



# Freedom of Information Newsletter

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Number 19 – May 2018

## ***Appointment of Acting Information Commissioner, Lisa Ward***

Ms Lisa Ward commenced as Acting Information Commissioner on 3 April 2018. Ms Ward has been appointed to the position for a 12 month period. Prior to commencing with the OIC, Ms Ward was the Principal Assistant Ombudsman Investigations and Legal Services. Ms Ward has previously served as a member of the State Administrative Tribunal and as a member of the Migration Review Tribunal and Refugee Review Tribunal. She has graduate and postgraduate qualifications in Law from the University of Western Australia.

## ***From the Acting Information Commissioner – FOI an integral part of our democracy***

It is important for agencies to remember that the Freedom of Information Act 1992 (the FOI Act) gives everyone a legally enforceable right to access government information in Western Australia. This legislative right to access government information is the hallmark of an open, transparent and accountable democracy.

Dealing with requests under the FOI Act is more than an administrative process. I encourage agencies to engage meaningfully with access applicants. Good communication between agencies and applicants in the context of a clear understanding of the objects and requirements of the FOI Act results in better outcomes for all parties.

## ***Agency news – Annual Statistical returns***

Under section 111 of the FOI Act, the Information Commissioner's annual report to Parliament must include certain specified information relating to the number and nature of applications dealt with by agencies under the FOI Act during the year. Under this provision, agencies have to provide the Commissioner with such information as required for the purpose of preparing the annual report. At the end of the financial year, all agencies will be invited by email to complete an online statistical survey related to their FOI activity for the 2017/18 financial year. If you have any questions about preparing to complete the survey please contact the OIC.

## ***Good news story – Agency FOI webpage has benefits***

This office encourages agencies to make information about FOI processes within an agency clearly accessible on an agency's website. A webpage that includes basic information about FOI and includes a postal address, an email address and contact number for further information can benefit both members of the public and the agency. An FOI Coordinator of a large agency has told this office that including a webpage with this kind of information has had a positive impact for the agency. Following the inclusion of an email address and contact phone number on the website, there has been a noticeable reduction in enquiries directed to the Customer Information Centre and the FOI Coordinator has had the opportunity to assist people to make effective and targeted access applications in the first instance.

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## *Vale Su Lloyd*

With great sadness, the Office of the Information Commissioner acknowledges that our recently retired colleague, Ms Su Lloyd, has passed away. Before retiring, Ms Lloyd was the Acting Information Commissioner from September 2017. She served as the OIC's Principal Legal Officer for a period five years. The OIC recognises Su's significant contribution to freedom of information within Western Australia. She was instrumental in establishing our current conciliation practices and strategic plan.



After over a decade in senior executive positions in state government, where she served in strategic industrial relations and corporate restructuring roles, and five years as head of a boutique legal practice, Su took up the role of Director, Dispute Resolution Directorate, WorkCover WA, a position she held for three years. Su was then appointed Special Counsel, Workplace Relations with a mid-sized commercial law firm, following which she took up her position at the Office of the Information Commissioner in 2012. An accredited Gateway reviewer for both the Commonwealth and Western Australia, Su participated in Gateway reviews for major infrastructure projects including a state-wide health sector ICT system, the review of a government wide ICT initiative valued at a total of \$6 billion and the establishment of a new government agency.

Holding degrees in education and law, and a Diploma in Life Coaching, Su was also a nationally accredited mediator. Her overseas experience includes advanced mediation training at the World Intellectual Property Organisation in Geneva, Switzerland and as an Expert Assessor at CDRC Vienna 2017, an international mediation competition.

We will miss our respected colleague and we are grateful for the humour, professionalism and knowledge that she shared with us.

## *FOI training news – 2018 training dates available now*

The 2018 training dates for agencies can be found [<here>](#).

If a session is listed as fully booked, please register for the relevant waitlist. This will give us the opportunity to contact you if there are cancellations or, if there is considerable demand, to schedule another training session.

## *Subscription and feedback*

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