

Unrecovered War Casualties – Army Privacy Statement

The Department of Defence is bound by the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Cth). This privacy statement is provided in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles (APP) contained within the Privacy Act and the Defence Privacy Policy. More information about the Defence Privacy Policy can be found [here](#). You may also request a hard copy from the Defence Privacy Office by sending an email to: defence.privacy@defence.gov.au

Unrecovered War Casualties – Army (UWC-A) will only collect personal information that is reasonably necessary for, or directly related to the identification of historic fallen service members. This privacy statement is specific to UWC-A functions and activities.

What is the difference between ‘personal information’ and ‘sensitive information’?

The Privacy Act defines personal information as:

Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:

- a. whether the information or opinion is true or not, and*
- b. whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.*

For UWC-A functions this may include, but is not limited to, your name, familial relationship to a historic fallen service member, date of birth and sex. More information about what is considered personal information can be found [here](#).

Sensitive information is a subset of personal information that attracts additional conditions in its collection, use, storage and disclosure. For a detailed description of what is considered sensitive information according to the Privacy Act, see [here](#). For UWC-A functions, sensitive information includes, but is not limited to, DNA samples and genetic data obtained from DNA samples.

Collection and use of personal and sensitive information

Personal biographic information is collected from publicly available records or provided directly by you to Defence personnel or via the UWC-A online contact registry.

Your personal information may be used by UWC-A to:

- Obtain relevant military service records from the National Archives of Australia;
- Seek the services of external genealogists or family researchers within Australia to assist in identifying the family members of a historic fallen service member; and/or
- Identify and contact suitable DNA donors to obtain a DNA sample that could help identify recovered remains.

Sensitive information is collected with your express consent and is only used for the purpose of identifying human remains believed to be a historic fallen service member. DNA profiles are generated from family donor DNA samples and are compared to DNA profiles generated from human remains. This is an essential component of UWC-A’s primary purpose to identify Australian Defence Force historic fallen service members.

Where your consent is given, your DNA sample may also be used for research that seeks to further UWC-A’s capacity to identify human remains. Where possible, your information will be de-identified.

Genetic data collected by UWC-A may contain health information, however, UWC-A does not and will not undertake health level analysis of your DNA.

You have the right to refuse to provide a DNA sample or to withdraw your consent for UWC-A to collect and use the genetic data obtained from your DNA sample at any time. If you choose to withdraw your consent UWC-A may be unable to identify fallen services members. If you provided consent for UWC-A to use your sensitive information for research purposes it may not be possible to withdraw your data from a dataset. If you wish to withdraw consent, please email: army.uwc@defence.gov.au or phone 1800 019 090.

The use of third parties or external contractors

Defence uses consultants, contractors, and outsourced service providers to undertake certain business functions. Personal information about you may be collected by or provided to an external service provider on behalf of UWC-A when necessary. Defence standard practice is to retain effective control of personal information through the terms of the contract agreed to by both parties. UWC-A will not engage with external service providers unless we are certain they comply with relevant legislation.

Disclosure of personal and sensitive information

UWC-A does not disclose personal or sensitive information to any other person, including relatives, unless the individual about whom the information relates to has given express consent, or the disclosure is required or authorised by or under Australian law, or in circumstances where it is unreasonable to obtain the individual's consent and the disclosure is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to life, health or safety of an individual or to public health and safety.

Defence may disclose personal information about you to a person or organisation that is not in Australia or an external territory (overseas recipient) where it relates to Defence activities or functions. UWC-A employs both Australian and international third-party service providers to process DNA samples collected with express consent. UWC-A takes all reasonable steps to protect personal information by ensuring that third party service providers are bound by privacy legislation that aligns with Australian Privacy legislation.

UWC-A may work with other countries to recover fallen service members and may need to share personal information to identify remains. Your information will only be shared with partner organisations in order to identify fallen service members and after UWC-A ensures partner agencies will take all reasonable steps to protect your information.

Storage of personal and sensitive information

Defence stores and protects personal and sensitive information about you in accordance with the Defence Security Principles Framework. UWC-A takes all reasonable steps to protect your personal and sensitive information against loss, unauthorised access, modification and/or misuse.

Access to personal and sensitive information

Under the Australian Privacy Principles, you have a right to request or seek correction of personal information held by Defence about you. UWC-A will attempt to provide you with access to personal information, however this is not always possible. In all circumstances UWC-A is obliged to respond to your request within 30 days and to provide you with the relevant information you requested or an explanation as to why the information was not provided.

If you wish to request or amend your information, please email: army.uwc@defence.gov.au or phone 1800 019 090