



Media release:

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## **Beware the Statistics Grinch this Christmas**

There are stalkers afoot throughout the land this Christmas.

They are agents of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the supremo agency that won't take 'no' - or even 'later' - for an answer, according to the Australian Privacy Foundation and Civil Liberties Australia.

A woman, harried on the first days of the school holidays, reports she was accosted by a man just as she pulled up in her driveway. He appeared to be stalking her.

As she started to pull groceries from the boot, children in tow and sick mother waiting in the house, the 'stalker' rushed up and thrust an ID card in her face.

"I'm from ABS," the flasher said. "I'm here to record you. We want to know all about your energy use and consumption."

"Not now, please go away," says the flustered mum. "I'm out of energy, and the only consumption I'm interested in is a cup of tea. You can see I'm up to my eyeballs in shopping, plus the kids, and mum's inside sick. Come back after Christmas."

"You must do the survey. And you must do it in the next few days. If you don't, you'll be fined," says Mr Grinch, from the ABS.

Harassed Mum declines. Next, she receives further threats, saying she will soon be fined \$110 a day if she doesn't complete the survey.

Merry Christmas, ABS. May all your presents be little figurines of Australians, into which you can stick \$110 pins throughout all of 2013.

You win the APF/CLA award for the most bullying, least compassionate government agency this Christmas.

ENDS

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