

How The Ryerson Index Complies with the Privacy Act

The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner is quite clear on its website that the Privacy Act (1988, as amended) does not apply to deceased persons.

The website can be found at

<https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/guidance-and-advice/what-is-personal-information>

(URL current at 13 March 2023)

The relevant paragraph is reproduced below.

Information about deceased persons

In most cases, information about deceased persons is not considered to be 'personal information'. Personal information is information about an individual, which means a natural person and does not include a deceased person. However, if information about a deceased person includes information or an opinion about a living individual, it will be 'personal information' about that 'living individual'.

The final sentence above explains why we decided from the beginning not to include any family details in our index entries.

We are often asked why we don't also have a Ryerson Index for births and marriages. The simple answer is if we did, we would be publishing "personal information" (as defined in the Privacy Act) and so would need the permission of each individual listed to allow us to publish information such as a name, birth date or a marriage date. Clearly this is not a viable proposition.

The Committee of Ryerson Index Inc is of the firm belief that the Index is fully compliant with the Privacy Act.

John Graham

President, Ryerson Index Inc

13 March 2023