



# Official Information Capability Development Toolkit

OIA Forum – 23 November 2017

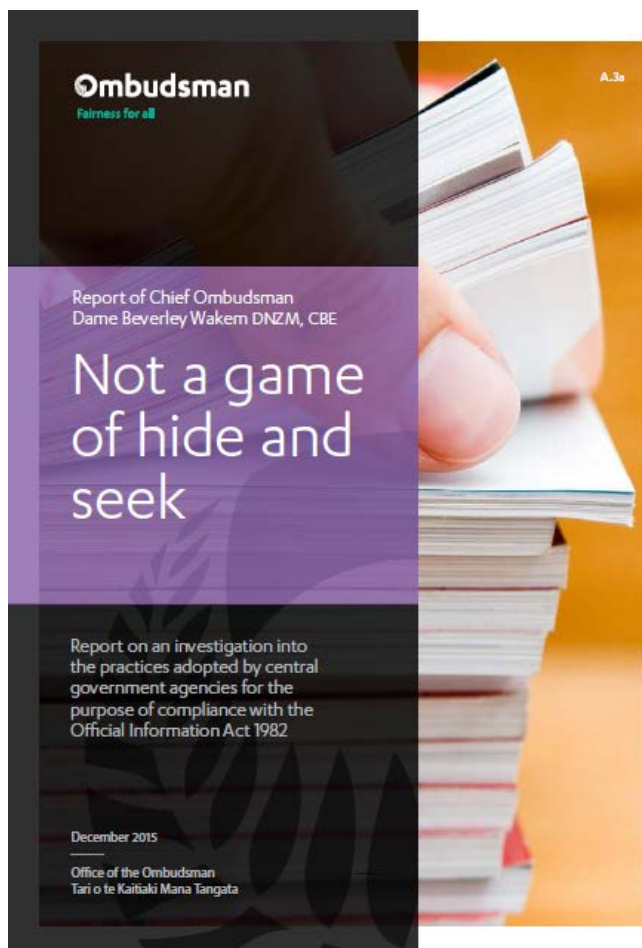


# Outline

- Brief overview of the toolkit
- Department of Conservation on their experience using the toolkit
- Questions



# Official Information



“Open government and freedom of information is a significant priority for me, and an important part of strengthening, protecting, and nurturing the constitutional principles that underpin the Public Service.”

