Influence on attitude to Australian governments	<p>The comparison between Australian governments and governments in their countries of birth make them trust the Australian government more, particularly since the introduction of privacy laws.</p>	<p>Yes, they trust the Australian government more, because here personal information is collected directly, whereas in their birth country, third party information is trusted more than that collected from individuals themselves.</p>
Awareness of Privacy laws	<p>Only as a result of this focus group discussion.</p>	<p>None of them have any knowledge of privacy laws.</p>
Where seek help in cases of abuse of info		<p>From their lawyers, legal aid or Citizens' Advice Bureau.</p>

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Issues raised	Cantonese	Mandarin
Likelihood of complaint to Ombudsman org	Yes, same as with any other complaint, it is only right to resolve the issue through a mediator and to do justice to any person who has not been treated fairly.	Yes, they would make use of a complaints body such as a Commission or Ombudsman, <i>'because they will fight for their rights... it is also a better way to solve problems before complaining to the police or the law courts.'</i>
Awareness of Privacy Victoria	Not until this focus group discussion, this is the first time they had heard of such a mechanism.	The only knowledge participants have of Privacy Victoria was gained from the focus group discussion. They believe it is a new government department to work for citizens' privacy.
Other complaints mechanisms	Yes, the Banking Ombudsman, the Legal Ombudsman, and the Telecommunications Ombudsman because of their publicity. Participants believe that these are independent of their industries and that is how it should be.	They have limited awareness of other complaints mechanisms. They regard the banking and telecoms ombudsman as separate from the government.
Attitude to slogans	<p>The group did not like the slogan. They thought it was too brief, vague and not striking enough.</p> <p>They suggested the poster should 'highlight certain privacy related issues to capture the attention of readers.' They understood little from it: 'the messages are too brief, especially for those who have never heard of the subject before.'</p> <p>The word 'real' carries different meaning and does not make sense in this context.</p>	<p>Participants did not find the slogan <i>'attractive'</i>, and it had little impact on them. The message they gained from it was: <i>'that privacy means it is the citizens' right, the law of Victoria and the law has come into effect in Victoria.'</i></p> <p>The meaning in English was not clear, and needed translation.</p> <p>The best way to express in Chinese would be: <i>'...a short, sharp, simple and self evaluation question'</i></p>
Best way to inform	Through TV, newspapers and radio, both in Chinese and English. Use information brochures, and pamphlets, websites, current affairs programs.	Written materials in Chinese, and radio sessions explaining the concept of privacy to the community in Chinese. Also television.
Who most trusted	The government should play the main role in providing information and should run more information sessions to professional groups.	They would trust the Privacy Victoria staff to convey the messages to the community, via an interpreter.

Greek community

Victoria's Greek community is very large, well established and with an aging first generation. Greek language and culture is maintained in the second generation, through Greek language schools and cultural groups. Among the first generation, there is a high proportion with relatively poor English language skills, many who have been in Australia for decades still do not speak English.

- There is some sensitivity about information sought by government departments. Issues relating to health, assets, religion and ethnicity are all regarded as personal and private.
- Participants are concerned that this type of information could be used against them.
- There is considerable trust in 'government' but they are not convinced that information can be protected effectively, because of modern technologies.
- They believe that race and religion should not be collected because it is potentially divisive and political. Even second generation Greeks wish to keep this confidential, so that they are not perceived as 'foreign'.
- This group was very keen that issues relating to collection, storage and use of personal data should be discussed openly and publicly; that there should be extensive public information on how data is stored, how it is used and for what purpose.
- Participants were also keen to be able to check information stored about them, to ensure that it is relevant and accurate.
- Guidelines should be established for the storage and disposal of data.
- Departmental sharing of information should be dependent on the permission of the subject, citizens should be asked each time their personal data is to be shared.
- However, criminal records should be shared with all departments and retained indefinitely.
- Experiences in Greece of the way governments treated their citizens' personal information, has generated more trust in Australian governments.

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- There was no awareness of privacy laws, nor of Privacy Victoria. There is awareness of the Ombudsman but no other complaints mechanisms.
- The Ombudsman is seen as fair and independent, and would be used if the issue was sufficiently important.
- The slogan works quite well amongst this community.
- There are many media outlets serving the community and messages coming from 'the Government' through the media would be trusted.

