



**Australian  
Privacy  
Foundation**

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Media enquiries:  
Anna Johnston  
Chair, Australian Privacy Foundation  
Tel: 0400 432 241

Background information at:  
[www.privacy.org.au](http://www.privacy.org.au)

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **So-called 'Access Card' worse than Australia Card**

13 June 2006

"Joe Hockey's so-called 'Access Card' proposal is a national ID card, plain and simple", warned Australian Privacy Foundation Chair, Anna Johnston, today.

"Just by comparing it to the much-despised 'Australia Card', every Australian can see for themselves that this proposal matches it – and then adds some even more intrusive features," she said.

The Australian Privacy Foundation, the leading non-governmental organisation dedicated to protecting the privacy rights of Australians, today released a 'tick-box' comparison of the two schemes, titled "*Spot the difference: national ID card proposals*".

"Joe Hockey's proposal has all the essential elements of a national ID card system," said Ms Johnston.

"First, he is proposing a unique, national ID number for every man, woman and child covered by the scheme; a new photo ID card to be issued to every adult; and a national population database to hold extensive information about everyone", she said.

"And second, the proposed system is compulsory for everyone who wants to access bulk-billing health services, claim their Medicare rebates, or receive any benefits - from social security benefits like the baby bonus or the old-age pension, to concession fares on public transport" said Ms Johnston.

"Except for the mega-wealthy who can afford never to use Medicare, that is effectively a compulsory system of ID cards. I haven't yet met a single person who seriously believes the Government's claim that this is a 'voluntary' scheme", she said.

"And this latest proposal has even more intrusive features that the 'Australia Card' did – now we're looking at the use of biometrics and computer chips in the card, as well as expanded uses by government, and even access to your personal information by the private sector", she said.

"For the past 20 years, Australians have consistently rejected government proposals for a national ID card", said Ms Johnston. "It's time the Government admitted that this so-called 'Access Card' is just another national ID card proposal, disguised in fuzzy language".

"The Minister continues to refuse to release the Privacy Impact Assessment he commissioned to review this proposal", she said.

"Our only conclusion is that he doesn't want Australians to see this proposal for what it is: a national ID card that would enable governments and businesses to link, match, track and profile the daily movements and private lives of ordinary, law-abiding people".

A copy of ***Spot the difference: national ID card proposals*** is available at  
[http://www.privacy.org.au/Media/MR060613\\_APF\\_IDcard\\_diff.pdf](http://www.privacy.org.au/Media/MR060613_APF_IDcard_diff.pdf)

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