

# Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc.

## Privacy policy instituted 21 December 2001

### Legislated privacy provisions

New privacy provisions in the *Privacy Act 1988* affecting private sector organisations came into effect on 21 December 2001. As a result, the National Privacy Principles (NPPs) in the legislation will apply to Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc. The NPPs are legally binding rules set out in Schedule 3 of the *Privacy Act* (see Appendix 1 of this policy) that dictate how private sector organisations must collect, use, keep secure and disclose personal information. The NPPs aim to ensure that organisations that hold information about people handle that information responsibly. They also give people some control over the way information about them is handled.

### LRRSA's privacy plan

#### **Please note that as of 21 December 2001:**

LRRSA collects only limited amounts of information about its members and customers, little of which is personal in nature, and therefore the effects of these regulations will be minimal.

This information is usually limited to our members' history with LRRSA.

The information is stored only in the LRRSA computer databases and that:

- Our members have every right to expect that this information will be kept confidential.

- This information is to be retained within LRRSA and not transferred to other private persons, businesses or organisations.

- Our databases are confidential and not for sale.

- Our reputation as an ethical organisation is at stake in the way we handle information.

Therefore, this *Privacy Plan* has been implemented as part of our standard procedures.

**Phil Rickard** has been appointed as privacy officer. The privacy officer is the first point of contact in LRRSA when privacy issues arise either internally or externally. The privacy officer is also responsible for ensuring that LRRSA's privacy policy and procedures are fully implemented and working effectively, including (but not limited to):

- Maintaining the privacy policy plan within the NPP guidelines;

- Co-ordinating and implementing the privacy policy plan;

- Promoting the plan to all relevant parties; and

- Conducting a yearly privacy audit for LRRSA.

### Privacy audit principles

Audit questions include:

- What personal information does LRRSA collect?

- Is any of the information sensitive information (see section 6 of the Privacy Act)?

- How does LRRSA collect this information? (Common ways in which organisations collect personal information include standard forms, customer surveys, loyalty programs or online interaction.)

- Where and how does LRRSA store this information?

- (LRRSA may keep personal information stored in a single database or it may be spread across LRRSA in a number of sites.)

- Who within LRRSA has access to the personal information it holds and who actually needs to have access to the information?

- Does LRRSA have measures to protect the personal information it holds from unauthorised access?

- Why does LRRSA collect the personal information it collects? Does LRRSA need it for a particular function or activity?

- Would individuals know LRRSA is collecting the information?

- How does LRRSA use the information?

- Does LRRSA give the information to anyone outside LRRSA?

- Does LRRSA contract out any functions or activities involving personal information?

- Does LRRSA take any privacy measures to protect this information?

- Does LRRSA make individuals aware of LRRSA's intended uses and disclosures of that information?

- Is relevant personal information accurate, complete and up to date?

- Does LRRSA transfer information overseas?

Once LRRSA has answered these and any other relevant questions the next step is to run through each of the NPPs and think about how LRRSA's information handling practices measure up against them. If necessary a plan will be developed to address any areas that do not comply with the NPPs.

## Handling complaints

Having an effective complaints handling process is an important part of managing privacy risks within LRRSA. It helps the organisation to:

- identify (and address) any systemic or ongoing compliance problems;
- increase member and customer confidence in LRRSA's privacy procedures;
- builds the good reputation of LRRSA; and
- addresses complaints quickly and effectively.

Although the Privacy Officer will primarily be responsible for handling the complaints process, all officers of the Society need to be constantly aware of privacy issues and ensure that we give no cause for complaint.