



**Office of the
Information
Commissioner**

Association of Information Access Commissioners of Australia and New Zealand (AIAC) – 2-3 October 2025 – Communiqué

Information Commissioners and Ombudsmen call on public sector leaders to champion access to information as a driver of innovation, environmental sustainability and democratic values

The Association of Information Access Commissioners (AIAC), comprising Information Commissioners and Ombudsmen from Australia and New Zealand, held their bi-annual meeting in Sydney from 2 to 3 October 2025.

This meeting coincided with the 10th anniversary of the International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI), observed during the same week. In recognition of a decade of celebrating progress and identifying contemporary challenges to the right to information worldwide, UNESCO has chosen the theme “Ensuring Access to Environmental Information in the Digital Age” for this year’s IDUAI. This theme highlights the critical role that open government and information transparency play in addressing pressing matters of environmental significance through digital innovation.

In alignment with this global focus, Information Commissioners and Ombudsmen explored how information access, particularly access to environmental information, can act as a catalyst for environmental sustainability, innovation, and public participation. Open government, reliable environmental information and data not only strengthens government accountability, but fuels the development of digital tools, data-driven solutions and collaborative approaches essential to addressing today’s environmental challenges and creating a healthier environment for current and future generations.

Consistent with guiding principles, the right to access government-held information must be supported by a presumption in favour of accessing information. By presuming that information should be disclosed, the burden of proof shifts to the agency to justify any refusal, fostering an open and transparent government culture. AIAC members acknowledge this legislative safeguard necessary to support and enliven the human right enshrined under the United Nation’s International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Article 19 (Freedom of Speech).

AIAC members call upon public sector leaders to champion access to information as a driver of innovation by:

- recognising the value of government-held information and data as a resource to support innovation among governments, private sector actors and civil society to proactively engage with community needs; and
- acknowledging the significant benefits of information access tools, digital platforms and technology, to facilitate efficient and effective information access and generate a pro-disclosure culture.

AIAC members are integrity agencies with independent oversight and responsibilities to protect and promote the public's right to access government-held information under their respective state, territory and national laws.

Endorsements of this Communiqué are as follows:

Commonwealth	Endorsed
Australian Capital Territory	Endorsed
New South Wales	Endorsed
Northern Territory	Endorsed (virtually)
Victoria	Endorsed
Queensland	Endorsed
South Australia	Endorsed
Tasmania	Endorsed
Western Australia	Endorsed
New Zealand	Endorsed