



Australian Government

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

Information Publication Scheme

Survey of Australian Government Agencies: Appendix A — Questionnaire



Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

**Information Publication Scheme Survey of Australian
Government Agencies**

20th September – 18th October 2023

Introduction

Welcome to the 2023 Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) Information Publication Scheme (IPS) Agency Survey.

About the survey

The survey seeks information in relation to an important area of activity for all Australian Government agencies subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982 \(Cth\)](#) (FOI Act) – the operation of the IPS within each Australian Government agency.

Section 9 of the FOI Act requires agencies to complete a review of their IPS every 5 years in conjunction with the Information Commissioner. The OAIC has commissioned this survey to facilitate the IPS review for each agency. Your agency will satisfy this requirement by completing and submitting this survey by **18 October 2023**.

The information collected in the IPS Survey will be used by the OAIC to develop a national level report on the operation of the IPS across all Australian Government agencies and provide a comparative analysis with the results of the 2012 and 2018 IPS Surveys. A report of the 2018 IPS Survey results is published on the OAIC website – [Information Publication Scheme survey 2018 | OAIC](#).

The information collected may also be used to assist the OAIC understand agencies' approaches to the publication of information and identify ways the OAIC can provide advice, assistance and training to agencies on the operation of the IPS in the future.

What do I need to do as the primary survey contact officer?

The primary FOI Contact Officer(s) – as listed in the FOI Statistics Portal, at the end of August 2023, is expected to **coordinate a response across relevant areas of the agency** to ensure the survey is completed and submitted on time.

The survey opens on Wednesday 20 September 2023.

We recommend that you **review the questionnaire as soon as possible** to identify if input is required from other parts of your agency. This will allow input to be provided and your survey completed and submitted by the close date.

The survey includes references and links to specific parts of the [Guidelines issued by the Australian Information Commissioner under s 93A of the FOI Act](#) (FOI Guidelines) and the [FOI Act](#) to assist with interpreting and completing specific questions and sections. The survey also refers to, and requests information from your agency's 2022-23 Annual Report. We suggest that you have this report on hand when completing the survey.

The FOI statistics submitted by your agency over the last financial year may also assist when completing the survey. You may wish to download or 'print to PDF', a copy of your agency's 2023 Annual FOI Statistical Return by logging into the database and proceeding to the Quarterly and Annual Statistical Returns section. From there, change the **Period** to reflect **2023** year and select the 'Annual' button to the right of the screen (refer example below).

Quarterly and Annual Statistical Returns

Current details for the selected agency are shown below. Earlier years and quarters may also be selected.

Period

Financial Year Ending In: 2023

- ☒ Q1. 1 July - 30 September
- ☐ Q2. 1 October - 31 December
- ☐ Q3. 1 January - 31 March
- ☐ Q4. 1 April - 30 June

☐ Edit current Quarterly and Annual Returns for an Agency and automatically add them if they do not exist.

Quarterly

Annual

When does the survey close?

The survey will close on Wednesday 18 October 2023.

The Information Publication Scheme (IPS)

The IPS underpins a pro-disclosure culture across government and its purpose is to provide a mechanism through which government-held information is made available to the public. The IPS requires Australian Government agencies subject to the FOI Act to proactively publish specific categories of information on their websites. In particular:

- s 8(1) of the FOI Act requires agencies to prepare an Agency IPS plan
- s 8(2) requires agencies to publish their IPS plan and specified categories of information, and
- s 8(4) confirms that agencies may publish other information that they hold, in addition to the information required to be published under s 8(2).

This information is known as an agency's IPS entry. An agency's IPS entry is made up of three components:

1. The agency IPS plan (s 8(1) and 8(2)(a)).
2. Information required to be published under the IPS (s 8(2)).
3. 'Other' information that may be published by the agency (s 8(4)).

Section 8F of the FOI Act confers three specific functions on the Information Commissioner for reviewing the operation of the IPS:

- reviewing the operation of the IPS in each agency, in conjunction with the agency
- investigating an agency's compliance with IPS requirements, either upon receipt of a complaint or at the Information Commissioner's initiative, and
- otherwise monitoring, investigating and reporting on the operation of the IPS.

Section 9 of the FOI Act states that agencies must, in conjunction with the Information Commissioner, complete a review of the operation of the IPS within their agency, as appropriate from time to time and in any case, within five years after the last time a review under the section was completed. **Your agency will satisfy this requirement by completing and submitting this survey by 18 October 2023.**

Updated FOI Guidelines – Part 13

On 22 December 2022, the OAIC published a consultation draft of updates to Part 13 (Information Publication Scheme) of the FOI Guidelines, seeking feedback on the updated guidance.

Following this consultation, the OAIC published an updated version - [Part 13: Information Publication Scheme](#) – (v 1.5). The updated guidance notes the following areas of clarification:

- a) References to ‘information architecture’ changed to ‘Structure of the IPS’ [13.31] and [13.165].
- b) Updated reference material and links.
- c) Introduced a section on *The IPS and disclosure log requirements* [13.12] – [13.14].
- d) Introduced a section on *Open by design* [13.17] – [13.22].
- e) Introduced a section on *Overlapping publication requirements* [13.23] – [13.26].
- f) Revised guidance on the IPS information register [13.40] – [13.45].
- g) Revised guidance about ‘other’ information that agencies may publish on the IPS [13.131] – [13.139].
- h) Introduced a section on *Governance arrangements* [13.143] – [13.146].
- i) Updated guidance regarding the publication of complaint investigation summaries on the OAIC website [13.166] – [13.168].

