



AAP/Andrew Taylor

Many Australians are worried about the proliferation of data businesses and the government knowing too much about them.

Data Governance Australia chairman Graeme Samuel hopes that a self-regulatory code of conduct will raise the standards among data-driven organisations. Despite the pervasiveness of data in our daily lives, he argues most people don't understand the extent to which organisations use it.

As a former regulator, Samuel regards government regulation of data as “second-best” and is “there to step in when there is market failure”. In drafting the code, he has consulted closely with businesses and the public to try to “anticipate community concerns into the foreseeable future”.

On the government's My Health Record – which has been rolled out very slowly – he argues the benefits of a centralised system outweigh privacy concerns, although every effort needs to be made to protect the privacy of health records.

While data offers an opportunity for improved safety, trust in processes is paramount. “We need to be careful, of course, that the issue of security in terms of international terrorism and the like is not used as a superficial excuse for the collection of data to be used for other purposes.”

Michelle Grattan does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organization that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond the academic appointment above.

Authors: Michelle Grattan, Professorial Fellow, University of Canberra

Politics podcast: Graeme Samuel on data governance

Written by Michelle Grattan, Professorial Fellow, University of Canberra

Read more <http://theconversation.com/politics-podcast-graeme-samuel-on-data-governance-80899>