

The Year in Review

The 2014/15 Report identified a range of future focus priority actions to be taken by the IPC and agencies in 2015/16. The most significant outcomes of the IPC strategies identified in that Report are outlined below.

Mandatory proactive release

The 2014/15 Report identified that there were opportunities to maximise agencies' compliance with mandatory proactive release requirements in the GIPA Act, and identified contract register obligations as a future focus.

| Action | Outcome |
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| Create opportunities to maximise agencies' compliance with mandatory proactive release requirements, and identify strategies to enhance the use and impact of this pathway. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published <i>Universities' Compliance with the GIPA Act: Audit Report 2015, and IPC Contracts Register Procedures</i>. • Conducted a University Forum in March 2016 to discuss and showcase approaches to compliance and provide feedback. • Conducted a follow-up audit and reported in June 2016: <i>Universities' Compliance with the GIPA Act: Audit Report 2016</i> |
| Conduct a contract register compliance program across the government sector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided input into the Auditor General's performance audits of agency compliance with the GIPA Act. • Developed and released an e-learning module for contract reporting requirements. |

Authorised proactive release

A priority for the IPC continues to be issuing guidance on the legislative provisions that support the GIPA Act's 'push' model of information release, including authorised proactive release.

| Action | Outcome |
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| Provide expert advice on information sharing and release initiatives across government. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced an Open Data Infographic to assist the community in understanding Open Data and the benefits derived from its use. • Conducted a survey of community attitudes to the use and release of government data, reported on pages 10-15. • Provided expert advice to support the development of the NSW Open Data Action Plan and resources. |
| Produce enhanced regulatory guidance on the proactive release of information. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published, <i>Towards a NSW Charter for Public Participation</i>, which included guidance on using Agency Information Guides (AIGs) to proactively release information and data. • "Switch on Open Government" event for Right to Know Week 2015 showcased agency action to proactively release information. |
| Examine information access regimes in other jurisdictions and activate learnings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instituted and coordinated the development of a Jurisdictional Compendium to identify the similarities and differences of Australian legislative arrangements. • Provided expert input to the statutory review of the GIPA Act. |

Informal release

The 2014/15 Report highlighted the benefits for agencies and citizens of the informal release pathway. This includes improving the accessibility of information and flexibility in responding to informal requests for information.

| Action | Outcome |
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| Review and update the IPC's regulatory guidance on informal release of information. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitored and publicly reported upon the use of AIGs by agencies to promote informal release of information |
| Promote agency use and understanding of the informal release pathway. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed and distributed guidance materials to assist agencies in promoting informal release of information through AIGs. |

Formal access applications

The GIPA Act provides citizens with an enforceable right to apply for and access government information, unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure. The findings in the 2014/15 Report informed areas of future focus for the formal access application pathway.

| Action | Outcome |
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| Develop and publish guidance for the public on identified priorities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Published, Your Rights to Access Government Information in NSW. Published two fact sheets, Restraint Orders Under the GIPA Act and Offences Under the GIPA Act. |
| Develop and consult with agencies on regulatory guidance to improve the application of the public interest balancing test, including on third party objector matters. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted a practitioners' workshop regarding third party consultations. Issued a template letter for use by agencies in conducting third party consultations. |

| Action | Outcome |
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| Promote a rigorous, comprehensive and citizen-centric approach to information management through sound leadership. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiated an innovative community consultation platform, 'Your Say IPC', to inform promotion of public engagement. Launched an e-learning module on how to access information under the GIPA Act. Led the contribution of states and territory Information Commissioners/ Ombudsmen to the development of the Commonwealth's Open Government Partnership National Action Plan. Published for consultation a revised, values-oriented <i>IPC Customer Service Charter</i>. |
| Promote and support the use of the GIPA Tool to improve quality and timeliness of agency application management and annual reporting. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted an end-to-end review of the GIPA Tool and instituted enhancements. |
| Examine and respond to trends in information release rates and outcomes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trends in information release rates and outcomes for 2015/16 are examined in this report see pages 47-49. |
| Work with the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) to monitor the trend of GIPA Act matters, including dealing with applications involving the GIPA Act offence provisions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consulted NCAT in developing fact sheets on Restraint orders under the <i>GIPA Act and Offences under the GIPA Act</i>. |