Findings from the Greek focus group discussions

Issues raised	Greek
Composition of the group	Ten late middle-aged Greek Australians participated, five men and five women aged between 50 and 60 years old.
What is regarded as private	All aspects of personal life: income, assets, political views, intimate relationships, lifestyle.
Personal privacy	Health, assets, religion and race.
Why keep this private	The information is regarded as 'personal' and participants were worried that the information could be used against them.
Attitudes to government vs non-government organisations	Participants were concerned about access to the information no matter who stores it, because of modern technology, but they trust governments more than non-government bodies to treat their information confidentially.
Information sought by government departments	Personal information: name, address, birthplace, birthday, language spoken at home, overseas assets etc.
Essential information for gov depts	Age, number of family members, level of education, place of residence
Essential information for councils	Family structure, name, address, occupation. The group felt if additional information is required, people should be told how it is to be used.
Race and religion	No, it is not needed and may lead to discrimination. <i>'We live in a multiethnic, multilingual and multicultural society where these issues are irrelevant to our contribution to the development of this country. We would like to be considered part of the total body of the community with equal obligations and equal rights. We are very conscious about the way our grown up children feel about their ethnic background. Although they are very proud of their origin, they feel that their ethnicity and religion are very private matters. We don't want to be seen as some "foreign body"'</i>
Language spoken at home or birth country	Participants consider it should be optional. <i>'What happens in our home is a private matter regarding the spoken language. At the same time we realize that it could be helpful to the government in planning the teaching of LOTE languages at schools. And in developing action plans for ethnospecific needs and services. As for the information about our birth country to be provided only if it is imperative for a specific reason. Otherwise, it is irrelevant.'</i>

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Issues raised	Greek
Filling in forms	Participants would not give incorrect information, but would leave blanks if they thought it intrusive. There is a feeling of respect and obedience when they fill in forms for a government department, but at the same time they feel uneasy answering what they consider 'personal questions'.
Census questions	They had no problems with the Census form, although they would like there to be an agreement with all governments, to make questions of race, religion and ethnicity to be optional.
Should govt depts share info?	For safety reasons, eg child abuse, family violence, abuse of the welfare system; and to target services more efficiently, to save the government money.
Should they ask?	Yes, every time it is to be shared, and they would like to know how the information is to be used, and to make sure it is relevant.
Sharing & storing criminal records	Participants were very strong on the sharing of criminal records, they considered it essential to be shared between departments, but not with other organisations; and that they should be kept for life regardless of the seriousness of the crime.
Level of trust in govt depts	Participants trust the government. <i>'...as long as I am officially assured that they are not going to disclose it to others and I am protected by the law if leakages occur.'</i>
Sensitivity of govt depts – how this impacts	They do not believe that departments understand cultural differences and what is perceived as private. <i>'The individual's culture has a lot to do with what is perceived as private. This is another reason why policies regarding personal information should be discussed publicly so people can have a say about what they regard "private".'</i> They would be more prepared to provide information if they believed the departments were sensitive to their beliefs.
Storage & maintenance of info	Information should be stored as long as it is useful. In some cases this could be indefinitely. Participants would like to be able to check information to ensure that it is relevant and accurate. <i>'I want to be in control of what happens to the information I have provided.'</i>
Experience in birth country	Information was collected both directly and indirectly in Greece. Mostly from other citizens and other government departments: <i>'...especially during the civil war in Greece and the years that followed. Citizens had no control over what was collected. A lot of Greeks left the country at that time. There is more trust now.'</i>
Influence on attitude to Aus govts	Yes, feel more trust in Australian governments. <i>'Having lived through difficult political situations in Greece, when we came to Australia, we felt a sense of freedom and relief.'</i>
Awareness of Privacy laws	None was aware of privacy laws, although all thought it imperative that there should be such legislation.

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Issues raised	Greek
Where seek help in cases of abuse of info	Would go to the department first to express the complaint, then to an Ombudsman if not satisfied, if there was one.
Likelihood of complaint to Ombudsman org	Going to an Ombudsman was seen as less complicated than seeking redress from any other source.
Awareness of Privacy Victoria	None. Participants were not sure of what the role would be.
Other complaints mechanisms	Participants were not aware of any, other than the unions. They did not know who appoints the Ombudsman – the government or industry.
Attitude to slogans	The slogan was seen as conveying an effective message, telling people that privacy exists, and that it is the right of every citizen to expect his or her privacy to be protected by the law. <i>'It makes you feel at first glance that there is protection of your privacy. I also like the way it flows. It has a ring of confidence and authority.'</i>
Best way to inform	Through the Greek media, radio and press.
Who most trusted	The government.

Italian community

Similar to the Greek community, Italians have been in Victoria for decades and the community is large and well established. Also like the Greek community, there are many first generation Italians whose English is poor.

- These participants were relaxed about providing information to government departments.
- They regard personal information such as medical history, sexual orientation, religion and income as private, but trust governments to protect their data and keep it confidential.
- They were concerned about non-government organisations not protecting their data, particularly because of modern technology.
- Religion and ethnicity is not an issue for these participants, who could see the rationale behind the collection of such information.
- Sharing information between departments is more problematical, for this group, although they can see benefits for it happening.
- They would like to be asked each time it is going to happen.
- Sharing criminal records is acceptable.
- As with other groups, although 'Government' is trusted to have appropriate policies, there is suspicion of officials.
- They would like to be able to check information stored about themselves.
- Participants would want to complain if they believed their data had been misused. They would seek local help initially.
- There was no knowledge of privacy laws, nor of Privacy Victoria. They were aware of other Ombudsmen, but were unsure how they are established and funded.
- Need simple, clear information in Italian provided verbally at public meetings, with bi-lingual speakers and interpreters.
- Or through the press, radio and other written materials in Italian.

