

# **MEDIA ORGANISATION PRIVACY STANDARDS**

## **Introduction**

From 21 December 2001, new privacy laws apply to private sector organisations. From that date, the National Privacy Principles contained in the *Privacy Act 1988* (**Privacy Act**) will regulate how organisations handle personal information.

However, the new privacy laws do not apply to “acts done or practices engaged in by a media organisation in the course of journalism”, so long as that media organisation is publicly committed to observing standards that deal with privacy in the context of its activities and those standards have been published in writing by the organisation.

These Privacy Standards (**Standards**) outline how ACP Magazines Ltd. (“**ACP**”) journalists will handle personal information in the context of its journalism activities. The objective of these Standards is to balance the right of a person to privacy, against the obligations of the media to inform the public about matters of news, current affairs and events.

## **Definition of personal information**

To summarise, personal information is basically information or an opinion which can identify a person.

## **Collection of personal information**

ACP journalists will collect personal information in the course of reporting on news, current affairs and events. It is ACP’s policy that, generally, journalists should identify themselves when collecting personal information. There may be exceptions to this if the collection is for the purposes of an article which is in the public interest.

## **Use and disclosure of personal information**

Personal information collected by ACP journalists will generally only be used for the purposes for which it was collected.

Personal information will generally only be disclosed in ACP publications if relevant for the purposes of reporting on news, current affairs and events.

## **Storage and checking of personal information**

ACP journalists will endeavour to check that the personal information they use is accurate, complete and up-to-date, and that it is stored in a secure way.

## **Anonymity**

The new privacy laws do not require us to reveal the identity of confidential sources. It is consistent with the privacy laws for us to ensure the anonymity of our sources, where lawful and practicable to do so.

## **Dealing with sensitive information**

Under the new privacy laws, sensitive information includes details of a person's religion, race, sexual preferences, health, trade union or professional association membership. ACP will not portray any person in a negative light by placing gratuitous emphasis on national or ethnic origin, race, religion or sexual preference. However, where it is in the public interest, ACP may report events and publish articles and comments in which such matters are raised.

## **Complaints**

If you have a complaint about the handling of personal information by ACP journalists, please contact ACP's Privacy Officer at ACP Magazines Ltd., 54-58 Park Street, SYDNEY NSW 2001 or via e-mail [privacyofficer@acpmagazines.com.au](mailto:privacyofficer@acpmagazines.com.au)