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Migration Amendment (Strengthening Biometrics Integrity) Bill 2015 [Provisions]

In considering this bill, please consider the sensitivity of the biometric data being collected, especially in terms of any medical information which can be revealed (such as by DNA), not only of the person in question, but also of genetic relatives. Within this, please also consider that future advances in medical science may make it possible to reveal more information than is currently possible from this data, and that there should, therefore, be tight controls on the length and method of data storage to protect that sensitive information. Section 495A, as an example, may need some added protections, as it currently allows for unrestricted use of computing technologies to store and transmit that sensitive data, putting it at risk of hacking and public exposure.

As a general statement on this bill, it appears to be very broad and vague in the powers it allows the minister under the new section 257A, removing safeguards and allowing for unrestricted types of biometric data to be collected. Throughout the explanatory memorandum it is stated multiple times that the intent of the legislation isn't the universal collection of biometric identifiers, yet that is what the bill allows for. If that isn't the intent, then shouldn't this bill have more protections built into it?

