

President Mr Trump's "America first" language and his unapologetic treatment of old allies in Europe as he attacked them for relying on US protection while letting their own militaries run down.

Australia, unlike some NATO countries, has increased its defence spending to the benchmark 2 per cent of GDP. Mr Carouso said this and other demonstrations of Australian commitment to alliance were being recognised by US military figures.

"Our military guys are very satisfied and the President does listen to his military people... You are sort of the poster child for burden-sharing," he said.

Mr Carouso has served as acting ambassador for two years as the Trump administration dithers on finding a permanent appointee, though Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said during recent meetings with Australian counterpart Julie Bishop and Defence Minister Marise Payne that an ambassador would be named "soon".

Mr Carouso said the meeting in San Francisco underscored that the US saw continuing close engagement in Asia as an American stra-

tegy. The three-country plan aimed to draw more private infrastructure investment into the region by helping needy countries go through open processes that developed feasibility studies, attracted sustainable financing, conducted transparent and competitive bids for contractors and made sure local labour was used, Mr Carouso said.

"China's very effective at going in and saying, 'Just tell us what you want, sign here and we'll get it for you.' Which is a really nice, easy model," he said.

The US-Australia-Japan model was "more sustainable, more transparent, where everyone knows what the rules are and what the outcomes can be", he said.

"We believe in our capitalist system. We believe in competition. It's not against Belt and Road. It's competition to Belt and Road."



My Health Record can store DNA data, but critics

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conditions across 230 genes raises new privacy and security questions.

Paul Lacaze, head of Public Health Genomics at Monash University, said a national electronic system was "essential" if Australia wanted to achieve its full potential in precision medicine, but it needed to be implemented "properly" from the start.

"An invasion of your genetic information privacy is more personal and potentially more offensive than other types of data," he said.

Mr Lacaze said genetic results should be stored in a separate sys-

tem and there should be an additional layer of consent.

"The first reason is familial - your genetic results can imply something in a family member, that they may have also inherited that same genetic [variation] and they may not know or want to know," he said.

"Secondly, Australia still permits the use of genetic test results in life insurance underwriting, a practice long ago banned by most other comparable countries."

Dr Lacaze said stronger bioethics legislation and consumer safeguards were needed before pathology providers begin uploading genomic information to My Health Record.



Genomics promises to improve prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease.

Your genome is the complete set of genetic instructions encoded in the two metres of DNA in most of your cells. Genomics - healthcare that's tailored to a person's unique genetic makeup - promises to improve the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease.

Minister Hunt, who has committed \$500 million for the Genomics Health Futures Mission, said My Health Record had the full support of Australia's genomic leaders.

"The protection of patient information and privacy is critical and we have strong safeguards in place to protect health data," his spokesman said.

The ADHA said patients could choose whether they wanted genomic pathology results added to their My Health Record, like other health information, and always view a full history of access.

Dr Elizabeth Sigston, a leading head and neck surgeon, said the commercial genetic testing industry was pushing for genetic information to be integrated into record systems around the world and Australia shouldn't acquiesce.

The Garvan Institute of Medical Research said My Health Record would improve patient care and medical research.

"In terms of how it might be used