- Peter Hughes

# Official Information Capability Development Toolkit

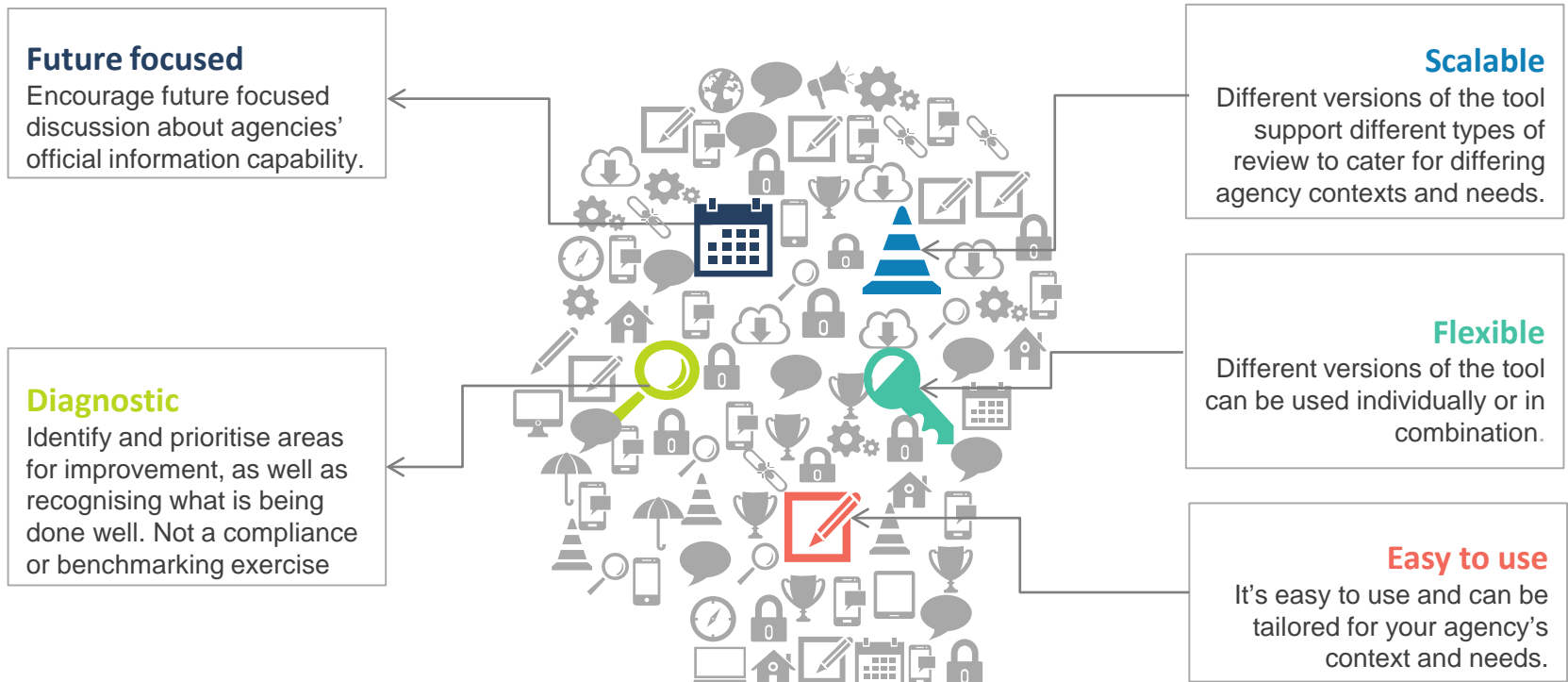
- Provides a structured framework for reviewing official information capability
- Helps agencies identify their strengths and weaknesses, improvement strategies, and priorities
- The approach taken means that the toolkit is not a compliance or benchmarking exercise.



# Design principles

A tool to help agencies assess their official information practices in terms of their:

- Compliance with the *letter* of the Official Information Act, particularly in relation to OIA requests, and
- Compliance with the *spirit* of the Act, particularly in relation to the proactive release of information held by the agency.



# Review tools

## OFFICIAL INFORMATION CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT – INTERMEDIATE LEVEL REVIEW

Intermediate level review

	Lead question	Element	Key question	What good looks like
Customer focus	How well do we understand the information needs of New Zealanders and provide accessible and responsive services?	Understanding customer needs	How well does the agency understand its customers and their information needs?	Official information is provided to the public and stakeholder groups based on understanding of their information needs.
		Engaging with customers	How well does the agency engage with customers to meet their information needs?	The agency has procedures in place for contacting requesters and these are reflected in practice.
		Proactive release	How well does the agency proactively release information?	An active programme of proactive release of official information is in place, including publication of OIA responses.
Leadership and direction	How well do we respond to and advance government's commitment to the principles of openness and transparency?	Senior leadership commitment	How well does the senior team demonstrate its commitment to openness and meeting official information obligations?	The senior leadership team provides a clear statement of expectations regarding the agency's commitment to openness and meeting official information obligations.
		Senior leadership oversight	How well does the senior team provide collective leadership and direction to ensure official information performance?	Demand and performance information is actively used to inform planning, resourcing and capability building decisions.
		Working with Ministers	How well does the agency engage with Ministers in relation to OIA requests, responses and information releases?	There is clear understanding about respective roles and decision making responsibilities under the OIA, and how the 'no surprises' approach will be managed.
People and development	How well do we ensure we have the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time?	Investing in capability	How well do leaders build official information capability within the agency and across the system?	There is investment in people to build knowledge and skills, and minimize key person risk.
		Culture	How well does the agency develop and sustain a culture that embodies openness and transparency?	All levels of staff and management act consistently with the letter and spirit of the OIA.
		Training and development	How well does the workforce understand the OIA and their role in the agency's approach to official information?	OIA training and professional development is planned, organized and undertaken on a regular basis.
Structure, policies and systems	How well do our structure, policies and systems support effective and consistent official information practices?	Organisation design	How well does the agency's organisational structure support official information performance?	Formal structure exists with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and the delegations for making decisions on OIA requests sit at an appropriate level.
		Policies, processes and practices	How well do the OIA and information management policies, processes and practices promote efficient, effective and consistent practice?	Effective OIA and IM policies, procedures and systems are in place, are well understood and are reflected in current practice.
		Tools	How well does the agency deploy systems and tools to support its official information practices?	Appropriate tools and technologies are in place to effectively process and track OIA requests.
Performance	How well do we monitor and continually improve our official information performance?	Monitoring and reporting	How well does the agency monitor and evaluate its OIA performance?	Performance standards are in place and are regularly reported on and reviewed by the senior team.
		Continuous improvement	How well does the agency encourage and demonstrate continuous improvement of its official information practices and performance?	Performance information, including complaints data is used to continually improve OIA policies and procedures.