Findings from Italian focus group discussions

Issues raised	Italian
Composition of the group	All participants were over 55, although all are still active. There were two men, aged 60 & 64, and four women aged 55 and over.
What is regarded as private	All things that happen in the home, personal details, earnings. <i>‘Yes there is privacy about what you earn, we usually don’t talk about that.’</i>
Personal privacy	Information about health, financial status, personal commitments.
Why keep this private	So that the information is not exposed to public knowledge: <i>‘because it is nobody else’s business.’</i>
Attitudes to government vs non-government organisations	There is greater trust in governments and councils, but not private organisations: <i>‘There is no privacy lately because of computer links, nothing stays private. Everything should be private, I keep everything to myself.’</i>
Information sought by government departments	All kinds of personal information from earnings to religion, health, mental health, police record.
Essential information for gov depts	Age, sex, occupation, family’s composition, place of residence, contact details.
Essential information for councils	Age of residents, birth rate, religious affiliation, address, telephone number, pets and swimming pool ownership.
Race and religion	Yes, to have a clear picture of the community / population and to be able to plan for its requirements.
Language spoken at home or birth country	<i>Yes, the information should be collected so the councils can provide adequate services, such as after hours schools to teach English to the more mature residents, who haven’t had the opportunity to learn the language previously, to plan for interpreters, bilingual community workers in creches etc.</i>
Filling in forms	Participants gave mixed responses – some would leave blank spaces, others would not. <i>‘Never leave blank spaces, because the forms would be rejected as incomplete.’</i> All said they would never give incorrect information. <i>‘After all, it could be traced...’</i>
Census questions	The Census form appear not to have caused much concern, although a few participants felt angry about questions on income, working history and ancestry.

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Issues raised	Italian
Should gov depts share info?	<p>The majority said <i>'No'</i>. The information could end up in the wrong hands. Others said it would be permissible if they were asked first. One said: <i>'It is most unlikely for the departments NOT to swap information.'</i></p> <p>Sharing would be acceptable to track down dole fraud, tax evasion and to offer more efficient services.</p>
Should they ask?	<p>Yes, each and every time, and any time the information is changed.</p>
Sharing & storing criminal records	<p>All agreed that this should be done.</p> <p>The majority believed criminal records should be kept forever, or at least 10 years.</p>
Level of trust in gov depts	<p>There is general trust in government, but commented: <i>'not all government officials can be trusted (even some former ministers continue to have access to government information.)'</i></p>
Sensitivity of gov depts – how this impacts	<p>Participants were unsure, but hoped that their feelings are understood.</p> <p><i>'I really hope so, but being very personal and private, it is difficult for one person to understand how each person feels.'</i></p> <p>They don't believe they would provide any greater amount of information, because they are already providing a lot.</p> <p><i>'There isn't much more information to be provided. In one way or another, all possible information required is obtained.'</i></p>
Storage & maintenance of info	<p>Information should not be kept for more than 10 years, some suggested it should be destroyed after 5 years, others after 7 years.</p> <p>All participants would like to be able to check the data stored about them.</p> <p><i>'after all, the information belongs to us.'</i></p>
Experience in birth country	<p>In Italy, there is an identity card, information is collected in a similar way to Australia, with forms, census and applications.</p>
Influence on attitude to Aus govs	<p>No, the level of trust is similar in both governments.</p>
Awareness of Privacy laws	<p>Participants felt ill informed about privacy laws.</p>
Where seek help in cases of info abuse	<p>There were several suggestions including solicitor, law institute, local MP.</p>
Likelihood of complaint to Ombudsman org	<p>All of those who were aware of Ombudsmen said they would go to one if appropriate: <i>'... because they are above parties and are independent, even if they are probably funded by the Government.'</i></p>

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Issues raised	Italian
Awareness of Privacy Victoria	The participants were not clear about it, most said they had not heard of the Victorian Privacy Commissioner, but guessed that it deals with and protects the privacy of citizens.
Other complaints mechanisms	Participants were aware of Ombudsmen in various fields, they believed that they are appointed by the government to protect people's rights. Some believed that they are funded by the various industries.
Best way to inform	Verbally, in Italian, at public meetings where there could be questions and answers with bilingual speakers or interpreters. Also through the press, TV, radio, and leaflets in Italian or through clubs and schools. <i>'Some of the material you get from organisations, on privacy and privacy policies is written using difficult words and very long paragraphs.'</i>
Who most trusted	The Premier's Department, TV, newspapers – mainly the 'government'.

