



International Access
to Information Day

Welcome to the OAIC's International Access to Information Day

We'll begin shortly at 9:00am AEST
Your camera and microphone will remain off during the event.

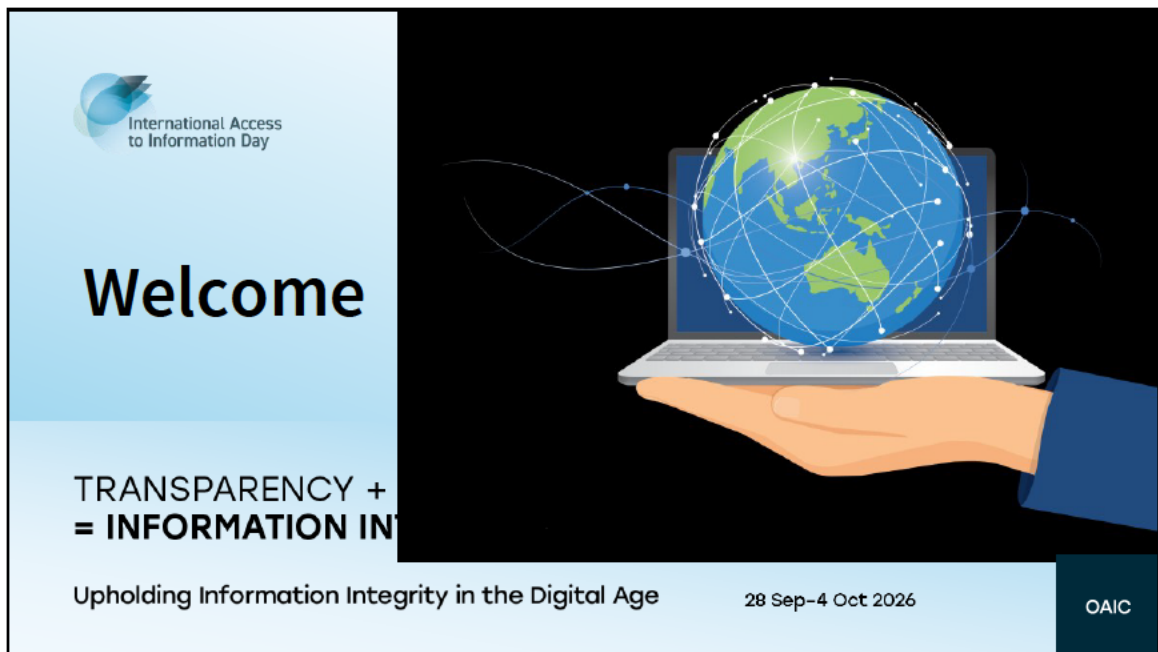
Have a question?
Submit it at any time using the Q&A function. Our team will monitor questions and share them with speakers during allocated Q&A sessions.

Break: 10:20 – 10:50am AEST
Event concludes: 12:45pm AEST



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Holding slide.



Slide for MC Ash's brief introduction and MC Ash's further introduction of event



International Access
to Information Day

Welcome to Count

Tyronne Bell
Ngunnawal Traditional Cu



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International Access
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Introductory remarks

Elizabeth Tydd
Australian Information Commissioner



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Welcome video

*The Hon. Michelle Rowland
Attorney-General*



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Fireside chat

Elizabeth Tydd, Australian Information
Commissioner, OAIC

Dr Catherine Williams, Executive Director
Centre for Public Integrity

Clancy Moore, CEO,
Transparency International Australia



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Fireside chat



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Morning tea

We'll resume at 10:50am AEST

The livestream will remain open during the break however the camera and audio will be turned off.

You're welcome to stay connected or leave the stream and rejoin us at 10:45am for a 10:50am start.

See you shortly!



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Holding slide.



Practitioner update

FOI decisions – focus areas

- new applications received in 2022
- reviews where the sole access refusal reason relates to:
 - adequacy of searches (s 24A)
 - practical refusal (s 24)
- new applications of access grant decisions
- reviews where the respondent is a Minister

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Introductions - I'm Justin Lodge, A/g GM FOICM. I have previously been the Director of Significant Decisions and my current substantive role is in the VAD project team.

The FOI Commissioner has made several IC review decisions since our last update. A significant proportion of these related to our IC review areas of focus, which are:

- IC review applications received in 2022
- IC reviews where the sole access refusal reason relates to:
 - adequacy of searches (s 24A)
 - practical refusal (s 24)
- IC review applications of access grant decisions
- IC reviews where the respondent is a Minister.

