



Australian Government



Inspector-
General of
Water
Compliance

Information Publication Scheme Inspector-General of Water Compliance Agency Plan

February 2023

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Introduction

The 2010-11 reforms to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) established a requirement for an Information Publication Scheme for relevant Australian Government agencies, including the Inspector-General of Water Compliance (the Inspector-General). In accordance with section 8(1) of the FOI Act, the Inspector-General has prepared this Information Publication Scheme – Inspector-General of Water Compliance Agency Plan (the Agency Plan).

Purpose

The purpose of the Agency Plan is to:

- Assist the Inspector-General in planning and developing its contribution to the Information Publication Scheme
- Demonstrate what information the Inspector-General proposes to publish, how and to whom the information will be published and how the Inspector-General will otherwise comply with the Information Publication Scheme
- Clarify the separate imposition of obligations under the FOI Act on the Office of the Inspector-General of Water Compliance.

Objectives

The Agency Plan outlines the mechanisms and procedures the Inspector-General is required to undertake in managing and making information available. These include:

1. Effectively and efficiently managing its information holdings that are relevant to the Information Publication Scheme
2. Identifying all information required to be published, including this plan, under the Information Publication Scheme and identify additional information that can appropriately be published as 'optional information'
3. Ensuring that online content conforms with the Government's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (as amended from time-to-time)
4. Regularly reviewing information published under the Information Publication Scheme to ensure it remains complete, accurate and up-to-date
5. Ensuring that the information published under the Information Publication Scheme is discoverable, searchable, understandable and reusable
6. Developing a mechanism and procedures to measure the success of the Agency Plan.

Implementing the Information Publication Scheme

This section sets out the arrangements for implementing the Information Publication Scheme through the Agency Plan.

Plan owner

This Agency Plan is owned by the Inspector-General of Water Compliance.

Responsibility for the IPS

The Deputy Inspector-General (Capability), with assistance from the Regulatory Best Practice Team in Office of the Inspector-General of Water Compliance (the office), oversees the implementation of the Information Publication Scheme.

How the information can be accessed on the website

The Inspector-General's [FOI page](#) is the main portal through which members of the public can access the information made available under this Agency Plan.

Freedom of information requests

The Inspector-General's [FOI page](#) explains how you can make a freedom of information (FOI) request, the review process, fees and charges and contact information.

Freedom of information disclosure log

The disclosure log provides access to documents disclosed by the Inspector-General pursuant to an FOI request by listing summary information such as title, date of release, including number of pages and descriptions of the types of documents released. The publication of this information is in accordance with section 11C of the FOI Act.

Interested parties may access copies of the documents listed in the Inspector-General's FOI Disclosure Log (either in hard copy, CD or, where possible, email) by contacting the [FOI Officer](#).

Information publication requirements

The Inspector-General will publish all documents required under sections 8, 8(A), 8(C) and 8(D) of the FOI Act.

Information published by the Inspector-General

What the Inspector-General will publish

- [Annual reports](#) (published in accordance with section 215Y of the Water Act)
- [Annual work plan](#) (published in accordance with section 215E of the Water Act)
- [Audit reports](#) (published in accordance with section 73N of the Water Act)
- Open consultations
- [Contact information](#)
- Decision making powers under the Water Act
- [Disclosure Log of information released pursuant to FOI requests](#)
- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- [Governance arrangements](#)
- Guidelines (issued in accordance with section 215V of the Water Act)
- [Inquiry reports](#) (published in accordance with section 239AE of the Water Act)
- [Media releases](#)
- [Office of the Inspector-General of Water Compliance organisation chart](#)
- Statutory appointments (under section 215TA of the Water Act)
- Standards (issued in accordance with section 215VA of the Water Act)
- [What the Inspector-General of Water Compliance does](#)
- [Who the Inspector-General of Water Compliance is](#)

Optional information

Taking into account the objectives of the FOI Act (s 3(4)), the Inspector-General will publish as much information as possible on its website to comply with the FOI Act and in the interests of full disclosure (in addition to the information published under s 8(2)).

However, the Inspector-General's publication practices must be balanced against its obligation to respect and maintain confidential information, which includes, among other things, personal information and information provided in confidence by third party. This type of information will only be published when the public interest test applies or consent is provided by the owner of the information. The public and stakeholders should remain confident that any personal or confidential information the Inspector-General possesses will be protected from release when it is appropriate to do so.

The Inspector-General will ensure documents published can be found easily and are searchable. The Inspector-General's website has user friendly navigation and an easy-to-use search function.

The Inspector-General encourages people to print copies of required documents, if they are available on the website, rather than asking the Inspector-General to do so. The Inspector-General may impose a charge when asked to print a large number of documents. This is consistent with charges in the *Freedom of Information (Charges) Regulations 1982*, which generally apply to access requests under Part III of the FOI Act.

Operational material

The Inspector-General is committed to acting with integrity by being transparent in how the functions and powers under the Water Act will be used. Among other things, the Inspector-General will publish operational material setting out how the Inspector-General and Office will conduct activities supporting those functions and powers.

The purpose of this operational material is to provide clarity around the reasons for a specified approach and predictability in how the powers under the Water Act are exercised. Consequently, this material will be developed having regard to feedback from affected persons or other parties, in line with best practice. This material and relevant feedback will be published on the Inspector-General's website.

Administering the IPS Agency Plan

The Inspector-General will publish all mandated information relevant to the statutory office of the Inspector-General of Water Compliance as it is finalised.

General objective

The Inspector-General's objective is to be transparent in making decisions in accordance with the Water Act, including through the disclosure of material used by the Commission in its functions and decision-making, unless otherwise prevented (such as for confidential information). The Inspector-General will be as proactive as possible in publishing both optional and operational information in order to comply with its obligations.

Review

The Inspector-General will ensure that all information is accurate and up to date at the time of publication.

The Inspector-General's objective with respect to IPS is to ensure transparency and openness with the public in its decision-making processes. The Inspector-General will ensure that comments made by the public in relation to this Agency Plan will be taken into account and the plan amended as appropriate.

Office of the Inspector-General of Water Compliance

FOI requirements

The Inspector-General is supported by the office, which sits in the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water portfolio.

Material developed by the office, where not covered by this Agency Plan, is information that is managed by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water in accordance with its [FOI arrangements](#).

Feedback

Feedback on the Agency Plan can be provided through the following methods:

By post:

Inspector-General of Water Compliance
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
GPO Box 3090, Canberra ACT 2601

By email:

IGWC.FOI@agriculture.gov.au