



INFORMATION MATCHING BULLETIN

December 2006

Information Matching Newsletter from the Privacy Commissioner

2005/06 Annual Report

The report of the Privacy Commissioner for the year ended June 2006 was tabled in Parliament on 23 November¹.

We reported on 40 active matches, up from 36 last year. Four new information matching authorisations were passed by government bringing the total estimated number of authorised matches to 75.

This year we noted an unexpected drop in the number of records disclosed between agencies. Some agencies reduced the number of records being processed in order to more effectively manage work flows. Other agencies were constrained by financial or human resource issues. Some programmes which initially involved matching large volumes of historic records are now processing current (and subsequently fewer) records.

On-line transfers

There was a 45% increase in the number of information matching programmes using on-line information transfer. The Commissioner granted 17 requests for approval, more than double the number granted in 2004/05. As at 30 June 2006, 16 out of the 40 active information matching programmes were authorised to use on-line transfers.

Audit approach

This year we initiated a pilot audit approach to reporting on selected matching programmes. IRD and DIA used this approach to collectively report on eight matching programmes. Each audit comprised two distinct parts. The first part, called the

adequacy audit, focused on departmental policies, documentation and guidelines. The second part, titled the process audit, focused on the departmental staff involved in operating the programme.

The audit approach will be reviewed in the coming months with the expectation that enhanced audit documentation and tools will be provided for reporting in the 2006/07 fiscal year.

Outreach

Two well-attended meetings of the Information Matching Interest Group were held during the reporting period. The group discussed topics such as developing new programmes, the audit approach to reporting, the seeking of on-line approvals, and the development of a closed shared workspace for agencies involved in data matching.

Second Information Matching Workshop held

Fifteen participants attended the second Information Matching Workshop, held on November 29. The workshop, titled "The Privacy Act and developing an information matching programme" aimed to give some practical background knowledge about the Privacy Act along with more detailed information about preparing an IMPIA².

¹ The full report is available on our website. Hard copies are also available from this Office and are being sent out to departments.

² Information matching privacy impact assessment.

As was the case in the first workshop, presenters Lindy Siegert and Colin Trotter were pleased with the contribution of participants during the brainstorming and case study sessions.

A number of people are registered for the next workshop which we plan to run early in 2007. You can register your interest by contacting Angela Stuart at angela.stuart@privacy.org.nz or by phoning (04) 474 7590.

Second Data Matching Compliance Adviser appointed

Neil Sanson recently joined Colin Trotter as the second Data Matching Compliance Adviser. Neil has a background in IT audit in government and the private sector. He has been familiarising himself with the details of existing information matching programmes and has met a number of agency contacts through site visits and work meetings.

Data match reports updated

An updated selection of formal reports issued by this Office can be found at <http://www.privacy.org.nz/data-matching/information-matching-reports>

Publications

There are a number of other publications and reports available from the Privacy Commissioner that may be of interest to those involved in information matching. These are listed on the Privacy Commissioner's web site at: <http://www.privacy.org.nz>



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