Privacy notice

Information we will collect

To manage the survey, the OAIC and ORIMA will collect information about the primary survey contact officer completing this survey, in particular your name, email and phone number. We will only use your personal information to manage the IPS review. We will not use your personal information for any other purpose. If this information is not provided, we may be unable to clarify your responses, if this is necessary, and this may affect our ability to complete the review of your agency’s IPS in conjunction with your agency.

We will also ask you to provide contact information for the Senior Executive Service (SES) officer responsible for the IPS in your agency (if relevant). This includes their name, telephone number, email address, and position title. We collect this information to confirm the appointment of a senior executive within the agency responsible for leading the agency’s work on IPS compliance. If this information is not provided, we may be unable to confirm such an appointment in considering your agency’s IPS governance and administration for the purposes of this review.

How we will collect your information and who will see it

The information collected in the IPS Survey will be used by the OAIC to develop a national level report on the operation of the IPS across all Australian Government agencies and provide a comparative analysis with the results of the 2012 and 2018 IPS Agency Surveys. These publications will not contain your name or any identifiable information about you or any staff member in your agency. A report of the 2018 IPS Survey results is published on the OAIC website – [Information Publication Scheme survey 2018 | OAIC](#).

The information collected may also be used to assist the OAIC to understand agencies' approaches to the publication of information and identify ways the OAIC can provide advice, assistance and training to agencies on the operation of the IPS in the future.

ORIMA will provide individual survey responses, including free-text responses in verbatim form, to the OAIC. These responses will include your agency name and the contact information of the SES officer responsible for IPS in your agency (if relevant).

Information you provide may be subject to a request under the FOI Act. If the OAIC receives an FOI request concerning agency responses, the OAIC may consult the agency before making a decision.

More on privacy

For information about how ORIMA Research and the OAIC manage privacy, including how information will be stored; how to request access or correct personal information, or how to make a privacy complaint, please see:

- OAIC's Privacy Policy <https://www.oaic.gov.au/about-the-OAIC/our-corporate-information/plans-policies-and-procedures/privacy-policy>
- ORIMA's Privacy Policy <https://orima.com.au/privacy-policy/>

Further Information

All questions regarding completion of the survey should be directed to ORIMA Research. Please call our helpdesk on 1800 806 590 or email IPSSurvey@orima.com.

If you have any questions about the IPS review, you may contact Ms Anastasia Pierakos on 03 9526 9000 or via email to anastasia.pierakos@orima.com. Alternatively, you may contact Ms Karen Tulloch at the OAIC via email to karen.tulloch@oaic.gov.au.

Should you have any questions about ORIMA's privacy policy or how ORIMA will treat your information, you may contact ORIMA's Privacy Officer, Tyler Forrester on (03) 9526 9000.

Details of the OAIC Privacy Officer are available in the Privacy Officer Instrument located on the OAIC website here <https://www.oaic.gov.au/about-the-OAIC/our-corporate-information/operational-information/privacy-officer-appointment-instrument>.

A. Agency Details

Demographic Details

- 1 What is the name of your agency?

- 2 What is your agency's portfolio?

- 3 Please provide the following information

Note: This will only be used if we need to contact you to clarify any of your survey responses. Your information will not be used for analysis or reporting purposes. See also the [Privacy Notice](#).

[Please answer all fields]

a. Name of the Contact Officer completing this survey (i.e, the IPS review)	
b. Contact phone number	
c. Contact email address	

- 4 How many staff were employed by your agency at the following dates.

Note:

(1) Where this survey refers to 'your agency', please refer to the entity named in question 1 and exclude any other agencies, statutory authorities and entities in your agency's portfolio

(2) Please provide a whole agency head count, not full-time equivalent (FTE). Please include in your calculations all current agency employees (ongoing, non-ongoing, full time, part time and those on extended leave). Exclude contractors, including those whose services are provided through a labour hire firm.

- 1 30 June 2023? _____
- 2 20 September 2023? _____

- 5 How many FOI requests were received by your agency during the 2022-2023 financial year?

- 1 Personal (*please specify*) n = _____

2 Other (please specify) n = _____

3 Total (please specify) n = _____

- 6 What is the number of FOI staff who spent at least 75% of their time on FOI or IPS work (this information is captured in your agency's input to the OAIC FOI Statistics Portal Annual Report – refer questions 2 A) and B).

Note: The OAIC will access and use your agency's total FOI expenditure for the 2022-23 financial year from your annual FOI statistics return; the expenditure will be calculated on the datasets at data.gov.au once this information is publicly available.

	More than 75% of the time	Between 0% and 75% of the time
a. FOI	_____	_____
b. IPS	_____	_____

- 7 Have there been any changes to your agency's structure after 30 June 2022 that have impacted on your agency's processing of FOI requests or total FOI expenditure?

1 Yes (please elaborate)

2 No

B. Agency IPS Operation Review

IPS operation review

Section 9(1) of the FOI Act requires that each agency must complete a review of the operation of the IPS in the agency with the Information Commissioner as appropriate from time to time; and at least once every five years (see s 9 of the FOI Act and [Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#) [paragraph 13.163 - 13.165] under 'Review of agency IPS compliance'). The OAIC encourages agencies to undertake more regular reviews, preferably annually.

