



## Media Statement

29 August 2017

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### Resignation of WA Information Commissioner

Western Australia's Information Commissioner, Sven Bluemmel, is advising the Governor of his resignation with effect from Friday 22 September 2017. Mr Bluemmel has been in the role since May 2009 and leaves to take up the newly created position of Victorian Information Commissioner on 25 September 2017.

Over the course of eight years in the role, Mr Bluemmel and his staff have implemented significant reforms in the operations and direction of the office. This includes the introduction of conciliation conferences to quickly resolve disputes and a focus on education and outreach to government agencies and the broader community. This included a very successful FOI in WA Conference held in Perth earlier this month that brought together over 250 FOI professionals from across Western Australia to share practical knowledge in order to improve the administration of freedom of information in the State.

'An effective freedom of information regime is an important safeguard of our Parliamentary democracy' Mr Bluemmel said. 'I am honoured by the trust that Western Australians have placed in me to lead the Office of the Information Commissioner for the last eight years. I would like to thank all my staff in the office for the tremendous job they do in discharging their important responsibilities for the benefit of the people of the State. Together, we have built an office that is respected for its impartiality, integrity and effectiveness. I would also like to thank the freedom of information professionals in State and local government agencies who undertake an important role, often under difficult circumstances. They are the front line of government transparency and their roles do not always receive the recognition they deserve.'

Mr Bluemmel urged government, agencies and the community to appreciate the growing importance of information in people's lives. He also encouraged parties to work together constructively when making or dealing with requests for information held by government.

'While we must always strive for improvement, I leave my current position knowing that the administration of freedom of information in Western Australia today is on a fundamentally sound footing. There will always be differing points of view on the merits of any individual decision on document access. However, I am confident that the overall system enjoys the support of the Parliament, the public sector and the community as a whole', Mr Bluemmel said.