

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME PLAN

Introduction

1. The Information Publication Scheme (IPS) is established under Part 2 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act). The IPS requires agencies subject to the FOI Act to publish a broad range of information on their websites and to make that information available online where possible. The IPS is to commence from 1 May 2011.
2. The Australian Research Council (ARC) is required to comply with the IPS requirements. The ARC has prepared this IPS Plan as required under section 8(1) of the FOI Act. The plan outlines how the ARC proposes to administer the IPS.

Purpose

3. The ARC is required to adopt an IPS in compliance with section 8(1) of the FOI Act.

Objectives

4. The IPS outlines the procedures the ARC is to undertake in managing and making available information under the IPS. This includes:
 - identifying all information required to be published;
 - regularly reviewing information published to ensure that it is up to date, accurate and complete;
 - ensuring that online content conforms with the Government's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, Version 2 (WCAG 2.0); and
 - developing a mechanism and procedures to measure the success of the ARC's IPS.
5. Steps currently taken by the ARC towards establishment of the IPS include:
 - holding meetings with the ARC's website managers in relation to the application of relevant content on the ARC's website; and
 - conducting consultation across the ARC to determine the kinds of information that is already available on the ARC's website, the kind of information that should be made available, and identifying who is responsible for the information.

6. As the purpose of the IPS is to make information available to the public at minimum cost and inconvenience, the ARC will not charge for information provided by email.

Management of ARC information

7. The initial point of entry for public access to ARC information is the ARC homepage (www.arc.gov.au) which will host the Information Publication Scheme webpage. As part of assessing what information should be made available, the ARC will take into account the objects of the FOI Act, and guidelines issued by the Australian Information Commissioner.

8. The ARC currently publishes (and is required to publish under the IPS):

- 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 arrangements for members of the public to comment on specific policy proposals for which the ARC is responsible, including how (and to whom) those comments may be made;
- details of officers who can be contacted about access to information or documents under the FOI Act;
- our operational information insofar as it extends to our exercising functions and powers in making decisions or recommendations which affect members of the public – for example, any rules, guidelines, practices or precedents relating to those decisions or recommendations; and
- contact information online for both FOI and Information Publication Scheme processes, which will include telephone contacts, email and postal addresses.

9. In addition the ARC will publish (as required under the IPS):

- a plan for the Information Publication Scheme;
- Information which the ARC routinely or regularly releases in response to FOI requests. This requirement complements the ‘disclosure log’ requirements; and
- information which the ARC routinely provides to the Parliament in response to requests and orders.

10. The ARC is also required under section 1C of the FOI Act to publish a ‘disclosure log’ of information contained in documents which it has released under the Act, subject to limitations to protect personal and business information or other information that the Australian Information Commissioner may determine is unreasonable to publish.

11. The ARC will publish on its website, within 10 working days of the release of information, details of the nature of the information provided and of how copies of the documents released may be obtained.

Review

12. The ARC will review the operation of the IPS annually and update its plan each year.