- 8 Since the 2018 Survey, has your agency completed a review of the operation of the IPS in your agency in conjunction with the Information Commissioner?

1 Yes *[Please answer Q9-12]*

2 No *[Go to Q12]*

Please note that the Information Commissioner will consider the completion and submission of this survey by 18 October 2023 to have satisfied your agency's requirement to complete a review of the operation of the IPS in your agency.

- 9 *[if yes selected at Q8, ask]* When was the review completed?

10 Did the review cover the following five key elements of IPS compliance set out in Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines [paragraph 13.165]?	Yes	No
a. Agency IPS plan (This includes whether the agency published a comprehensive plan for its IPS compliance)		
b. Governance and administration (This includes whether the agency has appropriate governance mechanisms in place to meet its IPS obligations, including an information management framework)		
c. IPS document holdings (This includes whether the agency reviewed its document holdings to identify what information must be published under s 8(2) and information that can be published under s 8(4). Whether the agency IPS entry is accurate, up-to-date and complete)		
d. Structure of the IPS (This includes whether the agency has a publication framework in place and has taken the necessary steps to ensure that information in its IPS entry is easily discoverable and accessible to the Australian community)		

- e. Agency compliance review
(This includes whether the agency has appropriate processes, systems and resources in place to monitor and review its IPS compliance and to make necessary improvement in the agency's IPS implementation)

- 11 Please briefly describe the outcomes of this review (including key findings and any recommendations) and, if available, upload relevant documents relating to the review.

[Upload documents]

Complaint handling/measurement

- 12 Does your agency's website provide information about how to make a complaint about your agency's IPS?

- 1 Yes
2 No

- 13 [If yes at Q12, ask] Please provide a link to this information on your website or include the text provided on your website in the box below.

URL:

OR

Text on your website

- 14 How many complaints about your agency's IPS did your agency receive in 2022-23?

- 1 n = (please specify)

- 2 No IPS complaints were received over this period

3 Information on the number of IPS complaints received is not available / not recorded

15 Does your agency have any methods in place to collect feedback about your IPS practices?

- 1 Yes (e.g., website feedback widgets to select asking 'was this page helpful')
- 2 No

16 [if yes selected at Q15, ask] Which of the following measures does your agency use to collect feedback about your IPS practices?

- 1 Survey, feedback form or feedback widget hosted on your agency's website
- 2 Surveys sent to stakeholders/users of your agency's information
- 3 Focus groups, interviews or workshops with stakeholders/users of your agency's information
- 4 Other *Please specify* _____

17 [if no selected at Q15, ask] Will you develop methods to measure feedback about your IPS practices in 2023-24?

- 1 Yes, this is under development
- 2 Yes, this is planned
- 3 No, not planned in 2023-24

18 Have you been able to identify good practices being used by other agencies to support the purposes of the IPS?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

19 [if yes selected at Q18, ask] Please provide examples of the good practices being used by other agencies to support the purposes of the IPS (examples could include the publication of FOI statistics, routinely requested data and information, 'hot issues' or 'hot topics' briefs etc.)

20 If you have any further comments about your agency's review of the operation of the IPS, please provide them here.

Information Contact Officer Network

The Information Contact Officer Network (ICON) is a network for representatives from Australian Government departments and agencies who work in FOI or have an interest in this area.

The OAIC publishes an ICON Newsletter providing updates on a range of OAIC initiatives, publications and recent IC review decisions. ICON meetings provide Contact Officers with the opportunity to receive updates on the work of the OAIC and developments in FOI.

For further information on ICON, including on how to join the network, please click here [Information Contact Officers Network | OAIC](#)

21 Does your agency have an Officer(s) who participate in ICON?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No *[Go to Q23]*

22 Which of the following best describes the area of your agency that the ICON officer(s) is located?

An area with the following function:

- 1 FOI
- 2 Privacy
- 3 Legal or Litigation

Other area (not listed above)

- 4 Other area within Information Management Branch (or equivalent)
- 5 Other area within Corporate Branch / Division
- 6 Other *[Please specify]:* _____

C. Agency IPS Plan

The FOI Act requires all agencies to publish an IPS plan on their website (s 8). [Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#), refer to paragraphs [13.31 – 13.35] and [13.46] which provide guidance on the structure, contents and publication requirements of the Agency Plan.

Agency IPS Plan Published

23 Does your agency have a published Agency IPS Plan on its website?

1 Yes - *Please enter URL*

2 No

24 *[If no is selected for Q23, ask]* Why does your agency not have a published Agency IPS Plan on its website?

Agency IPS Plan follows OAIC structure and content recommendations

[Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#) [13.31] 'Structure and contents of the agency plan' recommends that agencies use the following five standardised headings in their Agency IPS Plans:

- Establishing and administering the agency's IPS entry
- Structure of the IPS
- Information required to be published under the IPS (s 8(2))
- Other information to be published (s 8(4))
- IPS compliance review (s 8F).

25 Does your Agency IPS Plan use the five standard recommended headings as specified above, and in the FOI Guidelines [13.31]?

1 Yes – All *[Go to Q28]*

2 Yes – Some

3 No – we do not use any of the five standard headings

26 *[if Yes - Some selected at Q25, ask]* Which of these headings does your agency use and why?

