



**Australian
Privacy**
Foundation

GPO Box 1196 Sydney NSW 2001
ph (02) 9231 4949 | fax (02) 9262 3553
mail@privacy.org.au | www.privacy.org.au

EMBARGOED UNTIL 7 PM MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2003

ATTORNEY GENERAL WINS PRIVACY LIFETIME MENACE AWARD

The inaugural Australian Big Brother Award for **Lifetime Menace to Privacy** has gone to Attorney-General Daryl Williams, for his long record of profound disregard for privacy. The award was announced by former NSW Privacy Commissioner Chris Puplick, in a ceremony held at the Grace Hotel in Sydney on Monday evening, and it kicks off a week of events with the global privacy commissioners' conference being held this week in Sydney.

The Big Brother awards are for individuals, corporations, public officials and governments that have shown a blatant disregard for privacy. They have no relationship to the TEN Network TV program.

Nominations were received from members of the public and considered by a panel of seven eminent judges, including academics, journalists, lawyers, civil rights campaigners and privacy experts. The vote for Mr Williams was clear cut with a 6-1 result prevailing. In passing down the judgment, one judge remarked that, "the ASIO legislation marks Williams as a man who can not be trusted with the moral weight that the position of Attorney-General commands."

Mr Williams has repeatedly introduced encroachments into the privacy of all Australians. Since 1996, he has sponsored successive amendments to the ASIO legislation, extending the powers of the domestic intelligence agency to intrude on the privacy of Australians, and weakening the agency's accountability and oversight. He has overseen a weakening of privacy protections in telecommunications interceptions law, the establishment of the controversial CrimTrac agency and DNA database, and the expansion of the powers of AUSTRAC. Mr Williams also oversaw the \$15 million fridge magnet terrorism awareness campaign, which won Privacy International's global prize for Most Egregiously Stupid Security measure in the Stupid Security awards earlier this year.

Other winners of Big Brother Awards were:

- The **Greatest Corporate Invader** award went to the Internet Industry Association (IIA) for its draft Cybercrime Code of Practice. The Code was developed between the IIA members and law enforcement agencies. If implemented, it requires Internet Service Providers to store records of customers' e-mail and internet usage for well beyond the legally required period, effectively making ISPs snoop for law enforcement agencies. The IIA beat off competition from the Australian Direct Marketing Association, which recently warned of massive job losses

- The **Most Intrusive Technology Award** went to TICA Default Tenancy Control for brazen breaches of the privacy of tenants through the TICA Tenancy Database. Scores of complaints over inaccuracies in the TICA tenancy database have been received by tenancy groups around Australia, and a class-action complaint was filed with the Federal Privacy Commissioner earlier this year. To rub salt into the wound, the only way that tenants have been able to raise concerns and seek changes to their entries is by calling a 190- number and paying \$5.45 per minute, or \$327 per hour.
- The Minister for Justice and Customs, Senator Chris Ellison, won **Worst Public Official** - for a government agency or official that has shown a blatant disregard of privacy for his proposal to contravene the privacy principles with his proposal for a central electronic identification database of government information on all Australians. The proposal is directly in conflict with the privacy principle in the government's own Privacy Act.

Further details of the nominations, the judges panel and the awards can be found in the on the APF website at www.privacy.org.au/bba.

The Big Brother Awards

The Big Brother Awards were launched by Privacy International in the mid-1990s. Almost one hundred awards have been issued in 23 ceremonies held by affiliated organizations since then, with Australia now joining as the thirteenth country to hold its own Big Brother Awards. The Awards aim to focus attention on the activities and government and private sector organisations that have done the most to threaten personal privacy in their countries. The award ceremony is in the nature of a spoof "Oscars" (the Big Brothers have become affectionately known as the "Orwells").

For further information please contact the Australian Privacy Foundation on (02) 9231 4949.