## In-depth review

- Provides comprehensive evaluation of capability
- Use worksheet to record your detailed findings and prioritise areas for improvement

## OFFICIAL INFORMATION CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT - IN-DEPTH WORKSHEET

Customer focus – How well do we understand the information needs of New Zealanders and provide accessible and responsive services?

Element	Key question	Questions to consider in your review	What are we doing well?	What can we improve?	Maturity Rating	When do we need to act?
Understanding customer needs	How well does the agency understand its customers and their information needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well does the agency recognise and understand customer and their information requirements in relation to their needs?</li> <li>To what extent is the agency actively monitoring to assist what information is being sought by its users?</li> <li>To what extent does the agency proactively release new sensitive information to the public in looking for an opportunity?</li> <li>To what extent do we include about customer information needs, including the format in which information is requested (including agency policies, systems and needs)?</li> </ul>				
Engaging with customers	How well does the agency engage with customers to meet their information needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what do we do to inform about making a request easy as well as the agency's web site, use friendly and up to date?</li> <li>To what extent does the agency establish alternatives to first requestor make an effective request?</li> <li>How well does the agency respond well responses to better understand their information needs?</li> <li>How well does the agency explore ways to deliver value to customers in terms of meeting their information needs?</li> <li>How well does the agency continue to work to understand customer interaction and take action on issues?</li> </ul>				
Proactive release	How well does the agency proactively release information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what degree are there clear and consistent internal policies and procedures for processing release of information, including publication of OIA responses?</li> <li>To what extent do leaders demonstrate a commitment to openness over the long term, through the practical measures of structures consistent with the agency's internal policies?</li> </ul>				

In-depth review

## Intermediate level review

- Includes suggestions for 'what good looks like'
- Use to start a conversation about capability
- Review tool for low to medium volumes and complexity of OIA requests

# When to use the toolkit

- As part of a capability building exercise
- To test consistency of practices across business units in decentralised OIA function
- As input to the agency's planning and improvement cycles
- As input to a PIF self-review
- To prepare for an OIA own-motion investigation by the Office of the Ombudsmen.



# Department of Conservation pilot

- **Context**  
Highly decentralised with process, design and advice from the centre
- **How we used the toolkit**  
Supported discussions with Leadership Team  
Current state self-assessment and design of future work programme
- **Where to next**  
Basis for progress and performance reporting, and future change programme
- **Final thoughts**  
Toolkit is flexible enough to adapt to variety of needs and uses





# Workshops

## Using the Official Information Capability Development Toolkit

- 1½ hour workshop for agencies on the toolkit and how to use it to build future capability
- Session 1: 2pm Tuesday 12 December
- Session 2: 9.30am Thursday 14 December

To register please email [oiforum@ssc.govt.nz](mailto:oiforum@ssc.govt.nz)



**Questions?**