- 27 [if No – we do not use any of the five standard headings selected at Q25, ask] Why does your agency not use these headings?

Update and maintenance of Agency IPS Plan

[Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#) [13.34] 'Establishing and administering an agency's IPS entry' recommends that the Agency IPS Plan address the following nine matters:

28 Does your Agency IPS Plan specify/address:	Yes	No	Not applicable
i. the senior executive officer currently responsible for leading the agency's work on IPS compliance?			
ii. the resources allocated to establishing and administering the agency's IPS entry?			
iii. the process for identifying operational information required under s 8(2)?			
iv. the process for identifying additional ('other') information under s 8(4)?			
v. the process for revising the IPS entry?			
vi. the measures being taken to ensure that the agency's IPS entry is accurate, up-to-date and complete?			
vii. the measures (if any) being taken to improve the agency's <u>information asset management framework</u> to support its IPS compliance?			
viii. whether the agency has developed an internal IPS information register (see [13.40] – [13.45])			
ix. details of <u>access charges</u> (if any) imposed for accessing information published under the IPS as well as how charges will be calculated (see [13.158 – 13.160])			

- 29 When was your Agency IPS Plan last updated? (see [13.27] – [13.30]) [of the FOI Guidelines](#)

- The Agency plan was last updated on: _____
- We have not updated our Agency IPS Plan since it was first published. *Please specify the date your Agency IPS Plan was first published:* _____

Please note: If you cannot determine the exact day, please select the first of the month and relevant year (e.g. 01/03/2020). Similarly, if you cannot determine the exact day and month, please select the first day of the relevant year (e.g. 01/01/2023).

There is an opportunity to provide clarification in the free-text at Question 33.

30 Do you have a timetable for formally reviewing your Agency IPS Plan? The OAIC encourages agencies to undertake regular reviews, preferably annually [13.163 [Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#)]

- 1 Yes
- 2 No [*Go to Q32*]

31 If you have a timetable, how often is a formal review of the Agency IPS Plan scheduled to be undertaken? The OAIC encourages agencies to undertake more regular reviews, preferably annually [13.163 [Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#)]

- 1 At least every 12 months
- 2 On a regular basis but less often than every 12 months [Please specify frequency]: _____
- 3 Only where significant IPS changes occur
- 4 Don't know / Can't say

32 Has your agency reviewed the most recent changes to Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines published in August 2023? [Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#)

- 1 Yes
- 2 No, but was **aware** of these changes
- 3 No, was **not aware** of these changes (before this survey)

33 If you have any further comments about the legislative requirement to publish and prepare an Agency IPS Plan or any feedback about the guidance provided in [Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#), about the structure and contents of the Agency IPS Plan please provide them here.

Please note: If you would like to provide clarification about the date(s) to be entered at Question 29 'When was your Agency IPS Plan last updated and/or last published?', please do so here.

D. IPS Governance and Administration

This section checks whether your agency has established an appropriate governance and administration framework to support the maintenance of information published under the IPS, including that published information is accurate, up-to-date and complete. The framework should include:

- appropriate IPS policies, business processes and procedures to guide the IPS within the agency;
- clear allocation of responsibility for the implementation, ongoing maintenance and compliance review and reporting associated with the IPS;
- the appointment of a senior executive within the agency responsible for leading the agency's work on IPS compliance;
- establishing appropriate information management processes to facilitate identification and publication of IPS documents; and
- measures to ensure that agency staff are aware of and understand the IPS requirements.

NOTE: Any reference to procedures in this survey is a reference to written procedures.

Governance/ structural arrangements

34 Does your agency have a senior executive officer with responsibility for leading the agency's work on IPS compliance?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

35 [if Yes selected at Q34, ask] What are the senior executive officer's details?

Name: _____

Position Title / Role: _____

Work area: _____

36 [if No selected at Q34, ask] Why has your agency not appointed a senior executive officer with responsibility for leading the agency's work on IPS compliance?

37 Does your agency have a formal IPS governance structure? (e.g. Steering Committee, Working Group or other body with direct oversight of the IPS)

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

38 [if Yes selected at Q37, ask] What type(s) of formal IPS governance structure(s) does your agency have?

- 1 Steering Committee
- 2 Working Group
- 3 Other *[please specify]* _____

39 [if No selected at Q37, ask] Why does your agency not have a formal IPS governance structure?

40 Where does the work function for the IPS sit within your agency (i.e., who completes the bulk of the work)?

- 1 With a dedicated IPS officer
- 2 Shared within the team responsible for FOI
- 3 With your organisation's Information Champion
- 4 Shared across different team units/ individuals
- 5 Other, *please specify* _____

41 Please select the appropriate band(s)/level(s) or equivalent level/best match to the officer(s) who complete work on the IPS. *Please select all that apply*

- 1 APS Level 1-4
- 2 APS Level 5-6
- 3 Executive Level 1
- 4 Executive Level 2
- 5 SES Band 1
- 6 SES Band 2 or above

IPS Policies and procedures have been established

42 Are policies and/or procedures in place to:	Yes	No
a. identify and prepare documents for IPS publication?		
b. publish IPS documents?		

Resources allocated to IPS functions

- 43 What is the number of staff (please record a head count of staff, not full-time equivalent (FTE)) performing IPS functions and duties in your agency as at 30 June 2023? This is the number of staff (i.e., headcount) whose duties include IPS functions as part of their normal functions.

