



The Hon Michael McCormack MP
Minister for Small Business

Mr David K Jamison AM
National President
Defence Force Welfare Association

By Email: jamison@bigpond.com

David
Dear Mr Jamison

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 August 2016 to the Minister for Defence Personnel, the Hon Dan Tehan MP, regarding privacy and the 2016 Census of Population and Housing. It has been forwarded to me as I have portfolio responsibility for the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

In response to your questions regarding the ABS's legislation, the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* and the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* empower the ABS to undertake the collection, compilation, analysis, and dissemination of statistics and related information. The ABS is required to collect name and a number of addresses (e.g. usual residence, address on Census night, workplace address) in the Census, as specified in the *Census and Statistics (Census) Regulation 2015*. The ABS has collected name and addresses in every Census, back to 1911.

Names and addresses will be stored separately both from each other and from the Census response data on different servers. These servers are subject to role-based access control where the same individual will not have access to that information at the same time.

Under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, all information provided in the Census remains strictly confidential to the ABS and can never be released in an identifiable form, whether to a court, tribunal, or other agency.

The ABS has advised that:

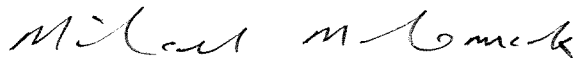
- Senior ABS Officials met with Senior Defence Officials in April 2016, including the Associate Director of Department of Defence, to discuss Census plans and procedures, and ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for current members of the defence forces;
- The Australian Statistician wrote to the Secretary of the Department of Veteran Affairs in advance of an Ex Service Organisation Roundtable that was held on Wednesday 10th August in order to provide information to members about the privacy and security of Census information; and

- The General Manager of the Census program has also spoken directly with the Executive Director of your organisation, Mr Alf Jaugietis about these issues.

I have also been informed that the ABS has discussed the protection of an individual's anonymity where they either hold positions that require anonymity and/or find themselves in circumstances where this is critical to personal safety with a number of agencies. I am informed that the agencies responsible are satisfied with the ABS's approach.

I trust this information is of assistance to you and I would like to pass on my thanks for your support of the 2016 Census.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael McCormack". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

MICHAEL McCORMACK

9 SEP 2016