

OIA Forum for Practitioners

Thursday 23 November 2017. 1:30pm – 3:30pm.

Nau Mai room, Ground floor, Te Puni Kōkiri House, 143 Lambton Quay, Wellington 6011
Facilitator: Lucy Alcock (Department of Conservation)

AGENDA:

1:30	<i>Housekeeping</i>
1:35	<i>Welcome and opening remarks</i> Catherine Williams, Acting Deputy Commissioner, Integrity Ethics and Standards, SSC
1:45	<i>New OIA Guidance</i> Erik Koed, Assistant Commissioner, SSC and Kelly Stein (OIA guidance working group)
2:30	<i>Introducing the Official Information Capability Development Toolkit</i> Mary Wiles, OIA Project Team, SSC Agency: Department of Conservation.
2.50	<i>Official Information Learning Needs Analysis survey</i> Mary Wiles, OIA Project Team, SSC
3.00	<i>Update from the Office of the Ombudsman</i> Emma Leach, Assistant Ombudsman, Office of the Ombudsman
3:15	<i>Upcoming proactive release policy development workshops</i> Morag McConville, OIA Project Team, SSC
3:20	<i>Next steps, feedback, close.</i>

OIA Forum – 23 November 2017

Speaking notes - Catherine Williams

Summary of Speaking Points

- Thank you for coming today – great to see so many people putting time aside for what is an important forum. Good opportunity to share best practice with colleagues and learn from each other.
- Special welcome to staff from the Office of the Ombudsman. We have really enjoyed working with the Ombudsman's office to help lift agency capability in the OIA.
- Importance of trust and integrity of the public service
- Spirit of service to the community – making a difference for New Zealand and New Zealanders.
- Public Service four constitutional pillars:
 - Political neutrality
 - Open and transparent;
 - Free and frank advice to Ministers
 - Appointment of staff on merit.
- Release of official information - key tool for enhancing transparency and promoting accountability.
- Results of August 2017 statistics collection – showing improvements in timeliness.
- Launch of new tools and information - Capability development toolkit, OIA guidance for agencies, OIA as part of induction programme for Ministerial office staff, and proactive release policies and practices.
- OIA Forum key vehicle for shaping the SSC OIA work programme.
- Conclusion: The Public Service has and is raising the bar on openness and transparency, and we're doing this for no other reason than it's the right thing to do.

New OIA Guidance

The Commission is progressively developing a suite of guidance to foster public sector consistency and increase the timeliness of responding to official information requests. The presentation introduced the following new guidance documents, which were developed in collaboration with government agencies:

- [Processing an Official Information Act Request](#)
- [Contacting requesters](#)
- [Minister and Agency Official Information Requests](#)
- [Extensions and the Official Information Act - Section 15A](#)
- [Information Requests Requiring Substantial Collation or Research](#)
- [Transferring Information Requests - Section 14](#)

See PowerPoint slides and [OIA Guidance for Agencies](#) on SSC's website.

Table discussion on new guides.

Introducing the Official Information Capability Development Toolkit

In October 2017, the Commission released an official information capability development toolkit to help agencies better understand their current level of capability to manage official information and identify where they can improve. The presentation provided an overview of the toolkit and the Department of Conservation talked about their experience using it.

See PowerPoint slides and [Capability development toolkit](#)

Capability Development Toolkit – Agency Experience

Department of Conservation presentation to OIA Forum – 23 November 2017

Summary of Speaking Points

Context

- DoC has a highly decentralised OIA function. OIAs devolved across operational departments spread around the country to complete. Process, design and advice at the centre.
- The toolkit came along at a time when we were introducing new systems and process and introducing ideas that challenged the way DOC had always done things.

How we used the toolkit

- The high level wheel was used to support discussion with the Leadership team.
- There were a few false starts. We got excited by an in-depth analysis and workshops and even embarked on asking an NGO who requests regularly about their information needs in order to inform a workshop on customer focus. We then recognised that doing in depth workshops would confuse the key changes we were undertaking.
- Instead used the worksheet to undertake a current state self-assessment and help to design a future work programme.

Where to from here

- We intend to use the high level wheel to focus future quarterly progress and performance reporting to SLT.
- We have reflected 'what good looks like' shown in the intermediate tool in our OIA and proactive release policy.
- We will design our future change programme around the structure of the toolkit.

Final thoughts

- The toolkit has the flexibility to adapt a variety of needs and uses. Take the time to consider how it might best meet your needs.

Official Information Learning Needs Analysis survey

The Commission conducted a short on-line survey to identify support agencies wanted from SSC over the next 12-18 months. The presentation provided a summary of the survey results from 85 agencies.

See PowerPoint slides

Update from the Office of the Ombudsman

See Presentation to OIA forum speaking notes

Upcoming proactive release policy development workshops

Developing and implementing a Proactive Release Policy

1 hour workshop for agencies wanting assistance with the development of a proactive release policy.

Session 1: 10am Tuesday 5 December (for Public Service departments only)

Session 2: 10am Wednesday 6 December (open session)