Note: n= _____

Staff training and awareness of IPS obligations

- 44 Has responsibility for the management or coordination of staff training and awareness of IPS obligations been assigned to a team/area within your agency?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

- 45 [if Yes selected at Q44, ask] What is the name of the team/area within your agency that has been assigned this responsibility?

- 46 Does your induction training for new staff include information on the IPS?

- 1 Yes *[Please briefly describe the information on the IPS that is included in your induction training]*
- 2 No

- 47 Does your agency provide staff with other specific training on IPS obligations?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No *[Go to Q50]*

48 How is this specific training on IPS obligations provided? *Please select all that apply*

- 1 In-person or online course conducted live by a trainer
- 2 Self-paced online / eLearning module
- 3 On the job
- 4 Other *[please specify]* _____

49 What is the **main way** that staff are trained in the agency's IPS obligations?

- 1 In-person or online course conducted live by a trainer
- 2 Self-paced online / eLearning module
- 3 On the job
- 4 Other *[please specify]* _____

50 If you have any further comments about the governance and administration of the IPS in your agency please provide them here.

E. IPS Entry

Section 8 of the FOI Act requires Australian Government agencies to publish the categories of information specified below.

Information required to be published

51 Does your agency publish on its website details of:	Yes	No
a. Its organisational structure?		
b. The agency's functions and decision making powers?		
c. Appointments of agency officers made under Acts (other than APS employees within the meaning of the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i>)?		
d. Annual reports prepared by the agency for Parliament?		
e. Consultation arrangements for members of the public to comment on specific policy proposals for which the agency is responsible?		
f. Information in documents to which the agency routinely gives access in response to requests under Part III of the FOI Act – s 8(2)(g)?		
g. Information released in response to FOI <u>access</u> requests via an <u>Agency Disclosure Log</u> – s 11C		
h. Information held by the agency that it routinely provides to the Parliament in response to requests and orders from the Parliament?		
i. Contact details for FOI information or documents?		
j. Operational information - the rules, policies, principles and procedures that agencies apply in making decisions or recommendations that affect members of the public (as defined in s 8A of the FOI Act)? <i>Please note that this excludes information provided to members of the public via a fee based subscription service.</i>		

Other information to be published under the IPS

The FOI Act (s 8(4)) identifies that 'other' information – additional to that mentioned in s 8(2) – may be published by agencies. [Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#), [13.131] – [13.139] 'Other Information to be published under the IPS', advises that agencies are generally best placed to identify what public sector information they publish.

In doing so, agencies should strive to implement the objects of the FOI Act, which declare that information held by government is a national resource that should be managed for public purposes.

52 Does your agency have a mechanism (e.g., process, procedure and/or policy) for identifying 'other' information that can be published under the IPS?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

53 [If yes is selected in Q52, ask] What types of 'other' information is published? For example, information released under administrative access arrangements.

54 What does your agency believe would be the impact (if any) from increasing proactive publication under the IPS on the number of FOI requests your agency receives?

- 1 Large increase in requests
- 2 Small increase in requests
- 3 No change
- 4 Small decline in requests
- 5 Large decline in requests

55 Does your agency have a clear approach to releasing statistics that are routinely requested (for example, an agency's service delivery performance)?

- 1 Yes
- 2 Under development
- 3 No
- 4 Not applicable – why is this not applicable?: _____

- 56 [If No is selected for Q55, ask] Why does your agency not have a clear approach to releasing statistics that are routinely requested?

- 57 Does your agency provide guidance and information to its staff about how to identify what 'other' information can be published under the IPS as outlined in s 8(4) of the FOI Act and Part 13 of the Guidelines?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

- 58 [If answer No to Q57, ask] What type of OAIC guidance (in addition to the FOI Guidelines) would assist your agency identify what 'other' information can be published under the IPS? (Examples of these could include FAQs, ICON updates, Information Matters newsletters, checklists etc.)

Exceptions – personal and business information

The FOI Act (s 8(2)(g)(i) and (ii)) provides that an agency is not required to publish personal or business information as part of its IPS entry if it would be unreasonable to publish that information (see the FOI Guidelines [13.96] – [13.98]). Agencies will generally not publish information given to an individual or business applicant in response to an FOI request that is personal to that applicant.

Where information is not published because an exception applies, the Information Commissioner encourages agencies to record this in an IPS information register, including the title of the document to which an exception applies and the reason it was not published under the IPS. Capturing this information may help an agency when it reviews the operation of the IPS or responds to any complaints to the Information Commissioner about the IPS.

- 59 In 2022-23, has your agency made a decision not to publish information under the IPS due to the personal or business information exceptions under s 8(2)(g)(i) or (ii)?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No [Go to Q62]
- 3 Not applicable [Go to Q62]

[Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#) recommends that agencies maintain an 'IPS information register'. The register may be:

- a single register that encompasses information required to be published in the IPS (please refer to s 8 of the FOI Act), as well as additional public sector information held by the agency, or
- separate registers for information that is required to be published in the IPS (please refer to s 8 of the FOI Act), and other public sector information.

