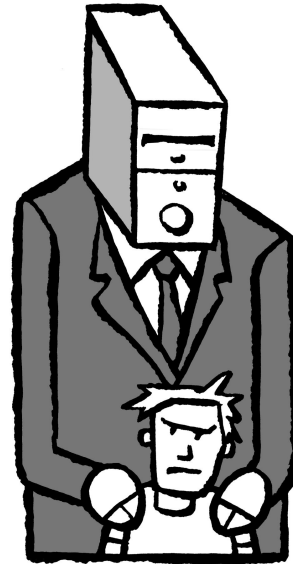




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**Big Brother Awards 2004**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **AUSTRALIA GOES FOR GOLD IN THE ORWELLS**

EMBARGOED until 9 am Thursday 9 September 2004.

The Australian Privacy Foundation (APF) today called for nominations for Australia's annual *Big Brother Awards*, affectionately known as the 'Orwells'.

The awards are for corporations, public officials and governments that have shown a blatant disregard for privacy. The awards also feature categories for individuals and organisations who have made a major positive contribution to protecting the privacy of Australians.

Each year, the national members and affiliated organisations of Privacy International present the Big Brother Awards to government and private sector organisations which have done the most to threaten personal privacy in their countries. Since 1998, over 40 ceremonies have been held in 16 countries. The Big Brother Awards have no relationship to the TEN Network TV program of the same name.

"Last year's Orwell winners really went for gold, showing Australians are capable of world class performances in privacy invasion", said Privacy Foundation spokeswoman Anna Johnston.

"TICA, the tenancy blacklisting organisation, later went on to face the first successful class action privacy complaint in Australia's history. And former Australian Attorney General Darryl Williams, who won the 'Lifetime Menace' category in last year's Orwells, oversaw the \$15 million 'security fridge magnet' campaign, which won Privacy International's global prize for Most Egregiously Stupid Security Measure."

"I really hope our politicians and corporations can follow in our athletes' footsteps, and win more gold for Australia."

“The Queensland government is in with a medal chance for its ‘smartcard’ drivers’ licence proposal, but a wildcard entry like DFAT’s biometric passports could yet pip it at the post in the People’s Choice award”, predicted Ms Johnston.

“We’re calling on all Australians to really get behind this event. Slam-dunk your favourite politician, government department or corporation by nominating their outstanding achievements in the invasion of your privacy.”

“The protection of privacy is serious business. Respect for people’s personal information and their private space is an essential element of the trust needed to sustain relationships in this ‘Information Age’”, said Ms Johnston.

“But the Orwells allow the Privacy Foundation to show the lighter side of human rights work, while also highlighting the need for more public debate about initiatives which have negative privacy impacts.”

The award categories are:

- Greatest Corporate Invader - for a corporation that has shown a blatant disregard of privacy.
- Worst Public Agency or Official - for a government agency or official that has shown a blatant disregard of privacy.
- Most Invasive Technology - for a technology that is particularly privacy invasive.
- Lifetime Menace - for a privacy invader with a long record of profound disregard for privacy.
- People’s Choice - for the individual or organisation most frequently nominated by the public.
- Boot in the Mouth - for the best quote on a privacy related topic.

Nominations are also sought for:

- Best Privacy Guardian - for a meritorious act of privacy protection or defence.
- Lifetime Achievement - for provision of outstanding services to privacy protection.

Nominations will be accepted from members of the public until the closing date of **30 September 2004**. Nominations should be emailed to **mail@privacy.org.au** . The APF website has further details on how to nominate, at [www.privacy.org.au/bba](http://www.privacy.org.au/bba) .

The winners of the Orwells will be announced in November.

### **About the Privacy Foundation**

The Privacy Foundation was founded in 1987 as a last-ditch stand against the proposed Australia Card national identity system and has continued to be an advocate for privacy issues since that time.

The APF aims to represent the public interest across a wide range of issues including the privacy of people's bodies, homes, health records, email, internet usage, spending habits and communications.

The APF's website at [www.privacy.org.au](http://www.privacy.org.au) is a significant resource for any person who has an interest or issue that concerns privacy. It includes a comprehensive directory of relevant organisations, membership information, analysis of current privacy issues, APF submissions, catalogues of privacy laws, a list of Board members, a history of the APF and media contact points for various issues.

## **The APF Election Challenge**

The Australian Privacy Foundation recently threw down the gauntlet to parties contesting the federal election to reverse the unprecedented recent trend to sacrifice privacy and civil liberties in the quest for absolute 'national security'.

The Privacy Foundation challenged parties and candidates in the forthcoming federal election to endorse the following principles and objectives:

- Balancing privacy and "security"
- Assessing the privacy impact of intrusive proposals
- Strengthening the *Privacy Act*
- Extending the Spam Act 'opt-in' principle to telemarketing
- Cooperating with the States and Territories on privacy protection in health, surveillance and tracking

The parties' election platforms will be judged against these five basic principles.

"Privacy has been a casualty of the 'war on terrorism'. It's time that governments stopped their intrusions into established civil liberties, and restored a sense of balance to their policies", said APF Chair John Corker at the launch of the Election Challenge, on 19 August. "It will be no comfort if this persistent erosion of basic freedoms and increased police power creates a society in which Australians feel increasingly powerless, scared and exposed".

*- end of release -*

Contact for the Big Brother Awards:  
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Use of the Big Brother Awards image:

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The Foundation's full Election Challenge with its priorities for privacy protection is available at:  
<http://www.privacy.org.au/Papers/Priorities04.doc.html>