

## First in First Aid



### PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

#### Privacy Legislation Amendment (Emergencies and Disasters) Bill 2006

Thank you for the opportunity to make comment on the proposed changes to the Privacy Act. The following comments reflect the services provided by St John Ambulance Australia in emergency and disaster situations and the impact the outcomes will have on the organisation initially. Over the past 18 months St John has focussed on Disaster Preparedness and the interaction with an increasing number of agencies is inevitable.

St John Ambulance Australia responds nationally to emergencies and disasters, with each State and Territory having emergency management arrangements in place. The role of St John in these circumstances is to:

- (a) provide Volunteer First Aid Services which may include Advanced Casualty Management Teams that enhance pre-hospital care (NSW, Victoria, QLD, SA, Tasmania and ACT); and
- (b) in WA and the NT provide the Ambulance Service in addition to Volunteer First Aid Services

Records of all of the above services are kept and the existing Privacy Act requirements apply.


The purpose of the amendment to the Privacy Act is noted and a consequence of the changes will need to be:

- addressed in our National Emergency Response Guidelines;
- included in selected training programs; and
- reviewed to ensure data collection and its management are appropriate.

The details provided in the amended Bill should not restrict the services we currently provide. However, the implementation of the changes will require a concerted effort to ensure we have all appropriate measures in place.

While the intent of the changes is considered necessary, the dependency we have on volunteers to assist with the implementation of these changes is considerable. I would like to suggest that national information sessions are held and easy to read fact sheets are made available to facilitate the implementation process.

Should you wish to discuss any of the above I can be contacted directly by  
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26 September 2006