60 Does your agency maintain an IPS information register(s)?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No [\[Go to Q62\]](#)

61 Does your agency record decisions not to publish information recorded in your agency's IPS information register?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

Fees and charges

Subject to a limited exception, information published under the IPS must be available free of charge to the community. An agency can charge for information under the IPS only where the information cannot be downloaded from a website, and the agency has incurred specific reproduction or incidental costs in giving a person access to that information under the IPS (s 8D(4)). The details of the charge must be published under the IPS before any charge is imposed (s 8D(5)).

Please note that the OAIC does not consider the provision of information to members of the public via a fee based subscription service as providing access under the IPS.

'Non-web based' documents or information refers to materials that cannot be accessed or downloaded directly from a website. For example, a voice recording held by an agency may not be easily or readily converted into an electronic format that can be made available for publication/downloading from a website.

62 Does your agency have a policy that specifies or covers its approach to charging for access to information under the IPS?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

63 Does your agency charge for information required (s 8(2)) or permitted (s 8(4)) to be published under the IPS?

- 1 Yes – Required only
- 2 Yes – Permitted only
- 3 Yes – Both
- 4 No [\[Go to Q68\]](#)

64 Does your agency use the FOI Charges Regulations for calculating and imposing a charge for access under the IPS?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

65 Is the charge for providing access to information (e.g., requests for data and/ or statistics) that cannot be downloaded from a website?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

66 Is the charge for reimbursing the agency for specific reproduction (or other incidental) costs associated with giving access?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

67 Are details of these charges published on your agency's website?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

68 If you have any further comments about IPS Entry in your agency please provide them here.

F. Structure of agency IPS entry

Use of recommended standardised headings and structure

The FOI Act specifies the information an agency must publish under the IPS, but not the format of publication. The FOI Act does not require that agencies use the headings or language specified in s 8(2). The Information Commissioner has advised however that it will be easier for the public to locate information published by each agency under the IPS if there is a consistent presentation of information on agency websites. To this end, [Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#) [13.152-13.153] ('Structure of agency IPS entry') recommends the use of 10 headings for the Agency Publication Framework.

69. Does your agency publish IPS information under the following standard headings?	Yes	No
a. Agency Plan – s 8(2)(a)		
b. Who we are – s 8(2)(b) and 8(2)(d)		
c. What we do – s 8(2)(i) and 8(2)(j)		
d. Our reports and responses to Parliament - s 8(2)(e) and 8(2)(h)		
e. Routinely requested information and disclosure log - s 8(2)(g)		
f. Consultation arrangements - s 8(2)(f)		
g. Our priorities - s 8(4)		
h. Our finances - s 8(4)		
i. Our lists - s 8(4)		
j. Contact us - s 8(2)(i)		
k. Other (<i>please specify all</i>)		

70 If you have any further comments about the use of the recommended standardised headings and structure for the publication of information under the IPS please provide them here.

Documents are easily discoverable and understandable

71 Does your agency website have:	Yes	No
a. A search function that can <u>access</u> information published within an agency's IPS entry?		
b. A mechanism in place to gather feedback from the community regarding whether IPS entries are easily discoverable and understandable?		
c. An alert service that can notify subscribers of new publications under the IPS or other developments in relation to the IPS?		
d. The OAIC IPS Icon visible on the homepage of your agency's website?		

72 [If yes for Q71d, ask] Where does this icon link to when clicked?

- 1 Agency IPS or FOI information page
- 2 OAIC IPS information page
- 3 Other [Please specify]: _____
- 4 The icon is not linked to another web page.

Documents are easily accessible and machine readable

[Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#), [13.156 – 13.157] ('Accessibility') states that accessibility of published information by all members of the community is an important principle underlying the IPS. This principle is reinforced by three requirements:

- The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- Government agencies are required to conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.
- The Australian Human Rights Commission has also published World Wide Web Access: Disability Discrimination Act Advisory Notes (Version 4.0) which echo the obligation on agencies to conform to WCAG 2.0.

WCAG 2.0 covers a wide range of recommendations for making Web content more accessible. Following the WCAG 2.0 guidelines will make content accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities and make Web content more usable to users in general.

73 Are some, most or all of the documents published by your agency under the IPS in a format (or multiple formats) that conform with WCAG 2.0 requirements?

- 1 All documents
- 2 Most documents
- 3 Some documents
- 4 No documents

74 If you have any further comments about structure of agency IPS entry in your agency please provide them here.

G. Open access to information

- 75 Does your agency have a strategy for increasing open access to public sector information held by your agency (e.g. proactive publication), in addition to the information required to be published in the IPS and Disclosure Log?
- 1 Yes
 - 2 Under development
 - 3 No
- 76 Which of the following means does your agency use to publish or promote access to public sector information (includes linking to information published on your agency's website)? *Please select all that apply.*
- 1 Social media
 - 2 Newsletters
 - 3 Stakeholder networks
 - 4 Public appearances
 - 5 Other *(please specify)* _____
 - 6 No, we don't publish or promote access to public sector information
- 77 *[If social media selected at Q76, ask]* Which of the following social media sites does your agency use to publish or promote access to public sector information? *Please select all that apply.*
- 1 Facebook
 - 2 X (formerly known as Twitter)
 - 3 LinkedIn
 - 4 YouTube
 - 5 Other *(please specify)* _____

H. Discoverability

[Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines](#) recommends that agencies maintain an 'IPS information register'. The register may be:

- a single register that encompasses information required to be published in the IPS (please refer to s 8 of the FOI Act), as well as additional public sector information held by the agency, or
- separate registers for information that is required to be published in the IPS (please refer to s 8 of the FOI Act), and other public sector information.

