

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

1.1 On 14 September 2006, the Senate referred the Privacy Legislation Amendment (Emergencies and Disasters) Bill 2006 (the Bill) to the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs for inquiry and report by 12 October 2006.

1.2 The Bill seeks to amend the *Privacy Act 1988* (the Act) to allow for the collection, use and disclosure of personal information about deceased, injured and missing individuals involved in an emergency or disaster occurring in Australia or overseas.

### **Conduct of the inquiry**

1.3 The committee advertised the inquiry in The Australian newspaper on 19 September 2006, with submissions to be provided by 25 September 2006. The details of the bill and associated information were placed on the committee's website.

1.4 The committee also wrote to 59 organisations and individuals inviting submissions. The committee received 13 submissions, which are listed at Appendix 1 and are available on the committee's website.

1.5 Due to the limited number of issues raised in the submissions, the committee decided to deal with the inquiry on the papers only. Questions seeking information and clarification were forwarded to the Attorney-General's Department, and its responses appear as submission 12.

### **Acknowledgement**

1.6 The committee thanks those organisations who made submissions.

### **Note on references**

1.7 References in this report are to individual submissions as received by the committee, not to a bound volume.