These are available on our website where we also publish our quarterly regulatory statistics.

Today in our update we will be highlighting some **recent IC review and tribunal decisions, and recent vexatious declarations**

Practitioner updates

Recent FOI decisions

'BAA' and Australian Broadcasting Corporation (Freedom of information) [2026] AICmr 26 (6 May 2026)

Finding: Affirm

Overview

- Discusses s 47E(d) of the FOI Act to material that was removed from a court file following an order by the Federal Court of Australia.
- The agency contended and the FOI Commissioner accepted that disclosure would have a substantial adverse effect on the operations of the court.

Takeaway / impact

- Section 47E(d) claims are not limited only to the agency holding the documents at issue and can apply in circumstances where disclosure would impact the operations of another government agency.



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Overview

This decision discusses the application of s 47E(d) of the FOI Act to material that was removed from a court file following an order by the Federal Court of Australia (the Court). Although the agency held the documents at issue, the agency contended and the FOI

Commissioner accepted that disclosure of the documents at issue would have a substantial adverse effect on the operations of the Court.

Takeaway / impact

Section 47E(d) claims are not limited only to the agency holding the documents at issue, and can apply in circumstances where disclosure would have a substantial adverse effect on the proper and efficient conduct of the operations of another government agency.

Practitioner update

Recent FOI decisions

'BAS' and Comcare (Freedom of information) [2026] AICmr 45 (18 June 2026)

Finding: Affirm

Overview

- Discusses the application of s 24A to documents related to a compensation claim made by the applicant.
- It may be reasonable to expect that additional documents relevant to the applicant's request exist outside a formal claim file.

Takeaway / impact

- It emphasises the importance of ensuring that searches extend beyond the formal file, where appropriate, to identify all relevant documents in the agency's possession.



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Overview

This decision discusses the application of s 24A of the FOI Act to documents related to a compensation claim made by the applicant. It highlights that, in this context, it may be reasonable to expect that additional documents relevant to the applicant's request exist outside a

formal claim file.

Takeaway / impact

It emphasises the importance of ensuring that searches extend beyond the formal file, where appropriate, in order to identify all relevant documents in the agency's possession.

Practitioner update

Recent FOI decisions

'BBP' and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Freedom of information) [2026] AICmr 74 (21 August 2026)

Finding: Affirm

Overview

- Discusses whether a practical refusal reason exists and provides practical guidance on the request consultation process.

Takeaway / impact

- Provides guidance in relation to an agency's obligations to take steps to assist applicants to revise the scope of their request during a request consultation process.



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Overview

- discusses whether a practical refusal reason exists and provides practical guidance on the request consultation process.

Takeaway / impact

- recognises that there is an inherent tension between the obligations on agencies to assist an applicant to revise the scope of their request outside of the request consultation period and to issue a decision on the request within the prescribed timeframe. obligation to take additional steps, including those that the applicant described, to assist them to revise the scope of their request further.

Practitioner update

Takeaways from ART decisions

- *Australian Federal Police and Tabet (Freedom of information)* [2026] ARTA 2006 (14 September 2026) – onus under the FOI Act
- *Patrick and Secretary, Department of Industry, Science and Resources (Freedom of Information)* [2026] ARTA 766 (7 May 2026) – considers whether material exempted under ss 34(1)(d) and 34(2) actually comprise ‘drafts’, ‘extracts’ or ‘parts’ of a Cabinet document
- *Milo and Minister for Government Services (Freedom of information)* [2026] ARTA 629 (22 April 2026) – consider the responsibilities of incoming and outgoing ministers in the context of an FOI request in the light of *Attorney-General (Cth) v Patrick* [2024] FCAFC 126 and *Patrick v Attorney-General (Cth)* [2024] FCA 268
- *Tennant and Secretary, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (Freedom of Information)* [2026] ARTA 549 (13 April 2026) – covers s 47E(a) and the meaning of the term ‘test’
- *Kline and The Registrar Administrative Review Tribunal (Freedom of information)* [2026] ARTA 63 (21 January 2026) – explains the importance of considering the context of deliberative matter in weighing the public interest



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- *Milo and Minister for Government Services (Freedom of information)* [2026] ARTA 629 (22 April 2026) - consider the responsibilities of incoming and outgoing ministers in the context of an FOI request in the light of *Attorney-General (Cth) v Patrick* [2024] FCAFC 126 and *Patrick v Attorney-General (Cth)* [2024] FCA

268. Case managers and decision makers could note the Tribunal's comments (particularly at [57]) when considering searches matters, particularly in relation to the nature of an outgoing minister's duty not to frustrate the right of an FOI applicant to have their FOI request determined, and that, in the circumstances, this did not vest the incoming minister with constructive possession of every document the outgoing minister had when they left office.