78 Does your agency maintain an IPS information register(s)?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No [[Go to Q80](#)]

79 How often is your agency's IPS information register reviewed (i.e. is the data accurate, up to date and complete)?

- 1 At least every 6 months
- 2 At least every 12 months
- 3 Only where significant IPS changes occur or where there are changes to function responsibility (i.e., departmental restructures)
- 4 Don't know/ Can't say

80 Does your agency intend to develop an IPS information register in the next 12 months?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

81 Over the last 12 months, how much of the information that your agency has published has been in an open and standards-based format?

- 1 All of the information
- 2 Most of the information
- 3 Some of the information
- 4 None of the information
- 5 Not sure

82 Does your agency routinely apply metadata to the public sector information it publishes on the internet?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Not applicable

83 [If yes to Q83, ask] If your agency routinely applies metadata, please indicate which of the following metadata standards your agency uses:

- 1 ANZLIC
- 2 Other *(please specify)* _____

I. Challenges publishing public sector information

The OAIC [Principles on Open Public Sector Information](#) lists 8 principles to guide Australian Government agencies in building a culture of proactive information disclosure and community engagement. The following question identifies areas in which agencies may face challenges in publishing public sector information and could benefit from assistance or further guidance.

- 84 What are the most significant challenges your agency faces when publishing public sector information in addition to the information required to be published in the IPS and [Disclosure Log](#)? [\[Select up to 6\]](#)

Open Access to information

- 1 Obtaining sufficient budgetary resources to enable [open access to public sector information](#)
- 2 Identifying information, in addition to the information required to be published in the IPS and [Disclosure Log](#) that can be published
- 3 Transitioning to a culture of [open access](#) and proactive publication
- 4 Producing a plan or strategies for increasing [open access to public sector information](#)
- 5 Ensuring compliance with privacy and secrecy requirements when publishing [public sector information](#)

Engaging the community

- 6 Identifying [re-users](#)
- 7 Collaborating with [re-users](#)
- 8 Employing [Web 2.0](#) tools to support community consultation
- 9 Establishing effective processes to consult the community regarding what information to publish
- 10 Establishing channels for re-users to provide feedback about the quality, completeness, usefulness and accuracy of published information

Discoverable and useable information

- 18 Providing information in an [open and standards-based format](#)
- 19 Attaching high-quality [metadata](#) to information for discoverability
- 20 Ensuring compliance with the [WCAG 2.0](#)
- 21 Indexing or cataloguing information for discoverability
- 22 Publishing information in [machine readable format](#)
- 23 Maintaining [structured data](#) for publishing
- 24 Maintaining [linked data](#) for publishing
- 25 Agency costs (including staff time) associated with ensuring compliance with the [WCAG 2.0](#)

Clear reuse rights

- 26 Transitioning towards [Creative Commons 'BY' standard](#) as a default position
- 27 Determining appropriate open licences that will enable the re-use of information

- 11** Establishing processes to respond in a timely manner to requests and feedback received from the community

- 28** Determining whether public sector information is able to be released under open licensing conditions

- 29** Agency costs (including staff time) associated with administering licences

Effective information governance

- 12** Establishing an appropriate focal point, officer, or centralised department that is responsible for furthering open access to public sector information

- 13** Instigating strategic planning on information resource management

Appropriate charging for access

- 30** Establishing an appropriate and transparent charging regime(s) for your agency

- 31** Agency costs (including staff time) of administering charging regime

Robust information asset management

- 14** Establishment and maintenance of an information asset register

- 15** Providing up-to-date staff training in information management

- 16** Establishing clear procedures and lines of authority for decisions on information release and publication

Transparent enquiry and complaints processes

- 32** Establishing appropriate and transparent enquires and complaint processes

- 33** Responding to enquiries and complaints

Other

- 34** Other *(please specify)*

- 17** Protecting information against inappropriate or unauthorised use, access or disclosure

J. Other comments about the IPS

- 85 If you have any further comments on your agency's experiences with the IPS please provide them here.

- 86 If you have any further comments about the guidance provided by the OAIC about the operation of the IPS (including comments about any additional guidance or agency resources you would find useful) please provide them here.

Thank you for completing this survey

Please submit your survey to complete the process

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Details of the OAIC Privacy Officer are available in the Privacy Officer Instrument located on the OAIC website here <https://www.oaic.gov.au/about-the-OAIC/our-corporate-information/operational-information/privacy-officer-appointment-instrument>. See also the Privacy Notice.

Until we destroy our research records, you have the right to access the information that we hold about you as a result of this survey. Your agency may request at any time to have this information de-identified or destroyed.

If you have any questions about this survey, or would like any further information, you can call us on 1800 806 950.

Definitions

Access	: Where public sector information is made available, whether for free or for a charge, under licensing conditions or in formats which do not facilitate reuse. See also 'open access'.
ANZLIC	: A metadata standard developed by the Spatial Information Council for Australia and New Zealand (formerly known as Australia New Zealand Land Information Council): http://www.anzlic.gov.au/resources/anzlic-metadata-profile
Complaint	A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction that arises out of the provision of a service for which a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
Content	: Public content often has characteristics of being: static (i.e., it is an established record), held by the public sector rather than being directly generated by it (e.g., cultural archives, artistic works where third-party rights may be important), not directly associated with the functioning of government, and not necessarily associated with commercial uses but having other public good purposes (e.g., culture, education).
Creative Commons BY standard	: Pre-set licence terms that includes an open content license which lets others distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon an author's work, even commercially, as long as they credit the author for the original creation. It is the most accommodating of the Creative Commons licences .

