



**Records and Information Management
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To Whom it may concern:

RIMPA thanks the Productivity Commission for the opportunity to make comment on the Draft Report Data Availability and Use.

Overall, RIMPA sees the increase availability and use of data to boost innovation and competition in Australia as a positive move. We agree that access to reliable functional data can improve productivity, consumer confidence and opportunity, greater transparency and decision making.

We anticipate concerns from the public regarding the security of their information will need to be managed through a strong communication campaign which will build confidence generally. Issues of data breaches of identifiable personal information have the potential to be blurred by the public with releasing de-identified data sets which may result in a lack of consumer understanding and support. In this regard, there needs to be clear programs to maintain the accuracy of data and compiled data sets, clear content descriptions (and content gaps) and other identifiable metadata such as dates and provenance identifiers.

In including private sector data concerns may be raised around ownership of data and potential loss of income for these entities. Information as an asset is something a lot of entities profit from and the possibility of taking this income creating asset away from them will increase the instances of de-identifying information. In de-identifying information this would decrease the value of the information and again decrease profit.

We agree individuals should have a comprehensive right to access digitally held data about themselves however this may be seen as taking away the ownership of this information from the private entity and giving it to the individual - just because it is about an individual this shouldn't negate the ownership of the private entity. Individuals having access and final say in the distribution of this information could be a costly exercise for an entity and contrary to the intent of this opportunity. There may also be some concerns that the transfer rights (p349) negate commercial in confidence principles.

We support the program having broad oversight and complaints handling functions for individual data access and believe the nominated Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC), and to existing industry ombudsmen provide an appropriate level of understanding of the issues, ability to resolve disputes and recommend thoughtful and measured industry wide changes for improved success.

The concept of defining and releasing National Interest Datasets (NID)s and the levels of release to secured and trusted users through to the public has much potential. Collaboration in the decision-making process regarding release will need to occur between the states and territories and the community at large. Benefits realised from greater collaboration, access and service delivery between public sector entities may provide a catalyst of support for the public release of these de-identified datasets in time.

As a new function within the Government the establishment of the National Data Custodian (NDC) should give the program the resources required for success. The recommended functions - broad oversight and monitoring of Australia's data system, recommending the designation of National Interest Datasets, and accrediting Release Authorities and trusted users within the reformed data system – are appropriate. While having a designated function, the NDC will by necessity not operate in isolation and will need to work collaboratively with other information management functions within Government. The concept of accredited as Release Authorities may need to be extended to other functions such as data accuracy, cleansing and metadata management particularly where data sets are provided from private or public agencies that are no longer in existence.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "K Walker".

Kate Walker
Chief Executive Officer