

DEFENCE INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME PLAN

10 MARCH 2015

Introduction



Part 2 of the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (FOI Act) establishes an Information Publication Scheme (IPS) for Australian Government agencies subject to the FOI Act. The IPS commenced on 1 May 2011 and requires the Department of Defence to publish a broad range of information on its website. Defence is also required to publish a plan that explains how the IPS is administered.

The IPS underpins a pro-disclosure culture across government, and transforms the freedom of information framework from one that is reactive to individual requests for documents, to one that also relies more heavily on agency driven publication of information. The IPS requirements are intended to facilitate and promote public access to information promptly and at the lowest reasonable cost.

This plan describes how Defence will implement and administer its IPS entries as required by s 8(1) of the FOI Act, by addressing:

- administration of the Defence IPS entries;
- information architecture;
- information required to be published;
- other information to be published; and
- IPS compliance review.

Defence will continue to build and foster a culture in which appropriate proactive disclosure of its information holdings is embraced. This is in recognition that public sector information is a national resource, managed for public purposes.

Purpose

The purpose of this agency plan is to:

- assist Defence in maintaining and enhancing its IPS entries;
- facilitate improved transparency about that entries; and
- further identify information for public release, as well as ways in which Defence can improve compliance with the IPS requirements.

Objectives

Defence's objective is to outline appropriate mechanisms and procedures to:

- manage its IPS entries;
- identify and publish all information required to be published (s 8(2));
- proactively identify and publish any other information to be published (s 8(4));
- review on a regular basis and ensure that information published as part of its IPS entries is accurate, up to date and complete (s 8B);

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- ensure that information published as part of its IPS entries is easily discoverable, understandable, machine-readable, re-useable and transformable;
- ensure satisfactory conformance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (Version 2) (WCAG 2.0);
- measure the success of the Defence IPS entries by reference to community feedback and compliance review processes; and
- reduce the number of formal requests under the FOI Act by making information that is routinely sought readily available and accessible.

Information required to be published under the IPS

Defence has published mandatory information required under the IPS (s 8(2)) as part of the top-level information architecture and about us information on the Defence website.

This includes:

- a plan for the Information Publication Scheme (this plan);
- an organisation chart setting out the structure of the organisation;
- details of our functions, including decision-making powers and other powers affecting members of the public;
- details of appointments of officers made under Acts - such as appointments of statutory officers;
- our annual reports;
- details of consultation arrangements for members of the public to comment on specific policy proposals for which Defence is responsible, including how (and to whom) those comments may be made;
- information which Defence routinely releases in response to FOI requests;
- information that Defence routinely provides to the Parliament in response to requests and orders from the Parliament;
- how we can be contacted about access to information or documents under the FOI Act; and
- our operational information, insofar as it extends to our exercising functions and powers in making decisions or recommendations which may affect members of the public.

Other information to be published under the IPS

Defence proactively publishes other information that it holds (in addition to the information published under s 8(2)), taking into account the objects of the FOI Act (s 8(4)).

In keeping with improved accountability within Defence, from 20 January 2012, Hot Issue Briefs submitted to the Minister for Defence by the Department of Defence are publicly released under the IPS.

Administering our IPS entry

Governance arrangements

The Assistant Secretary, Information, Management and Access (IMA) is the strategic manager of FOI processes, the IPS, and corporate information management more generally. The IMA Branch

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administers the Defence IPS entries and is responsible for implementing, reviewing and revising this plan.

The governance arrangements established to support information management improvements in Defence include an Information Management Steering Committee. With membership at 3 Star/Senior Executive Service Band 3 level from each Group and Service, the Committee sets the whole-of Defence direction for corporate information management. The committee is co-chaired by the Deputy Secretary, Defence Support and Reform Group and the Chief Information Officer.

Information asset framework

Publishing and managing the Defence IPS entries is undertaken in accordance with the existing Defence publishing framework, which consists of a set of processes underpinned by corporate strategies, policies and standards.

In 2014, the Defence Web Estate Manual was released and it provides governance and guidance for the preparation, authorisation and publishing of web content. Defence will continue to update its Records Management Policy to address changes in the Archives Act 1983 and Records in Evidence obligations, as well as the introduction of the Government's Digital Transition Policy.

The Information Management Strategic Framework (IMSF) which was endorsed by the Defence Committee in 2010, brings together a set of principles and objectives that underpin a whole-of-Defence approach to Information Management.

Access

In keeping with the requirements of the whole-of-government Web Accessibility National Transition Strategy, Defence has established a web team to improve web services and access to Defence information. The team is responsible for monitoring Defence's vast web environment and ensuring that the Defence websites comply with the Australian Government Information Management Office's web accessibility rating.

Register of information

Defence maintains an internal register of information required or permitted to be published under the IPS. The register contains details on:

- the business area and contact officer responsible for the information;
- when the information was last updated;
- when the information is next scheduled for review; and
- if a document is not published online, who the contact officer is to obtain a copy.

Currency

Defence ensures its IPS entries are accurate, up to date and complete by undertaking the following:

- adhering to the internal IPS standard operating procedures which set out roles and responsibilities, procedures to manage the IPS content, and a notification and review process for adding new content and reviewing existing content for currency and relevancy;

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- adhering to section 11C of the FOI Act by publishing decisions and documents released under FOI taking into consideration the Guidelines issued by the Australian Information Commissioner; and
- inviting public feedback on the IPS.

Charges

Defence will not charge for information provided by email. However, where information is requested in an alternative format (for example, a photocopy of the document) and the reimbursement or incidental costs would be more than \$100, charges may apply. The charges that may apply are listed below.

| Format | Charges |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Photocopy | 10 cents per page |
| Copy (other than photocopy) | \$4.40 per page |
| Copy of the document in the form of a computer disk | An amount not exceeding the actual costs incurred by Defence in producing the copy |
| Copy of the document to be sent to the applicant by post or delivered to the applicant | An amount not exceeding the cost of postage or delivery |

Generally, there will be no charge where the cost would be below \$100.

Information architecture

The point of entry for public access to the Defence IPS content is the Defence website homepage. The IPS content can be accessed via the homepage navigation menu and the Accessing our Information icon in the footer.

IPS compliance review

Defence reviews the operation of the IPS annually and updates its plan each year.

Online information, in all formats, is regularly reviewed for currency and accuracy. Outdated information is replaced or archived.

A periodic analysis of Defence website statistics allows informed decisions as to the effectiveness of providing information online and the type of information being sought.

The success of the Defence IPS is determined by an analysis of public feedback via the Defence website's online feedback form, and the reduction of requests made for general and FOI information respectively.