

ACCESS CARD NO WAY

accesscardnoway.net

Professor Allan Fels, AO
Chair, Consumer and Privacy Taskforce
Department of Human Services

26th July 2006

Dear Professor Fels,

Submission #2 – Government Intrusion & Function Creep

The Taskforce's Discussion Paper #1 calls for the Access Card to be designed with capacity for unknown future uses (p21). As has been commented on in the IT press, the most worrying feature from both a management and cost viewpoint is the necessity of keeping such an enormous project under control. It would surely make more sense to carefully note what will be required in the present timeframe – suggested to be a seven year renewal cycle (p14), and then build to that specification.

The experience of the United Kingdom in planning their ID Card has not been reassuring. It shares many technical aspects with the proposed Access Card, including data storage capacity far beyond that necessary for the task of identification and monitoring of entitlements. In the last six months the UK Government has placed three new schemes to use the ID Card, all of which were denied as potential uses when the parliamentary debates occurred.

On pages 21 & 23 you imply that it is interest groups and non-government groups that will call for Access Card 'enhancements'. It will most likely be Federal Government Departments and Authorities, who have previously had their desire to control for the greater good hampered by the cost of monitoring the populace.

In touching upon the non-compulsory nature of the card the Discussion Paper #1 (p12 & p18) casually mentions that most Australians 'take-up Medicare'. I refer you to the Health Insurance Commission Report 2004-05, < <http://tinyurl.com/qnaqx> > in which Medicare covers 100.67% of the population. Allowing for some who are expatriots and travelling overseas this sounds suspiciously like a complete coverage of the resident population. This makes Function Creep and Intrusion all the more pertinent as this is not in practice a voluntary system.

I look forward to hearing your views on this and the other submission. I remain,

Yours Sincerely,

Tim Warner
Convenor
Access Card No Way Campaign