

# Market research and you



Centrelink regularly conducts market research with our customers and you might be asked to participate

## Why?

Centrelink wants to continue to improve our service to you. To do that we need to know what you think about the way we do things. Your views count and can help make a real difference.

Our research seeks your comment and reaction to many different things. For example:

- the design and content of a new information booklet
- the helpfulness of a new process
- satisfaction with the service given in the office, online or over the phone and
- feedback on the effectiveness of delivering Government programmes.

## How?

We conduct research using telephone and mail surveys, discussion groups and individual interviews. Sometimes Centrelink may contact you, but usually we hire market research companies who specialise in research with customers to work on our behalf.

We use market research companies, as we believe you will be more comfortable giving a full and honest opinion about Centrelink to someone who is not one of our staff.

We take great care to use only the most reputable market research companies who guarantee a professional service and the protection of your personal information.

## When will you be contacted?

You may be contacted outside of normal business hours. This is so we can include a wide cross section and as many customers as possible in our research. Centrelink or a market research company may contact you during the week (9.00 am to 8.00 pm) or on the weekend (9.00 am to 5.00 pm).

## Will you be chosen?

Selection of customers to participate in surveys and other research is done randomly.

## Do you have a choice?

Yes. Although we want and value your views you don't have to take part in any research activity if you don't want to. The choice is yours.

You may decline to participate in any research project—perhaps because it is inconvenient at the time, or for other reasons. If you decide not to participate, it will not affect any payment or service you receive from Centrelink.

If you do not wish to be contacted for any market research, please ring **Freecall™ 1800 050 004\*** and we will arrange to have your name excluded from future customer sample lists.

**Note:** The Australian Government has established a "Do Not Call" register, to stop telemarketers contacting you. Market research does not involve any attempts to sell things, and is not covered by that register.

[www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)

## What information is given to research companies?

We provide contracted research companies with limited customer details in accordance with strict confidentiality guidelines and privacy legislation. We give the minimum information necessary to conduct each project.

## How do we protect your privacy?

Centrelink, the Department of Human Services and policy departments are bound by Commonwealth confidentiality and privacy laws to protect your information. Centrelink's contracts with research companies contain legally binding provisions to protect your privacy. Your personal information remains confidential.

- It cannot be used for any purpose except the specific Centrelink research activity.
- It cannot be given to anyone else.
- It must be returned to Centrelink or destroyed when the research is over.

## Are your opinions anonymous?

Yes. Centrelink is not able to identify which customers have taken part in any research or survey, or their individual responses.

Centrelink will only know if you have been contacted for a research project if you contact us wanting more information.

## What are your rights?

If you are contacted for research activity you have the right to:

- ring us to check that the research is genuine and legitimate before you answer any questions
- ask for the company name, and the name and telephone number of the interviewer
- ask the interviewer to ring you back at a time that is more convenient for you
- say "no" to answering some or all of the questions
- end the interview if you are unhappy with any of the questions or the interviewer's manner.

If you have any concerns about the way the activity was conducted you can contact us on our Customer Relations number **Freecall™ 1800 050 004** (available 8.30 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Friday).

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, please use our TTY Customer Relations Service number **Freecall™ 1800 000 567\*** (available 8.30 am to 4.30 pm standard/summer time).

## Are there other ways to confirm a research company is genuine?

The market research industry professional associations require all member research companies to conduct their research according to a strict code of conduct. These measures ensure market research is carried out honestly, objectively and without unwelcome intrusion or disadvantage to respondents. The Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) national phone service, Surveyline, allows members of the public to check the bona fides of Australian research companies in one phone call.

**AMSRS Surveyline: 1300 364 830**

**Important:** Calls from your home phone to Centrelink "13" numbers from anywhere in Australia are charged at a fixed rate. That rate may vary from the price of a local call and may also vary between telephone service providers. Calls to "1800" numbers from your home phone are free. Calls from public or mobile phones may be timed and charged at a higher rate.