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FOI Ref: 201617/35

Dear Mr Warren

I refer to your email dated 25 August 2016, and to your request for access to documents in the possession of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (the ABS) in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act). Your request sought access to the following:

- Documents (including but not limited to meeting agendas, minutes, reports, emails, etc.) containing advice provided to the Australian Statistician by the ABS Chief Methodologist regarding methodologies and tools that could, should, or would be used to prevent individuals being identified when linking datasets with data from the 2016 Census. I specifically request documents in the period from 11 December 2014 to 18 December 2015, inclusive.
- Documents listing the current set, as of the date of this request, of methodologies and tools used by ABS to ensure ABS' legislative requirements to ensure no personal information is released in a manner likely to enable identification are met.
- Documents that describe the process by which ABS assesses which tools and methodologies are appropriate for preventing individuals being identified when datasets are linked.
- Documents that describe the process by which ABS adds new methodologies or tools to its range of approved methodologies or tools used to prevent individuals being identified when datasets are linked.

I am writing to notify you of our intention to refuse your request, in its current form, in accordance with Section 24(1) of the FOI Act.

I am refusing this request because a practical refusal reason exists.

In accordance with Section 24AA(1)(b) of the FOI Act, your request does not satisfy the requirement to provide such information concerning the documents as is reasonably necessary to enable the business area to identify what you are requesting. Please be aware that if identified some or all of the documents you seek are likely to be subject to significant redaction due to the following applicable exemption provided by the FOI Act:

- section 47E – documents would or could be reasonably expected to have an adverse effect on the proper and efficient conduct of the operations of an agency

Please contact ABS FOI Officer Alexia Tribe with a view to agreeing to one of the following options:

- a. withdrawing your request; or
- b. revising your request to narrow the scope.

Alexia Tribe can be reached by email at freedomofinformation@abs.gov.au or by telephone on (02) 6252 7203.

Please note that in accordance with Section 24AB(2)(e) you have 14 days from the date of this email to contact the ABS regarding your request. If we do not hear from you in this time your request will be deemed to be withdrawn.

Yours sincerely

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

9 September 2016