



information
and privacy
commission
new south wales

Media release

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NSW Information Commissioner commits to delivering citizens' right to public participation

NSW Information Commissioner Elizabeth Tydd has announced a commitment to ensure that NSW citizens achieve their right to public participation in the development of policy and service delivery by Government in NSW.

The announcement was made during the "Switch on Open Government in NSW" thought leadership event, hosted by Ms Tydd in Sydney today as part of Right to Know Week 2015 (28 Sept – 4 Oct 2015).

"NSW currently lags behind its interstate counterparts and international countries in implementing the right of citizens to participate. Under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act) – Part 3, section 20, NSW citizens have a legislative right to public participation, however, to date those legislated rights that enshrine participative democracy have not been realised," said Ms Tydd. "However the NSW Premier's commitment to delivering services that are responsive to the community, as contained in the NSW 2021 State Plan, presents a genuine opportunity to fully enliven the right of public participation.

"To deliver this fundamental right I will advocate for necessary enhancements to ensure the establishment of a meaningful citizen forum to enable citizen input in the development of a Charter for Public Participation to be adopted by government departments and independently oversighted by the Information and Privacy Commission NSW (IPC).

"Additionally as Information Commissioner and the CEO of the IPC I am focused upon ensuring that information access and privacy service standards are maintained.

"This work will necessitate a commitment by government to meaningfully and consistently engage with NSW citizens, therefore the IPC will continue to progress discussion with the NSW Government to ensure that this fundamental public right is activated," said Ms Tydd.

To request an interview with Ms Tydd to discuss this new open government initiative please contact Snezana Novakovic, (02) 8071 7021 or 1800 472 679.

ABOUT THE NSW INFORMATION COMMISSIONER:

The NSW Information Commissioner's statutory role includes promoting public awareness and understanding of the GIPA Act; providing information, advice, assistance and training to agencies and the public; dealing with complaints about agencies; investigating agencies' systems, policies and practices and reporting on compliance with the GIPA Act. The NSW Information Commissioner is also the CEO of the IPC.

For more information on the IPC and Right to Know Week 2015, please visit www.ipc.nsw.gov.au and follow us on Twitter #RTK2015 for current updates.

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