

Election 2013

Coalition Campaign Headquarters



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19 August 2013

Professor Roger Clarke
Chair
Australian Privacy Foundation
78 Sidaway Street
CHAPMAN ACT 2611

Dear Professor Clarke,

Thank you for providing the opportunity to outline the views of the Coalition on the important issues facing your organisation.

On behalf of the Coalition Members of Parliament and candidates, I am pleased to respond to your recent questionnaire.

The Coalition believes that a proper and lawful maintenance of privacy is a core principle of Australian society. We are committed to the privacy rights of individuals and businesses through measures that increase accountability, openness and transparency of personal data retention.

In recent years, there has been regular discussion surrounding the introduction of a privacy right of action in Australia. The Australian Law Reform Commission is due to produce another report assessing the viability of a privacy tort in the coming months. The Coalition supports workable safeguards surrounding privacy breaches and believes that any legislative action must be thoroughly assessed to ensure that unintended consequences do not arise.

Protecting the national security of all Australians is of utmost priority to a Coalition Government. We support the role of the Independent Reviewer of Adverse Security Assessments to examine relevant information relied upon by ASIO to making security determinations and assess the appropriateness of the outcomes. The Coalition also supports an independent review of the performance of the Privacy Commissioner's functions to keep up with necessary technological and community advances.

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The Coalition supports the findings of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Intelligence and Security that found that a data retention scheme should not be pursued at present. Any further examination of the proposals, subject of the inquiry, will involve comprehensive consultation with all relevant stakeholders. The Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act recently came into effect with support of the Coalition. We believe that further legislation is required to strengthen the regime and we will support industry codes to run in tandem with the legislation.

Our Plan is committed to ensuring that all amendments to privacy regulations are subject to the rule of law to protect Australians from arbitrary abuses of power from relevant bodies.

Between now and the election, the Coalition will be progressively providing further details of Our Plan to build a strong prosperous economy and a safe and secure Australia.

Once announced, the details of our policies will be available at www.liberal.org.au and www.nationals.org.au.

Thank you for the opportunity to communicate the Coalition's plans and commitments to your organisation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Loughnane', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Brian Loughnane
Federal Campaign Director