



International Access to Information Day

MEDIA RELEASE

Joint statement on International Access to Information Day 2020

Information Access Commissioners and Ombudsmen from across Australia and New Zealand have released a joint statement to mark International Access to Information Day on 28 September:

International Access to Information Day on 28 September is an opportunity to recognise the vital role that access to information plays in building community trust through transparency, in times of crisis and beyond.

On this day, we join with members of the United Nations, international regulators and others to acknowledge the importance of access to information laws and the community's right to know.

The importance of public access to information as governments respond to the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be overstated. The pro-active release of government-held information underpins our response to COVID-19, bush fires and other emergencies.

It also instils confidence in decisions that promote our economic recovery from the current pandemic by preserving transparency and accountability in government expenditure and ensuring that the public understands decisions that affect them.

The right to information is enshrined in access to information laws across Australia and New Zealand. We are among more than 120 nations around the world to guarantee citizens these rights — a significant expansion since 2009 when UNESCO recorded only 40 countries with these laws.

As countries around the world manage the impacts of COVID-19 and other crises facing communities, access to information becomes even more essential. Open, transparent and accountable governments that proactively release information to the community remain fundamental to a democratic society.

Co-signed by:

Angelene Falk

Australian Information Commissioner

Peter Boshier

Chief Ombudsman, New Zealand

Elizabeth Tydd

Information Commissioner, New South Wales



International Access to Information Day

Rachael Rangihaeata

Information Commissioner, Queensland

Wayne Lines

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Information Commissioner, Victoria

Catherine Fletcher

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Richard Connock

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Michael Manthorpe

Ombudsman, ACT

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Information Commissioner, Northern Territory