Somali community

This is a new, emerging community, which is growing as a result of refugee intake. There is a high proportion of single mothers in the community, whose partners were killed during the conflicts in Somalia. These women have had to shed the traditionally subservient role of women in Somalian culture and establish themselves in their new country. As a result, Somali women are often better informed than the men. However, the community as a whole tends to have poor English language skills, and high levels of unemployment. The majority are Muslim.

- Participants are reluctant to provide information about themselves, particularly after 11 September 2001 with the attitudes towards Muslims amongst the media and wider community.
- They have no trust in governments to protect them from harm, either inside or outside Australia.
- They are particularly scathing of the Department of Immigration, and believe their data is shared between departments without their knowledge.
- They are suspicious of the reasons for the collection of information and resent the repeated and frequent collection of the same details.
- Very concerned about providing race, religion and language spoken at home, as it can lead to the identification of their colour, and be potentially used to discriminate against them.
- Resented the collection of 'racial' information in the Census.
- Can see why these details may be collected for planning purposes, but would still prefer not to be personally identified in this way.
- They are frightened of interference with their lives.
- Will often leave blanks on official forms, but will not provide incorrect information.
- Do not want information shared between departments in any circumstances. They are concerned about the loss of control over their information.
- Would very much want to be asked before information is shared, and they would like to be able to check their data for accuracy.
- Even criminal records should not be shared.

- Although the Somali government was not trusted at all, this does not make them trust the Australian government more. By comparison, Australian governments ask far more questions and are too demanding.
- Although community leaders may be aware of some complaints mechanisms, there is no knowledge at all of privacy laws or Privacy Victoria and the community members knew no way of making a complaint.
- Limited English meant that the slogan was not understood until translated.
- There is no print media serving this community, and only infrequent radio programs on community radio.
- People would trust Somali community centres, mosques and religious leaders to provide information.

Findings from Somali focus group discussions

Issues raised	Somali
Composition of the group	Equal numbers of women and men, between the ages of 29 and 50 years old. All involved in community activities.
What is regarded as private	Telephone conversations, family disputes, personal plans like changing work, moving house; what you do in your home, your relationships, your income and community disputes. <i>'Our elders can resolve some of the community disputes such as fights between the families if the government doesn't become involved.'</i>
Personal privacy	Date of birth, income, personal plans, marital status and tax file number.
Why keep this private	Because we don't want anyone to interfere with our lives.
Attitudes to government versus non-government organisations	Feel more confident about government departments and the council – they are more responsible than non – government organisations.
Information sought by government departments	D.O.B., address, phone no, date of arrival Australia, country of origin, ethnicity, citizenship, language spoken, religion, number of the children, marital status, employment status, education status, income, health.
Essential information for gov depts	Address, D.O.B, health, language spoken, citizenship status, number of children, marital status, employment status, level of education.
Essential information for councils	Address, number of children, pet, property and car ownership.
Race and religion	Not at all, concerned about discrimination on basis of religion, or colour. Especially after September 11, became more suspicious of the government's reasons for seeking this information.
Language spoken at home or birth country	Not happy about providing this information because it can indicate their religion and race. They recognise that it may be necessary in order to plan the needs of non English speaking community, but still not comfortable about it.
Filling in forms	Yes, usually when filling Centrelink forms. Often unsure of the meaning because of lack of English language, <i>'and scared to be caught out by my past misleading answers.'</i>
Census questions	Yes, the use of the term 'race'. <i>'Because we felt as a minority and that we can be looked down upon and segregated.'</i>

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Issues raised	Somali
Should gov depts share info?	<p>No, participants want to know who is getting the information and why they are getting it. They are concerned that it <i>'could get out of hand and become public to anyone'</i></p> <p><i>'There is no time that this information is OK to be shared in any circumstance'</i></p>
Should they ask?	<p>Yes, they should ask each time they are proposing to share the information.</p>
Sharing & storing criminal records	<p>Participants feel uncomfortable sharing this information between departments, <i>'can be discriminating and unhelpful to that person'</i>. It's better if each department asks the person directly.</p> <p>Records of minor crimes should be kept a few years, but major ones like murder, child sexual abuse should be kept forever.</p>
Level of trust in gov depts	<p>Don't trust governments.</p>
Sensitivity of gov depts – how this impacts	<p>No, government departments don't understand our privacy values, because they never ask.</p> <p>Would feel more comfortable about providing information if they did respect our values.</p>
Storage & maintenance of info	<p>Records should be destroyed after two years.</p> <p>Would like to be able to check for accuracy.</p>
Experience in birth country	<p>Collection only compulsory at Census time, or if you are applying for a passport or identification.</p>
Influence on attitude to Australian governments	<p>Participants don't trust Australian governments because of constant demand for information. Even though they did not trust the Somalian government at all, they were less demanding of information.</p>
Awareness of Privacy laws	<p>Not aware of any.</p>
Where seek help in cases of abuse of info	<p>Participants did not know where to go for help.</p>
Likelihood of complaint to Ombudsman org	<p>Not at all, because they have no knowledge of such organisations.</p>
Awareness of Privacy Victoria	<p>None, never heard of it.</p>

