



Office of the  
Information Commissioner

*Freedom of information for Western Australia*



International Access  
to Information Day

## MEDIA STATEMENT

### Information Commissioners and Ombudsmen hail importance of enabling digital access

Wednesday 28 September 2022

Australian and New Zealand Information Commissioners and Ombudsmen today highlight the importance of government agencies developing robust digital systems that strengthen the community's access to information.

To mark International Access to Information Day (IAID, also known as IAI Day), celebrated annually on 28 September, we join in our commitment to promote and uphold the fundamental right of the community to access government information.

IAID recognises the community's right to access government-held information and its role in helping everyone participate in our democracy. The 2022 UNESCO theme for the day is **artificial intelligence, e-Governance and access to information**.

The increasing shift to conducting the business of government digitally including online service delivery has raised the importance of correctly designing the right information management systems and processes to enable access to information in the digital context. In this way we can ensure that government moves beyond a transactional approach to e-Government to the broader goal of strengthening Open Government and realising e-Governance.

This year's focus on enabling digital access builds upon our release last year of the *Open by Design Principles*, which outline important considerations for government agencies to build a culture of transparency and trust by prioritising, promoting and resourcing proactive disclosure.

Information Commissioners and Ombudsmen recognise that the government information landscape is changing rapidly and that making government-held information available to all Australians is essential to building trust in the community.

In accordance with the *Open by Design Principles*, Australia's and New Zealand's Information Commissioners and Ombudsmen urge agencies to tailor their digital strategy to implement a best practice approach to proactive disclosure.

This means:

- embedding proactive disclosure of information into agency practices through implementing governance mechanisms

- adopting a transparency by design approach to services delivery, decision-making and disclosure of information
- establishing proactive disclosure mechanisms whenever creating new institutions, and
- identifying, on a continual basis, categories of information – including data and data sets - suitable for proactive disclosure.

The global recognition of IAID highlights the importance of timely access to information in promoting public scrutiny of government policy, participation in democratic processes, and allowing individuals and governments to make informed decisions.

Co-signed by:

**Angelene Falk**

Australian Information Commissioner

**Leo Hardiman PSM KC**

Freedom of Information Commissioner

**Catherine Fletcher**

Information Commissioner, Western Australia

**Iain Anderson**

Ombudsman, ACT

**Peter Boshier**

Chief Ombudsman,  
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**Sven Bluemmel**

Information Commissioner, Victoria

**Richard Connock**

Ombudsman, Tasmania

**Wayne Lines**

Ombudsman, South Australia

**Rachael Rangihaeata**

Information Commissioner, Queensland

**Peter Shoyer**

Information Commissioner, Northern Territory

**Elizabeth Tydd**

Information Commissioner, New South Wales

**ENDS**

**For further information, please contact:**

The Office of the Information Commissioner (WA) by email to [info@oic.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@oic.wa.gov.au) or phone to 6551 7888.

**About the Western Australian Information Commissioner**

The Information Commissioner is an independent officer who reports directly to Parliament. The position is established by the *Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA)* (**the FOI Act**) and is supported by staff of the Office of the Information Commissioner.

The main function of the Information Commissioner is to, in response to complaints by applicants, provide independent external review of decisions made by agencies on access applications and requests to amend personal information under the FOI Act.

The Information Commissioner’s other responsibilities include:

- ensuring that agencies are aware of their responsibilities under the FOI Act;
- ensuring that members of the public are aware of the FOI Act and their rights;
- providing assistance to members of the public and agencies on matters relevant to the FOI Act; and
- recommending to Parliament legislative or administrative changes that could be made to help the objects of the FOI Act to be achieved.

**For further information about International Access to information Day**

- [Office of the Information Commissioner WA – International Access to Information Day](#)
- [Office of the Australian Information Commissioner – International Access to Information Day](#)
- [Information and Privacy Commission New South Wales – Right to Know Week NSW 2022](#)
- [Office of the Information Commissioner Queensland – International Access to Information Day 2022](#)
- [Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner – International Access to Information Day](#)
- [UNESCO – International Day for Universal Access to Information](#)