Practitioner update

Recent vexatious applicant declarations

Cancer Australia and 'BAX' (Freedom of information) [2026] AICmr 51 (30 June 2026)

Finding

- Repeated access actions involving an abuse of process as they unreasonably interfered with the agency's operations.

Overview

- 112 access actions involving overlapping and repetitive subject matter over 10 years.
- Use of the FOI Act to immoderately pursue a separate grievance against the agency and its staff.

Impact on agency

- Agency not required to process any access actions from the individual for 2 years, and certain other access actions for 5 years.



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In making the declaration, the FOI Commissioner also took into account:

- the small size of the agency and the disproportionate number of requests made by the individual
- the individual did not adhere to an undertaking they had made to moderate their behaviour

Practitioner update

Recent vexatious applicant declarations

Australian Human Rights Commission and 'BAY' (Freedom of information) [2026] AICmr 53 (8 July 2026)

Finding

- Repeated access actions involved an abuse of process as they unreasonably interfered with the agency's operations.

Overview

- 70 FOI requests and one internal review application over 12 months (including 18 withdrawals)
- Unsubstantiated and inflammatory accusations about the agency and named staff members.

Impact on agency

- Agency not required to process any access actions from the individual for 2 years.



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- The decision gives weight to:
 - the pattern of requests and the inappropriate tone of those engagements
 - the individual did not adhere to an undertaking they had made to moderate their behaviour
 - the individual's failure to engage productively with the agency to moderate their requests, after the agency advised, it was considering making an application

Practitioner update

Recent vexatious applicant declarations

Australian Federal Police and 'BBT' (Freedom of information) [2026] AICmr 79 (2 September 2026)

Finding

- Repeated access actions involved an abuse of process as they harassed or intimidated an individual or employee of the agency and unreasonably interfered with the agency's operations.

Overview

- 72 access actions over about 12 months
- Weight given to the number and nature of the access actions, and a grievance directed at particular staff members
- Discusses procedural fairness obligations.

Impact on agency

- Agency not required to process any further access actions from the respondent for a period of 2 years, that seek access to certain types of documents. Also, the OAIC is not required to consider any new IC review applications.



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Practitioner update

Recent vexatious applicant declarations

Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission and 'BBX' (Freedom of information) [2026] AICmr 84 (11 September 2026)

Overview and findings

- The individual repeatedly engaged in access actions which involve an abuse of process, on the ground of harassing or intimidating an individual or an employee of an agency.
- The repeated engagement did not amount to an abuse of process on the ground of unreasonably interfering with the operations of an agency:
 - Impact of agency's processing on the applicant weighed against making the declaration..

Impact on agency

- Agency is not required to process any future or outstanding FOI requests or requests for internal review for a period of 2 years. Also, the OAIC is not required to consider any new IC review applications or any FOI request to a document relating to any matter between the individual and the agency.



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Practitioner update

vexatious applicant declarations

key takeaways

- Importance of engaging with the respondent
- Moderating their access actions
- Natural fairness
- Right may be given to access actions involving
- Views of deemed decisions
- Delays in the agency's FOI processing is
- Especially important in relation to unreasonable
- Interference with an agency's operations

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Practitioner update

Disclosure Log Desktop Review

of the disclosure log review

assess compliance with s 11C and FOI guidelines;
provide guidance.

How we conduct the review?

Disclosure logs of 30 agencies examined in
desktop review.

What are our key findings?

Reviewed agencies' disclosure logs were
generally compliant – except with respect to
obligation to publish within 10 working
days of release.

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Practitioner update

Disclosure Log Desktop Review: What we found

Most agencies could improve their disclosure log to promote transparency and searchability.