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Issues raised	Somali
Other complaints mechanisms	None, never heard of any.
Attitude to slogans	Participants like the slogan, and understand that they have the right to protect privacy and contact Privacy Victoria. However, they did not understand the English – only when it was translated. The message must be translated.
Best way to inform	Through community radio 3CR and Channel 31
Who most trusted	Somali community centres, mosques and religious leaders.

Turkish community

The Turkish community, while it has been in Victoria for decades and is relatively well established, is only a mid-sized community. There are also some relatively new arrivals, as well as older members of the community. A high proportion have poor English language proficiency, and there are high levels of unemployment in the community. Many in the community are Muslim, and this impacts on their attitude to information collection and storage, because of their experiences of discrimination.

- Participants jealously guard their personal and family information. They do not want anyone to know what is happening within their family, particularly if there are any problems within the family. Problems must be resolved within the family.
- Only information that is directly relevant to the provision of service should be collected by government departments.
- Ethnicity, religion, language and country of birth are all very sensitive. Language spoken can be recorded if it leads to improved provision of language services, interpreters etc.
- There is resentment of the number and type of questions asked by departments, particularly Centrelink. The Census also asked for information they would rather not give.
- They are reluctant to provide information that could identify their Turkish origins.
- Participants are suspicious of government motives for collecting data, and will leave blanks on forms rather than provide sensitive information.
- They would feel more confident if they understood what the information was to be used for, by whom and when. They also sought assurance that they would be asked if it was to be used for any other purpose.
- Experiences with the way the Turkish government treated personal information strongly influence the way these participants feel about handing information to government departments, and there is mistrust of personnel staffing government agencies, rather than 'Australian Governments'.

- Australian governments by comparison are regarded as more open and transparent.
- Information, other than criminal records, should not be shared. Data should be specific to the department collecting it, and therefore not relevant to other departments.
- Restrictions should be placed on the sharing of criminal records. They should not be shared with all departments.
- They would like to be able to check the personal data stored about them.
- There was limited knowledge of privacy laws, none of the women and few of the men had heard of any.
- Participants are equally uninformed about complaints mechanisms.
- Fear of reprisals and a lack of belief that it would achieve anything would prevent complaints being made.
- Those with poor English would not seek help.
- The slogan was not understood. It would need to be reworked in Turkish and there would need to be other supporting information.
- Information in Turkish should be provided in meeting places – Turkish coffee shops, video shops and milk bars, as well as where information is collected: Medicare offices, post offices, GPs surgeries, hospitals, Centrelink offices etc.
- Advertising in Turkish newspapers, and talks on Turkish radio programs for those with poor literacy.
- Doctors, bilingual / bicultural workers and Turkish media are trusted information gatekeepers.

Findings from Turkish focus group discussions

Issues raised	Turkish
Composition of the group	Two mini-groups of five people each were run, one of women and one of men. The age range of women was 35-58 years, and men 38-67 years.
What is regarded as private	Both men and women believe that anything that relates to themselves, and their families is private; financial affairs, rent and mortgage. Women raised relationships with husbands and children, particularly their sexual relationship with husband, one also suggested age, contact details and number of children.
Personal privacy	As above, and including race and age.
Why keep this private	Family affairs are very private and the information should be kept in the family. They would like to think about the circumstances and decide if it is necessary to disclose any information to anyone or any organisation.
Attitudes to government vs non-government organisations	Usually, councils don't ask as many questions, participants have little interaction with councils. All of them mentioned that if the police ask for info they are ready to give it with no hesitation.
Information sought by government departments	Women mentioned name, address, age, telephone number, health information asked by hospitals. They commented that the Census questions were very personal. Schools ask job, earnings, if you are renting or paying mortgage. Men commented that Centrelink asks too many questions eg who is living in the home, debts, mortgage, assets, race, language spoken at home etc. They also commented on the Census.
Essential information for gov depts	Any information should be relevant to the department, and departments should only collect that information.
Essential information for councils	Only address, name and contact number. Could also ask language spoken at home so that information can be provided in Turkish.
Race and religion	No, it is not necessary. Women mentioned that sometimes in hospitals it might be necessary to ask religion, for religious ceremonies, or appropriate food.
Language spoken at home or birth country	Language is necessary for the provision of in-language information and services or interpreters.
Filling in forms	None would put incorrect information on forms, but some women would leave blank spaces. The men commented ' <i>No, we don't want to get into trouble.</i> ' They also said that sometimes they need someone with better English skills to assist them.