Data	: The representation of facts, concepts or instructions in a formalised (consistent and agreed) manner suitable for communication, interpretation or processing by human or automatic means. Typically comprised of numbers, words or images. The format and presentation of data may vary with the context in which it is used. Data is not 'information' until it is used in a particular context for a particular purpose.
Disclosure Log	: Information published by an agency or a minister that has been released in response to each FOI access request, subject to certain exceptions (s 11C of the FOI Act). Please refer to Part 14 of the FOI Guidelines .
Information asset	: Information in the form of a core strategic asset required to meet organisational outcomes and relevant legislative and administrative requirements.
Information asset management framework	: An asset management framework brings together key corporate planning activities and asset management. Asset management involves developing a process to manage, demand and guide the acquisition, use and disposal of assets. This process is intended to maximise service delivery potential and manage risks and costs over an asset's lifecycle. Please refer to Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines
Information asset register	: In accordance with Principle 5 of the <i>Principles of Open Public Sector Information</i> , an information asset register is a central, publicly available list of an agency's information assets intended to increase the discoverability and reusability of agency information assets by both internal and external users.
Information	: Any collection of data that is processed, analysed, interpreted, classified or communicated in order to serve a useful purpose, present fact or represent knowledge in any medium or form. This includes presentation in electronic (digital), print, audio, video, image, graphical, cartographic, physical sample, textual or numerical form.
Information Publication Scheme (IPS)	: Part II of the FOI Act establishes the IPS for Australian Government agencies subject to the FOI Act. The IPS commenced on 1 May 2011 and requires agencies to publish specific categories (set out in s 8(2)) of public sector information on their websites. Please refer to Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines .
IPS	: Information Publication Scheme (see above).

IPS information register	: An IPS information register could include the following information [with respect to information published under the IPS]: • which agency business area owns a particular document • when the document was last updated • the formats in which the document is available and the file size • if the document is not published online, who may be contacted within the agency to arrange public access and the number of requests that have been received • categories of information that were considered for publication under the IPS but were not published under s 8C (because the document contains exempt matter or publication is prohibited or restricted by an enactment). Please refer to Part 13 of the FOI Guidelines .
Linked data	: A model of publishing data online where relationships between the datasets are specified at a technical level using open standards (as opposed to publishing a collection of separate, unconnected datasets). This increases the ability of humans and machines to discover and understand the data.
Machine readable	: Machine readable data can be understood by machines through interpretation of the accompanying metadata. Releasing data in a machine readable format increases its discoverability and usability. Formats such as Microsoft Word and PDF, while understandable by humans, are not likely to be highly machine-readable.
Metadata	: Data that defines and describes other data, allowing users to find, manage, control and understand that data. For more information about metadata as it applies to public sector information, refer to the advice on Publishing Public Sector Information contained in the Australian Government Web Guide .
Open access	: Where public sector information is available at zero price under licensing terms and in formats that allow users to copy, use, transmit and reuse the public sector information from its original form.
Open and standards-based formats	: Electronic formats defined by open standards.
Open standard	: A form of technology that has been documented and is available for reuse on different platforms without proprietary restrictions. Proprietary formats could include DOC or DOCX, XLS or XLSX, PDF, ESRI or RTF. Open formats could include HMTL, XML, CSV, RDF, KML/KMZ, SHP, TAB or MID/MIF.

Principles on Open Public Sector Information	Principles, developed by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, form part of a core vision for government information management in Australia. The Principles are applied by the OAIC in its role of monitoring compliance by Australian Government agencies with the publication objectives of the FOI Act. The Principles are available on the OAIC website: https://www.oaic.gov.au/information-policy/information-policy-resources/principles-on-open-public-sector-information.
Public sector information	: Data, information or content that is generated, created, collected, processed, preserved, maintained, disseminated, or funded by (or for) the Government or public institutions.
Reuse/Re-User	: 'Reuse' refers to the process of taking public sector information and modifying it to create something new. Someone undertaking reuse is known as a 're-user'. Examples include converting public sector information into an alternate form or using it as the basis of a new application. Although reuse of public sector information occurs within Government, the questions in this survey are concerned with reuse of public sector information by the community. The OAIC will address public sector information reuse within Government separately.
Structured data	: Any data kept in an electronic record, where each piece of information has an assigned format and meaning, so that the data is in a form that can be easily used and manipulated. Relational databases and spreadsheets are examples of structured data. In contrast, a document containing free-form text that discusses the data contained in a spreadsheet would be 'unstructured data'.
WCAG 2.0	: Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.0 , published by the Worldwide Web Consortium and endorsed for all Australian Government websites.
Web 2.0	: A term referring to technologies that encourage online discussion, sharing and collaboration. In a public sector information context, this could include online ratings/feedback mechanisms associated with an agency's public sector information (such as the mechanisms available through data.gov.au), or the use of social media to engage with users about what public sector information to publish and agency publication practices.