

# Privacy Statement – Australian Honours and Awards System

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The Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General (the Office) assists the Governor-General to administer the Australian honours and awards system. This statement sets out how the Office complies with the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) in the *Privacy Act 1988* (Privacy Act) when requesting, collecting and managing personal information required to administer the Australian honours and awards system.

## **The Australian honours and awards system**

Nominations and recommendations for honours and awards are made by members of the public, organisations or Government bodies for individuals to be recognised within the Australian honours and awards system. These nominations and recommendations are received by the Office and contain personal information about those individuals.

The Australian Honours and Awards Secretariat (the Secretariat) is responsible for researching and verifying the information by contacting referees supplied, or identified by the Secretariat, and other external agencies or organisations. The recommendations are presented, either directly or through an advisory body, to the Governor-General for consideration and approval.

The integrity of the Australian honours and awards system relies on the principle of confidentiality and the Office requires personal information that is reasonably necessary to identify individuals to ensure awards are appropriately considered and awarded.

## **Personal information collected for the Australian Honours and Awards System**

The Office collects personal information to administer the Australian Honours and Awards System. The personal information collected may also be used to contact persons in relation to events hosted by the Office in connection with the honour or award received.

The nature of the personal information collected may include, but is not limited to: names, date and place of birth, occupation, gender, nationality, contact details (including telephone, email and residential or postal address), biographical information, and referee reports.

## **How does the Office collect personal information?**

The Office collects personal information through:

- nominations for Australian honours and awards
- comments and information from referees and nominators, by phone or in writing
- independent research of open source information including social media
- the Australian Electoral Roll to identify or locate individuals who:
  - are nominated, or are being considered for nomination, for an honour or award within the Australian honours and award system; or
  - have been selected to provide a reference connected with such a nomination.
- Information provided by Australian honours and awards recipients or others on their behalf.

Personal information about the nominee and some referees is collected without their knowledge. If the nominee is not recommended for an award, or a referee is not approached for comment, they will not be advised that their information has been collected. If the nominee is recommended for an award, they will not be advised of all the information that has been collected, such as referee reports, however their permission will be sought regarding what information is published and provided to other agencies for announcement, presentation or other purposes.

We may collect personal information from nominators and referees in a variety of ways including by phone, in writing, email, or via the 'SmartForms' service hosted by the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources.

SmartForms only stores data temporarily while transmitting from the form user (you) to the client agency (the Office). Data passing through the SmartForms service is encrypted, and is purged within 72 hours of the client agency confirming they've retrieved the data from the servers.

The SmartForms hosting application (Transact Manager) compiles activity logs that identify statistical information about the user's browser. Logs are partitioned so that an agency can only access data and reporting about their own agency and forms. SmartForms can report on statistical data at a global level.

## **What happens if you don't give us your personal information?**

When you are making a general enquiry regarding awards administered by the Australian Honours and Awards Secretariat, generally, you have the option of dealing with the Office anonymously or using a pseudonym.

However, to maintain the integrity of the Australian Honours and Awards System we need to positively identify nominees and referees. If a nominee or referee choose not to provide the Office with their personal information, then the Secretariat may not be able to administer the particular award/s.

### **How does the Office use and disclose personal information?**

The Office uses and discloses limited personal information for the purposes of administering the Australian Honours and Awards System and related activities. Examples of who the Office discloses limited personal information to include:

- the Order of Australia Council, the Australian Bravery Decorations Council and the National Emergency Medal Committee as appropriate to consider nominations and make recommendations to the Governor-General or Administrator
- individuals who are requested by the Australian Honours and Awards Secretariat to provide a referee report
- the Governor-General, or Administrator as the responsible authority to approve awards within the Australian honours and award system and send congratulatory messages
- external government agencies and private organisations for the purpose of verifying details of service as appropriate
- State and Territory Government Houses for the purposes of hosting investiture ceremonies
- Members of Parliament and other organisations for the purpose of congratulatory messages

The Office may use or disclose personal information for another purpose with your consent, where authorised or required by law, or where there is an exception under APP6 of the Privacy Act.

The Office may disclose personal information overseas when:

- the Secretariat approaches an individual overseas to provide a referee report
- the Secretariat is required to seek permission from another country regarding the acceptance of an Australian award by a non-Australian citizen, and, on occasion, may contact foreign governments in connection with foreign awards offered to Australian citizens
- an investiture ceremony for a recipient of an award within the Australian Honours and Awards System is hosted outside of Australia

- notifying Buckingham Palace of upcoming appointments and awards within the Australian Honours and Awards System

### **Further information**

More information about how the Office handles personal information, including how to make a complaint and seek access to and correction of personal information can be found in our main [privacy policy](#) and [privacy policy summary](#).