

Media Release

02 May 2016

Privacy Commissioner launches Privacy Awareness Month with a reminder that Privacy Matters

NSW was the second government in the world to introduce privacy legislation in 1975. While current NSW legislation has stood the test of time well, advances in technology have meant that an individual's privacy can be breached in ways unimaginable in years gone by.

As Dr Coombs, the NSW Privacy Commissioner, has said "Privacy has never been more relevant than during this time of technological development. A society without privacy has lost an essential freedom of the individual... The Committee's recommendations are a win for those people who have had their privacy breached in unimaginable ways and who have then suffered further indignity in discovering that they had no recourse".

Privacy Awareness Month, May 2016 (PAM 2016) is an annual initiative of the Asia Pacific Privacy Authorities (APPA) and is traditionally held in the first week of May. This year the celebrations have grown to encompass the entire month of May. "The attendance of Professor Joe Cannataci, UN Special Rapporteur, at the Office of the Australian Information Commissioners event this year is an exciting development and highlights privacy on the international stage, ensuring citizens everywhere are aware of their rights and their own responsibilities when it comes to privacy" Dr Coombs said.

PAM 2016 offers an opportunity for NSW public sector agencies, including local councils and universities, to highlight their commitment to good privacy practices by staging events and, importantly, sharing their privacy commitment with the NSW community.

This year NSW will celebrate PAM 2016 under the theme of *Privacy and You*, which highlights how relevant privacy is in our everyday lives, and asks questions such as:

- > What are my responsibilities when using online services?
- > What are my rights under current legislation?
- > How can I protect and access my personal information?

With May being Privacy Awareness Month and also Information Awareness Month, the Privacy Commissioner will provide organisations, both public and private sector, with privacy fact sheets and resources to promote awareness of privacy in NSW. Many of these resources can be obtained from the website www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/pam-2016.

Please contact the Office of the NSW Privacy Commissioner at Level 3, 47 Bridge Street Sydney or by email amy.mckenna@ipc.nsw.gov.au or phone (02) 9258 0938.

Interviews:

Dr Coombs is available for interviews to discuss privacy issues affecting the NSW community.

Media contact: Amy McKenna
Phone: (02) 9258 0938
After hours: 0431 686 619