



**Australian  
Privacy  
Foundation**

---

mail@privacy.org.au

<http://www.privacy.org.au>

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**25 November 2016**

### **#CensusInquiryFail**

First there was #CensusFail after the ABS completely ignored the privacy concerns of the Australian public.

The Australian Privacy Foundation called on the ABS to address serious privacy concerns and fix a Privacy Impact Assessment that failed to comply with the Privacy Commissioner Guideline.

That was followed by a census night debacle.

Now there is #CensusInquiryFail when the Parliamentary Committee has failed to resolve any of the serious privacy issues identified.

"We were hoping that the Inquiry could address the serious privacy issues and the distrust of the ABS that many Australians now feel. The Inquiry failed to address any of the serious issues. Australians still don't know whether name is voluntary or not. Australians still don't know what will happen to their personal information and in particular, whether a linkage key that could be re-identified will be shared with other government departments. Australians still don't know whether they will be fined simply because they did not want to give their name", states Kat Lane, Chair of the Australian Privacy Foundation.

Also of great concern was the decision by the Inquiry to not invite the Federal Privacy Commissioner, Timothy Pilgrim, to appear before the Inquiry. It is unclear why the committee would not be interested in asking questions about serious privacy issues.

"The Inquiry has recommended that ABS must do an external Privacy Impact Assessment for the next Census. Yet the last Census did not have an adequate Privacy Impact Assessment and this has still not been addressed. In fact, the privacy of all Australians has been compromised because no effective assessment was made before the Census." Says Kat Lane.

The Australian Privacy Foundation is asking the Government to act immediately to assure all Australians that there will be no fines, enact law reform to clarify that name is voluntary and that the ABS do a meaningful external Privacy Impact Assessment that the ABS complies with to restore trust.

We also call on the ABS to commit to not using any personal information for linkage keys given the failure of the 2015 Privacy Impact Assessment.

**Contact** Kat Lane, Chair, Australian Privacy Foundation  
0447 620 694 Kat.Lane@privacy.org.au