

How privacy protections will be eroded by Census 2006

This table is an extract from *Evaluation of the privacy risks posed by the Census Enhancement proposal*, Australian Privacy Foundation, 11 July 2005.

| Method of protecting privacy | Will it still exist in 2006? |
|---|---|
| Destroy all Census forms (originals and copies) after processing | ✗ No. Imaged copies of some completed Census forms will be kept by the Government indefinitely |
| Do not keep names or addresses once all Census forms have been collected | ✗ No. Names and addresses will be kept by the ABS |
| Do not keep names or addresses linked to other Census information on a database | ✗ No. Names will be kept in the same database as (and linked to) other Census information |
| Do not link Census information over time | ✗ No. Census information will be linked over time, from one Census to the next |
| Do not link Census information with any other source of information | ✗ No. Census information will be linked with information from other sources |
| Do not use names and addresses to link Census information with other information | ✗ No. Census information will be linked with information from other sources, using names and addresses as the key to linking |
| Do not use Census information for purposes not intended or notified at the time of collection | ✗ No. Information from the 2001 Census will be used 'retrospectively' in ways not intended or notified in 2001 |
| Do not use other information for purposes not intended or notified at the time of collection | ✗ No. Information from other sources will be used 'retrospectively' in ways not intended or notified when the data was collected |
| Keep data aggregated in large cell sizes | ✗ No. The geographic unit used for measuring data is to be made smaller, with the adoption of the 'mesh block', which may contain as few as 30 households |
| Have legislation prohibiting the disclosure of identifiable information by the ABS | Yes – but it is not enough. The law can be changed. |
| Have high security protocols around access to databases | Yes – but it is not enough. Technology can be hacked into. |
| Rely on the integrity of ABS staff | Yes – but it is not enough. Staff are subject to human frailties, and organisational culture can change. |