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Issues raised	Turkish
Census questions	All felt uncomfortable about some of the questions: detail about their mother and father, residency history, transport use, financial information, race and ethnicity.
Should gov depts share info?	The only information that should be swapped are criminal records. All other data is specific to the department collecting it and should not be exchanged. The women also suggested the exchange of health information between hospitals.
Should they ask?	Response was mixed, some of both men and women felt sharing would be OK if they were asked once. Others wanted to be asked each time.
Sharing & storing criminal records	Not between all departments, not relevant to some. Records of serious crimes should be kept for life, minor crimes should be destroyed after 10 years.
Level of trust in gov depts	Participants trust 'the Government' but not the individuals working in the departments. <i>'they can make mistakes or there are some people that can misuse the info they have for their own personal gains. It has to have good security mechanisms to protect the info.'</i>
Sensitivity of gov depts – how this impacts	The women and most men believed that government departments are sensitive, but the remaining men commented that sometimes departments don't understand the cultural differences. All participants would be happier to provide sensitive information if they knew how it was to be stored and used.
Storage & maintenance of info	Men would like their data kept for only two or three years after it has been used, except for hospitals which should keep it for life. The women were not concerned about how long. Both men and women would like to be able to check their data, relating it to freedom of information, having access to ones own information.
Experience in birth country	In Turkey, the Census is compulsory, but other data collected by departments is used without the person knowing. Privacy does not exist between departments and all share information without asking. The men were reluctant to discuss this issue.
Influence on attitude to Aus govs	Yes, the Australian governments are seen as more open, more transparent than the Turkish government and for this reason, they are trusted far more.
Awareness of Privacy laws	None was aware of any laws.
Where seek help in cases of abuse of info	Two of the women mentioned the Ombudsman, one knew only of the Telecoms Ombudsman. One of the men mentioned the Privacy Commissioner, but thought him part of the government.

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Issues raised	Turkish
Likelihood of complaint to Ombudsman org	Although one woman had been to the Telecoms Ombudsman, the rest would be unlikely to complain. Fear of reprisal, and lack of belief that anything could be achieved, and those with poor English would never seek help in order to complain. <i>'It is not possible.'</i>
Awareness of Privacy Victoria	Only two participants, one woman and one man had heard of the Privacy Commissioner, but both thought he belongs to a government department and were unsure of his role, other than to protect people's privacy.
Other complaints mechanisms	Only one person knew of the Telecoms Ombudsman. No others.
Attitude to slogans	Only three participants, two women and one man fully understood the slogan. Half the participants could not understand it at all. All agreed that it would need to be in Turkish to be able to reach the Turkish community, and it would have to have some explanation attached to the slogan.
Best way to inform	Display the information at GP's surgeries, post offices, Medicare offices, hospitals, Turkish coffee shops, video shops and milk bars. Advertising in Turkish newspapers and magazines, talks on Turkish radio programs – SBS, 3CR, 3ZZZ. Two women would like a letterbox drop with information in Turkish.
Who most trusted	Doctors, bilingual/bicultural workers, Turkish media.

Vietnamese community

The Vietnamese community in Victoria is large, relatively newly established and with many who came as refugees. English language skills tend to be poor, and there are high levels of unemployment, although as a community, there is a dedication to becoming established in their new country.

- Fear of corruption, identity theft, and criminal activity dominates this group's concern for the collection of personal data. New technologies are bringing greater concerns.
- Life in Vietnam post 1975, the level of state control and the fear of government people developed, influences the way older Vietnamese and recent arrivals view government here.
- In contrast to experiences in Vietnam of corrupt officials and the misuse of personal data, the behaviour of Australian governments compares very favourably.
- They have no trust in non-government organisations, but generally trust government to keep their information confidential.
- Participants would not leave any blank spaces on forms in case others entered false information on their forms. Vietnamese tend to respect authority figures, and would be unlikely to refuse to cooperate.
- If they can see a benefit to the community, participants are willing to allow sharing of data, but not for private companies or advertising materials.
- Would want written request for permission before sharing occurred, and to be able to check the information stored about them.
- Criminal records should be shared to protect the community.
- There is no awareness of privacy laws, Privacy Victoria or other complaints mechanisms.
- Are unlikely to go to an Ombudsman or Commission, which are seen as large and overwhelming. They are much more likely to go to a local organisation for help and support.
- The slogan has no meaning unless translated, and will need extra, supporting information. 'It's real' has no meaning.

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- There are several different forms of ‘privacy’ eg personal, family, ‘hidden information’ care must be taken in translation to use the most appropriate term, especially for older people.
- Vietnamese media – radio and newspapers are very popular and effective source of information.

