



Canberra Office

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45 Benjamin Way
Belconnen ACT 2617
Phone 1300 135 070

Locked Bag 10
Belconnen ACT 2616
www.abs.gov.au
ABN 26 331 428 522



FOI ref: 201617/03

Dear Mr Bennett

RE: YOUR FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

I refer to your email of the 22 July 2016 ([Attachment A](#)) in which you sought access to the following information under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act):

'Any documentation specifying the method or methods by which a personal identifier (including but not limited to a name or name and address pair) will be transformed into a statistical linkage key in the 2016 Census; and

Any source code, algorithm or similar machine-implemented process that will be used to transform a personal identifier into a statistical linkage key in the 2016 Census. Source code need only be the relevant part of a program that takes a personal identifier as an input and returns a statistical linkage key as an output.'

Response to your request

I am an authorised decision maker under section 23 of the FOI Act.

A search has been conducted for documents relevant to your request. No documents have been found that fall within the terms of your request. The ABS determines specific linkage methodologies on a project by project basis. A description of ABS use of anonymous linkage keys can be found at:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Statistical+Data+Integration+-+FAQ#linkagekeys> , and more information on ABS statistical linkage methods can be found at:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/ABS+Statistical+Data+Integration:+Data+and+Publications>

<http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/ABS+Statistical+Data+Integration:+Data+and+Publications>

In accordance with subsection 24A(1)(b)(ii) of the FOI Act (see [Attachment B](#)), I refuse your request on the grounds that no documents exist.

Charges

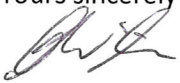
There is no charge for this request.

Internal Review of the Decision

Section 54 of the FOI Act gives you the right to apply for an internal review of the decision by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Additionally you may request a review of this decision by the Information Commissioner. Details of both procedures involved in an application to review a decision are set out at [Attachment C](#).

If you have any queries on this matter please contact the ABS FOI Contact Officer at freedomofinformation@abs.gov.au or on (02) 6252 7203.

Yours sincerely



Christine Williams
Program Manager
Governance and Parliamentary Liaison Branch
Australian Bureau of Statistics

22 August 2016

Dear Australian Bureau of Statistics,

In the response to request "FOI 201516-07" dated May 30 2016, the attached document "FOI 201516 07 Response with documents.pdf" discusses the creation of "unique statistical linkage keys" for example through the encoding of names and/or names and addresses.

I wish to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 1982:

(1) Any documentation specifying the method or methods by which a personal identifier (including but not limited to a name or name and address pair) will be transformed into a statistical linkage key in the 2016 Census.

(2) Any source code, algorithm or similar machine-implemented process that will be used to transform a personal identifier into a statistical linkage key in the 2016 Census. Source code need only be the relevant part of a program that takes a personal identifier as an input and returns a statistical linkage key as an output.

Yours faithfully,
Tim Bennett

Please use this email address for all replies to this request:
foi+request-2075-5efe9538@righttoknow.org.au

Is freedomofinformation@abs.gov.au the wrong address for Freedom of Information requests to Australian Bureau of Statistics? If so, please contact us using this form:
https://www.righttoknow.org.au/change_request/new?body=abs

This request has been made by an individual using Right to Know. This message and any reply that you make will be published on the internet. More information on how Right to Know works can be found at:
<https://www.righttoknow.org.au/help/officers>

If you find this service useful as an FOI officer, please ask your web manager to link to us from your organisation's FOI page.

Freedom of Information Act 1982

Section 24A

24A Requests may be refused if documents cannot be found, do not exist or have not been received

Document lost or non-existent

- (1) An agency or Minister may refuse a request for access to a document if:
 - (a) all reasonable steps have been taken to find the document;
and
 - (b) the agency or Minister is satisfied that the document:
 - (i) is in the agency's or Minister's possession but cannot be found; or
 - (ii) does not exist.

Document not received as required by contract

- (2) An agency may refuse a request for access to a document if:
 - (a) in order to comply with section 6C, the agency has taken contractual measures to ensure that it receives the document;
and
 - (b) the agency has not received the document; and
 - (c) the agency has taken all reasonable steps to receive the document in accordance with those contractual measures.

INFORMATION ON RIGHTS OF REVIEW

1. APPLICATION FOR INTERNAL REVIEW OF DECISION

If you disagree with our decision you have the right to apply for an internal review under section 54 of the FOI Act.

Application for a review of the decision must be made within 30 days of receipt of this letter.

No particular form is required but it would assist the decision-maker were you to set out in the application the grounds on which you consider that the decision should be reviewed.

Application for a review of the decision should be addressed to:

ABS FOI Contact Officer
Policy, Legislation and Assurance Section
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Locked Bag 10
BELCONNEN ACT 2617

OR

2. APPLICATION TO AUSTRALIAN INFORMATION COMMISSIONER (INFORMATION COMMISSIONER) FOR REVIEW OF DECISION

Section 54L of the Act gives you the right to seek a review of the decision from the Information Commissioner. An application for review must be made within 60 days of receiving the decision.

Applications for review must be in writing and must:

- give details of how notices must be sent to you; and
- include a copy of the notice of decision.

You should send your application for review to:

The Information Commissioner
Office of the Information Commissioner
GPO Box 5218
SYDNEY NSW 2001

AND/OR

3. COMPLAINTS TO THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

Section 70 of the Act provides that a person may complain to the Information Commissioner about action taken by an agency in the exercise of powers or the performance of functions under the Act.

A complaint to the Information Commissioner must be in writing and identify the agency the complaint is about. It should be directed to the following address:

The Information Commissioner
Office of the Information Commissioner
GPO Box 5218
SYDNEY NSW 2001

The Information Commissioner may decline to investigate the complaint in a number of circumstances, including that you did not exercise your right to ask the agency, the Information Commissioner, a court or tribunal to review the decision.