Office of the Information Commissioner
Western Australia

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International Access to Information Day

International Access to Information Day (IAID) is celebrated each year to promote the importance of access to information and its role in supporting accountability and transparency, informed decision-making and meaningful public participation in government.

This year's theme is Upholding information integrity in the digital age: The role of access to information in addressing information disorder.

The OIC WA is pleased to mark IAID with an event for agency FOI officers on **30 September 2026**.

The Information Commissioner and Information Access Deputy Commissioner will provide an update on the state of FOI in WA and discuss some of the challenges facing agencies and the OIC WA.

The event will be a great opportunity to meet OIC WA staff, connect with other FOI officers and share experiences. The session will be followed by afternoon tea.

Registration details will be sent to agencies soon.

Information access icon – Promoting information access



At the last meeting of Information Access Commissioners, agreement was reached for a common icon for information access to act as a visual signpost for access to government information across all Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand.

Information about the icon and downloadable formats of the icon itself (including EPS, and PNG files) are available at icons for access to information. This is a great way to mark IAID on 28 September in your agency.

WA agencies are encouraged to incorporate the icon on their home page with a link to their freedom of information page. The creation of a consistent visual cue across agencies provides an entry point for users to locate government information on agency websites across all levels of government. It will assist the WA public to navigate to FOI information regardless of jurisdiction, agency or website structure.

Updated online FOI training modules

The FOI Fundamentals Course has been updated to reflect creation of the new Office of the Information Commissioner under the *Information Commissioner Act 2024* (WA) and the amendments to the FOI Act that took effect on 1 July 2025 and 1 July 2026. Register for the online course at OIC Training and Events.

Update to FOI queue management policy

The OIC WA's Queue Management Policy has been updated recently to clarify how multiple external review applications from the same complainant are managed.

In determining the order in which applications are progressed, the Information Commissioner may consider the number of external review matters a complainant already has before the OIC. Where a complainant has multiple matters on hand, a newly received application may not be prioritised.

Matters of public interest will continue to be prioritised regardless of the number of applications.

This approach supports the fair and efficient use of the OIC's finite resources and promotes equitable and timely access to the external review process for more complainants.

New privacy FAQs on managing complaints

To support IPP entities in dealing with privacy complaints, the OIC has published two FAQs:

- What is the timeframe for an IPP entity to respond to a privacy complaint?
- How should an IPP entity handle a privacy complaint?

This guidance outlines the OIC's expectations about how IPP entities should manage privacy complaints, including:

- what is a sufficient amount of time for an IPP entity to deal with a privacy complaint
- why an IPP entity needs an effective complaints process
- the best way for an IPP entity to receive a privacy complaint, and
- what steps an IPP entity should take when it receives a privacy complaint.

Recent FOI decisions

Re 'B' and Main Roads Western Australia [2026] WAICmr 12

One aspect of this decision concerned the agency's decision to refuse the complainant access to a workplace allegation made against them, and to release an edited investigation report with personal information deleted under clause 3(1). In agreeing with the agency's clause 3(1) exemption claim, the Information Access Deputy Commissioner found the author's identity could be reasonably ascertained from the document. This is because of the following factors: the information was sufficiently specific that it was likely to be known to only a small number of people, the complainant's lengthy employment with the agency and the distinctive manner in which the allegation was written.

The decision also confirmed rights arising under an enterprise bargaining agreement operate independently of the FOI Act and cannot be enforced through an FOI access application.

Read the decision via the Office of the Information Commissioner website.

Other decisions

- *Re K and Department of Justice* [2026] WAICmr 13
- *Re QF7 and Child and Adolescent Health Service* [2026] WAICmr 14

Upcoming events

Regional advice & awareness program – week of 14 September

The Information Commissioner and staff from the OIC will join officers from the Ombudsman Western Australia, Consumer Protection Commission, Equal Opportunity Commission, Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman and the Australian Financial Complaints Authority in a regional awareness and accessibility program in Broome and surrounding communities. The OIC

will be engaging on FOI and privacy with regional stakeholders in the week commencing 14 September 2026.

Law Society WA webinar – 15 September

The Privacy Deputy Commissioner will present to the Law Society of Western Australia on why the new *Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024* (WA) is more than a new compliance obligation. Attendees will gain an understanding of the Information Privacy Principles under the PRIS Act, and what makes the PRIS Act the most advanced privacy law in Australia. The session will also explore why privacy impact assessments are more than a legal tickbox exercise, how to manage supply chain privacy risks, and why effective complaints management is an important component of an entity's privacy management system.

Western Australia Internal Audit Conference – 17 September

The Privacy Deputy Commissioner will present to the Western Australia Internal Audit Conference on managing evolving privacy and data protection obligations. This will include an overview of the new PRIS requirements, common gaps in data governance and privacy controls, managing supply chain privacy risk and internal audit's role in privacy assurance.

Privacy Community of Practice online event – 24 September

The OIC is excited to announce it will hold its first online Privacy Community of Practice session on 24 September 2026, following establishment of the community during Privacy Awareness Week. The session will cover the OIC's new privacy complaints jurisdiction, a member presentation on learnings from their PRIS implementation experience, and an opportunity for the Deputy Privacy Commissioner to answer questions from community members (please note questions must be received in advance).

This community is open to WA public sector Privacy Officers and PRIS Champions (or their nominated delegates). If you haven't already registered and are interested in attending, please register using this form: Privacy Community of Practice and we will send an invitation to attend.

For further information, please email info@oic.wa.gov.au.

FOI and Privacy tip of the month



Privacy – Prevent unauthorised transfer of your mobile number

Phone porting is a process which allows you to keep your phone number when you change telecommunications providers. Unauthorised phone porting happens when a scammer transfers your mobile number to a device they control so they can intercept your bank and email verification codes, as well as your private text messages and calls.



To pass standard phone porting identity checks, scammers rely on personal details they have already gathered about you (e.g. your full name, phone number, address, email or date of birth). This personal information can be obtained from your public social media profiles, data breaches, or even discarded postal letters.

Adding a security PIN or password to your existing telecommunications provider account means scammers cannot port your phone number just using basic personal details. To set up this additional layer of security, contact your telecommunications provider directly and ask them to add a security PIN or password to your account. If a request to port your

phone number occurs, your telecommunications provider will ask for your security PIN or password as part of their security checks.



FOI – Can agencies be third parties?

Agencies are not required to formally consult with other agencies about the disclosure of documents under the FOI Act. This is because an agency is not a 'third party' for the purposes of section 33 of the FOI Act.

However, if an agency is considering whether to give access to documents authored by another agency, or containing information about another agency's affairs, it may be helpful to contact that agency and ask for its views.



The agency that received the FOI application may take those views into account, but it must make its own decision about whether the documents are exempt.

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Office of the Information Commissioner acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.