Findings from the Vietnamese focus group discussions

Issues raised	Vietnamese
Composition of the group	Equal numbers of men and women, Women aged between 48 and 60, men aged between 24 and 59. In Australia between two and 13 years.
What is regarded as private	The women did not want to disclose the amount of money they have, nor personal health issues, particularly any cosmetic surgery they have had.
Personal privacy	Personal identity – name, address, date of birth, particularly their photograph.
Why keep this private	They are concerned that if someone has this information, they will do something illegal.
Attitudes to government versus non-government organisations	Have no trust of non-government organisations. Are particularly concerned with credit card fraud and misuse of their identity.
Information sought by government departments	Name, address, contact details, form of identification (many do not have drivers' licence, so use health care cards).
Race and religion	The men regard information about race and religion as very sensitive, particularly religion, and they do not want to disclose it. The women felt it important that the government know about these things, for planning purposes.
Language spoken at home or birth country	Participants were split, all felt that country of birth should be collected, but most felt that language spoken at home is not necessary.
Filling in forms	Participants would not leave blanks on forms. If they don't know, they will put 'don't know', because they are worried that someone else will complete the form incorrectly.
Census questions	Most participants were comfortable with the questions, although they needed help to complete it from someone with better English. The young man, did not like the word 'ethnicity' or 'NESB'. He associates these terms with '2 nd class citizens'.
Should gov depts share info?	The majority would require written consents from government departments to share information. They would agree to sharing if they thought the information would benefit the country, but not for private companies, or advertising.
Should they ask?	All felt that they should be asked at least once. Some were prepared to sign an authorisation just once, others would want to know which other departments and the reason for sharing – what it was to be used for.

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Issues raised	Vietnamese
Level of trust in gov depts	Most trust the government to do the right things by keeping their information private and confidential.
Sensitivity of gov depts – how this impacts	Most felt that officials would treat their information as confidential and keep it in a safe place. One was less trusting, and always asks how the information is to be used.
Storage & maintenance of info	Some felt data should be kept for 10 years, others for a maximum of five to seven years like the ATO. All would like to be able to check the records, although two stated they would like the collector to read and explain it to them.
Experience in birth country	Cannot compare Australia and Vietnam – Australia is free and there is a reason behind government activities. In VN, the government can do what it likes: <i>‘the policeman knocks on your door to check your household members at night without any reason, because they are only interested in money and corruption.’</i>
Influence on attitude to Australian governments	Because of the bad experiences in their home country, they all trust the Australian governments completely, and are grateful for the asylum they have found here.
Awareness of Privacy laws	None aware of privacy laws.
Where seek help in cases of abuse of info	Most did not know where they would go for help. Three suggested local MP, community workers, legal aid centres.
Likelihood of complaint to Ombudsman org	Unlikely to use an organisation like Ombudsman: language is a barrier, but also the name ‘Ombudsman’ or ‘Commission’ is <i>‘... so scary ... it seems like a big government body.’</i> They are more likely to go to their local organisation, such as a Migrant Resource Centre, for help.
Awareness of Privacy Victoria	None had heard of Privacy Victoria, and had no idea what it does.
Other complaints mechanisms	Knew none.
Attitude to slogans	Participants liked the slogan as far as it goes, but all wanted some addition such as: <i>‘Treat my information like yours.’</i> Or <i>‘Everyone deserves their privacy.’</i> Two felt ‘It’s Real’ has no meaning for them, and does not translate effectively into Vietnamese. The meaning is not very clear in English, particularly the phrase ‘It’s real’. Participants felt it needs a picture to attract attention.

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Issues raised	Vietnamese
Best way to inform	SBS radio, TV and Vietnamese newspapers such as Viet Luan, TiVi Victoria, Vietnam Thoi Nay, Tivi Tuan San.
Who most trusted	Vietnamese media are their only sources of information, don't read English newspapers.

Indigenous community

Indigenous people in Victoria comprise a midsize community. Unlike the migrant communities it is disperse and scattered throughout the state. There are high levels of unemployment and therefore frequent exposure to government departments and agencies.

- This group's primary concern was of others knowing their personal information and looking down on them.
- There is considerable mistrust of individuals working in government agencies. This is particularly acute in small towns where everyone knows everyone else in the community.
- Both government and non-government agencies are regarded with mistrust, particularly employment agencies which collect large amounts of information.
- Race information can be problematical, although most are proud to identify as Koori, some see it as a source of discrimination.
- Participants are casual about the completion of forms, and resent having to provide the same data repeatedly. Some will put in false information.
- If it is effective in preventing fraud and protecting children, participants are relaxed about the sharing of data between departments, but they need to retain the control of their data by being asked each time it is proposed.
- Also want control of the accuracy of the data, by always having access to it.
- Unless for the protection of children or in cases of sexual abuse, participants were more reluctant for criminal records to be shared.
- They believe that government departments and agencies are not sensitive to their culture.
- Participants would complain although none had any specific knowledge of privacy laws or Privacy Victoria.
- Not likely to use the services of an Ombudsman as it is too formal an institution.
- Welcome the concept of Privacy Victoria as an organisation to help people navigate redress for their grievances.
- Important for Privacy Victoria to develop relationships with communities, to provide a 'face', someone they feel comfortable about approaching.
- Information must be in plain and simple English.

