

**Launch of the Privacy Training Program, Parliamentary Theatrette  
12.30pm, Wednesday 21 August 2003**

Speech by MC : Anna Johnston,  
Deputy Privacy Commissioner

Good afternoon to you, and welcome to the launch of the Privacy Training Program.

My name is Anna Johnston, and I am the Deputy Privacy Commissioner of NSW. I will be your host for this afternoon's proceedings.

To launch the Program today we are honoured to have Robert Wheeler and Barbara Perry.

Robert Wheeler is Deputy Director General of the Office of Best Practice Information Technology and Corporate Services in the Department of Commerce. He has been with the NSW Government in the area of Information Management and Technology for the last eleven years.

The Office of Best Practice Information Technology and Corporate Services provides a central, integrated and strategic focus within the NSW Government for the use and development of information technology within and between government, industry and the community.

You could therefore say that the focus of both Robert's organisation and ours is to answer the question : how can organisations best deal with the information that they hold?

That is why the Privacy Training Program is a joint initiative of Privacy NSW and the Department of Commerce. Robert will speak in a moment about how the Program works, but at this point I wish to record our most sincere thanks to the Department of Commerce for this initiative. A number of people have been involved in this project over many months, and I wish to thank in particular Ken Bullock, Kris Corcoran, Linda Rouse and Robin Scaife, for their tremendous work.

Before Robert's presentation the Program will be officially launched on behalf of the Attorney General by Mrs Barbara Perry, Member for Auburn.

When you look up the electorate of Auburn on the Parliamentary website you will discover that Barbara's constituency encompasses people of 48 different nationalities and 6 major religions. It is described as a working class electorate with 82% employment, with 8 high schools, 16 primary schools, and 1 university campus.

That's a lot of children and young adults with educational records.

That's a lot of workers whose employment records include information not only about their working life, but about their health and perhaps their finances.

That's a lot of constituents who have tax records, bank records, drivers licenses.

Some of them will be property owners and so have land title and rates records; others will be renting and so have tenancy information held by the rental boards board, a landlord or estate agent.

There will be particularly sensitive personal information amongst all those records. There will be stories of marital breakdowns, drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness and financial problems amongst the people of Auburn, just as if you looked at any other part of the State.

Some of these people may draw on services from agencies like Community Services or Housing, and some will have contact with law enforcement agencies.

Some of the people of Auburn will have no difficulty with the notion that all their personal information should be open or shared. They will say: "I've got nothing to hide".

But most people I believe draw distinctions between that part of themselves they share with a neighbour or friend, as against what aspects of their lives they may display to their doctor, their employer, or a stranger.

So what does privacy law actually mean to the constituents of Auburn?

It is about *their* ability to control the conditions under which they make different aspects of themselves accessible to others.

*Privacy as reflected in the legislation* means the fair handling of people's personal information, by government.

And what does this mean for Government agencies?

Sometimes we in Government use fairly clinical terms like service delivery, clients and stakeholders, to describe what it is we do. But at its heart, Government is about people, and the relationships between people.

The richness and variety of our lives is reflected in our relationships with government agencies.

One size does *not* fit all.

The challenge for your agencies is therefore how to respect the many and varied people you deal with.

But here's one answer:

By respecting and protecting their personal information, you respect the person.

So, now I am pleased to be introducing to you our first speaker.

Barbara Perry was elected as Member for Auburn in a by-election in September 2001.

Prior to her Parliamentary career Barbara spent 12 years with Legal Aid, specialising in family law.

In addition to her normal Parliamentary duties, Barbara is Chair of the newly created Joint Statutory Committee on Children and Young People. However it is because of her role as a Member of the Privacy Advisory Committee that she is with us today, as a representative for the Attorney General.

I therefore now ask that you welcome Mrs Perry to the stage.

Thank you.

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I would like to conclude by thanking you for attending this launch of the Privacy Training Program.

Thank you once again to both Robert Wheeler and Barbara Perry for your participation today.

I also wish to remind you that copies of the Privacy Training Program are being mailed to the Privacy Contact Officers in every State and Local Government agency today, together with instructions on how to install the program on your intranet.

That concludes our proceedings, but I would like to invite you all to join us for some light refreshments in the foyer.

Thank you.