

Dear Commission

I would like to submit the following for consideration by you in your current inquiry into data availability and use. I apologise for lateness, but a recent article, outlining some of the ATO submission made me angry and I must write to you.

ATO presses for govt-wide data storage
Targets administrative lags for information sharing.

Ry Crozier

itNews

Sep 8 2016

<http://www.itnews.com.au/news/ato-presses-for-govt-wide-data-storage-436666>

From the article:

"The Australian Taxation Office is agitating for a shared data storage platform among federal agencies that could shave "several months" off lead times for data sharing."

From me:

This is the exact thing advocacy groups of many different persuasions have been fighting against for decades! Silos and separation are there for a reason. It's to try and maintain a semblance of personal autonomy and integrity. We DO NOT WANT the government departments to 'data share'.

We were promised over and over again in many consultations by government agencies that data would remain separate. Remember the Centrelink conglomeration period? "Oh no, we won't mix the data." Looks like we were fed even more misleading promises. Is it any wonder those of us who paid attention, participated, took an interest, and sought assurances are so angry now?

This push to integrate everything about all of us is mind-bogglingly wrong. We are NOT here to meet the bidding of the ATO or any other government agency in the 'name' of productivity and the 'economy'. We are people, not information or commodities. Public agencies are there to serve us, not the other way around.

Thank you for taking my short and heartfelt submission into consideration.

Jan Whitaker