Findings from the Indigenous focus group discussions

Issues raised	Indigenous
Composition of the group	Participants consisted of three women and five men. The women were aged between 25 and 40, the men aged between 18 and 50. Four were on CDEP, three were in administrative and managerial positions.
What is regarded as private	Personal circumstances, wealth, poverty, medical privacy; privacy between doctors and patients, service provider and clients and work related.
Personal privacy	Information about the family, medical conditions, income, personal past, financial transactions. <i>'It's hard –the community gossips – it's hard to keep a lid on it.'</i>
Why keep this private	Concern about discrimination is the main reason, and a reluctance for others to know all their personal details. This is particularly problematical for those living in smaller communities, country towns etc, where there is less anonymity. <i>'Some people look down on you if they know certain things. I'll let people know if I want them to know – it's no one's business most of the time.'</i>
Attitudes to government versus non-government organisations	There is no trust in either government or non-government organisations. <i>'There is no difference, they still have your information. Employment agencies are the worst, they ask so many questions.'</i> <i>'Anybody can use your information against you.'</i>
Information sought by government departments	Income, date of birth, address, number of children, names of family members, drug or alcohol usage, criminal records, rental receipts, Aboriginality.
Essential information for gov depts	Although they felt that nothing should be kept for any length of time, participants felt that certain information would be necessary for particular departments, health status, education and employment status.
Essential information for councils	Participants have no dealings that they know of with local government, but questioned the need for councils to know how many people live in the house.
Race and religion	Opinion was divided. Some believe that it promotes segregation, others felt it is irrelevant, others are proud to be identified as Koori, and are pleased to know how many Kooris there are in the area. There were no comments about religion.
Filling in forms	Omitting information is common, particularly if the requested information is not regarded as relevant. Are generally sick of filling in forms. Incorrect information has also been given: <i>'I have lied before to the Housing Commission and for Health Care Cards. I did it because it was in the best</i>

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Issues raised	Indigenous
	<p><i>interests of my family.'</i></p> <p>There is also resentment of the Census: <i>'Don't do the ABS Census form, it asks too many questions, it's thicker than a Tax Pack!'</i></p>
Census questions	<p>There were no objections to the terminology, just to the extent of the questions, and concerns that the collector would look at the form. Others completed it properly, because it is compulsory, but thought many people would not be accurate.</p>
Should gov depts share info?	<p>Participants were generally relaxed about information sharing, particularly if it would benefit them or help protect children, although they did require that their permission should be sought each time.</p> <p><i>'I have no problem in dobbing people in that are ripping off the system.'</i></p>
Should they ask?	<p>All agreed that permission must be granted every time.</p>
Sharing & storing criminal records	<p>Participants would prefer not, but anything that involved children's safety or sexual abuse should be shared. Records of sexual crimes, or abuse of children should be kept forever – a unanimous opinion.</p> <p>Petty crimes should only be kept a short time.</p> <p><i>'I suppose it depends on what the person has done to better themselves, they could be a totally different person now.'</i></p>
Level of trust in gov depts	<p>The problem for these participants is that they know the staff in the government departments in the small town where they live, and they don't trust them not to abuse their information. There is also a lack of understanding of 'Government'.</p>
Sensitivity of gov depts – how this impacts	<p>Generally not:</p> <p><i>'Medical clinics are worst – they talk really loudly and show little tact.'</i></p> <p><i>'Some people in the departments are real pigs – they reckon that it's their money (Newstart Allowance).'</i></p> <p>One noted: <i>'They implement policy, they try their best.'</i></p>
Storage & maintenance of info	<p>No actual time was given by the participants, but they agreed that a timeframe needs to be set up.</p> <p>Would like always to have access and it should be promoted that it is available, although the information would need to be in a simple form for checking.</p>
Awareness of Privacy laws	<p>Participants assumed that there are laws but did not know specifically of any. They assume that departments have policies in place. One had noticed an increase of privacy information recently.</p>
Where seek help in cases of abuse of info	<p>Participants would go to the department head to complain.</p>

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Issues raised	Indigenous
Awareness of Privacy Victoria	None had heard of it other than what had been provided prior to the discussion, but it was generally welcomed as an organisation that would help people navigate redress for their grievances.
Other complaints mechanisms	They knew of no others, but assumed that they would be part of the Government.
Attitude to slogans	The slogan was seen as clear and to the point, but not earth shattering.
Best way to inform	All participants said that they would like to receive user friendly (plain English) pamphlets. They would also like to be visited by a contact from the Commissioner, with whom could develop a relationship and who they could go to for information, and help if need arose.