20 of 30

agencies had not met their legislative obligation to publish information within 10 working days after access is granted



16 of 30

agencies had not published all required information released under the FOI Act on their disclosure log



10 of 12

agencies that provided relevant information do not accurately report the number of disclosure log entries published on their disclosure log to the OIAIC



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Practitioner update

Disclosure Log Desktop Review: summary of FOI Commissioner's recommendations

**Recommendation 1**

Agencies should review the format of, and information on, their disclosure logs and ensure they align with FOI Act obligations and objectives, as well as the FOI Guidelines.

**Recommendation 2**

Agencies should prioritise publication of documents released in response to FOI requests to ensure they comply with the requirement to publish documents within 10 working days of access being given to the applicant.

**Recommendation 3**

Agencies should publish documents released under the FOI Act as new entries on their disclosure log.

**Recommendation 4**

Agencies should ensure their FOI reporting processes are sufficiently robust – and revise as needed – to provide the correct number of disclosure log entries to the OAIC.



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FOI Guidelines updates – Part 14: Disclosure

Consultation draft issued for v 1.18 – issued 11 August 2026.

Proposed revisions include:

- Explaining why a document cannot be published if documents are withheld on request
- Ensuring disclosure log introduction reflect the agency's retention practices
- Disclosure log decision making section emphasises that agencies are deciding whether an exception to the publication requirement applies
- Emphasis on keeping records of decisions not to publish documents in their disclosure log
- Creating a new disclosure log entry in response to when a review is made giving greater access to requested documents
- Implementation of recommendations made in the Freedom of Information Commissioner's report '[Disclosure Log Desktop Review – 2026](#)' (August 2026) (publication of minister's disclosure log entries, increasing searchability, providing sufficient/ accurate descriptions of entries, publication time frames (10 working days), accurate reporting of disclosure log statistics)
- Updated links/references to resources: Disclosure log checklist



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Practitioner update

FOI Guidelines updates – Part 14: Disclosure

- Comments sought on content, practical implications, readability and accessibility
- Consultation closed 4 September 2026
- Submissions published on OAIC website
- Submissions under review; revised Part 14 to be issued end of 2026



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Practitioner update

Information Publication Scheme

1.6 issued 28 July 2026

es include:

- ed links to internal and external resources
- ed legislative references
- mentation of recommendations made in the
- lian Information Commissioner's report
- ated decision-making and public reporting
- the Freedom of Information Act' (January

ed content to reflect observations and

identified in the IPS review survey 2023

and the Freedom of Information Practitioners'

Survey 2024.

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Part 13: Information Publication Scheme

Key updates – IPS and ADM [13.132]

If an agency is authorised by legislation to use ADM, they should publish as part of their IPS entry:

- the name of the legislation that grants them this power, and whether or not they use ADM to provide information and services to the public
- the types of ADM they use to make automated decisions, not just that AI is being used by the agency
- a list of decisions they use ADM for, as well as relevant and easy to understand examples where possible, so the public can better understand how ADM is being used to make decisions that affect them
- any policies that clearly set out the principles for when and how they use ADM to make decisions and recommendations affecting members of the public.



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Part 13: Information Publication Scheme

Other updates

- IPS register is an internal document designed to promote awareness of open by design principles within agencies and to enable identification of documents that are already published [13.22]
- Template information access register (Appendix B)
- An agency may link to the agency's privacy policy to satisfy the obligation to publish information about its use of automated decision-making in relation to personal information [13.25]. Footnote to [13.25] references updates to the Australian Privacy Principles which come into effect on 10 December 2026
- The definition of 'information assets' expanded to refer to National Archives of Australia guidance [13.37]
- Suggestion that agencies use AI to identify information that is routinely provided in response to FOI requests [13.95]
- When deciding how much operational information to publish, consider whether a member of the public would be prejudiced by not having access to the information (s 10) [13.116].



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Broader FOI Guidelines updates in progress

We are progressing a range of updates to the FOI Guidelines that will reflect:

- ANAO report on Administration of the Freedom of Information Act 1982 by Selected Entities (20 May 2026)
- Processes in relation to investigations and complaints (Part 11) and vexatious applicant declarations (Part 12)
- Developments in IC review, ART, and Federal Court decisions
- Updates flagged in ICON updates



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Portal for FOI statistical returns

stats portal LIVE from 1 October 2026

- improved user experience
- substantive changes to FOI stats returns questions
- improved functionality and security of portal
- reach out to agencies about setting up their

will advertise in ICON walk-through sessions for

ely:

October

October

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Practitioner u Q&A



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Practitioners' panel discussion

Alice Linacre PSM, Freedom of Information
Commissioner, OAIC

Nicholas Shizas PSM, Deputy Commissioner and
Chief General Counsel, Australian Taxation Office

Debbie Arnold, First Assistant Secretary,
Ministerial Engagement and Communications,
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Katy Lin, Assistant Secretary, Legal Policy Branch,
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet



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Practitioners' Q&A



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**Thank you for joining
the OAIC to celebrate
IAID 2026**



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Feedback survey



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IAID 2026 Event Run Sheet

DATE	Monday, 21 September 2026
TIME	8:45am – 12:45pm AEST (in-person) 9:00am – 12:45pm AEST (online)
HYBRID VENUE	In-person: Members' Dining Room 2, Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, 18 King George Terrace, Parkes ACT 2600 Online: Microsoft Teams Townhall
AUDIENCE	Australian Government FOI practitioners Approx. 130 in-person and 250+ virtual attendees
AGENDA	IAID 2026 OAIC Event - Agenda.pdf
FLOOR PLAN	Members' Dining Room 2: D2026/037203

s22

Speakers' notes

s22

MC intro and session transition notes

- Good morning everyone and welcome to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner's event to mark International Access to Information Day (IAID) 2026.
- My name is Ash McDonald, and I'll be the MC for today's event. Thank you to everyone joining us here in Canberra, as well as those joining us online.
- Before we begin, a few housekeeping notes. For our in-person attendees, bathrooms are located [LOCATION], and in the event of an emergency, the emergency exits are [LOCATION] and please follow the directions of venue staff and OAIC staff.
- There will be a 30-minute morning tea break at 10:20am, which will be served [LOCATION].
- There will also be opportunities to ask questions at the end of each session. In-person attendees will be invited to ask questions during the allocated Q&A time. For those joining us online, we encourage you to submit questions through the Q&A function prior to the allocated Q&A sessions starting. OAIC staff will moderate the online questions.
- At the end of the event there will be a QR code displayed for you to provide your feedback on the event and session. We'd greatly appreciate your feedback to help us for future events.
- To formally open today's event, it is my please to introduce Ngannawal Traditional Custodian, Tyronne Bell, to welcome us to Ngannawal Country.

****WELCOME TO COUNTRY**

- Thank you Tyronne for that Welcome to Country.
- To begin our program, I'd like to now invite Liz Tydd, Australian Information Commissioner, to deliver some introductory remarks and officially welcome you to today's event.

- Liz took up the position of Australian Information Commissioner in August 2024 for a 5-year term. She is an experienced agency head and has occupied a number of statutory decision-making roles, including Information Commissioner and CEO of the NSW Information and Privacy Commission, Australian Freedom of Information Commissioner, Deputy President of the Workers Compensation Commission and Deputy Chairperson of the former Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal.
- Elizabeth has extensive regulatory and governance experience at an executive and board level in a range of jurisdictions and industries, including commercial, not-for-profit and public sector oversight.
- Please welcome Commissioner Tydd.

****AIC INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

- Thank you Commissioner Tydd for the warm introduction to today's event. We look forward to hearing from you again a bit later on.
- We will now hear a message from Attorney-General, the Honourable Michelle Rowland, to mark International Access to Information Day.

****PRE-RECORDED VIDEO OF A-G**

- Thank you to the Attorney-General for those remarks and for helping us mark this important occasion.
- We now move to our first session of the morning, a fireside chat chaired by Commissioner Tydd, which will explore:
 - Upholding information integrity across APS agencies in the digital age.
 - Navigating the impact of artificial intelligence on information trust and security.
 - Showcasing best-practice benchmarks for public sector integrity.
- It's my pleasure to introduce our guest speakers:
 - Dr Catherine Williams, Executive Director of the Centre for Public Integrity. Dr Williams is an expert in democratic accountability and public policy reform. Her research focuses on how to achieve transparency of and accountability in respect of the exercise of public power. Catherine co-authored Keeping Them Honest with the late Stephen Charles KC, and regularly contributes expert analysis to parliamentary inquiries and public debate on transparency and integrity reform.
 - Clancy Moore, CEO of Transparency International Australia. Mr Moore brings almost 20 years of advocacy, governance and international development experience in the Solomon Islands, Myanmar, and Australia, including leadership roles with Oxfam and ActionAid. He previously led the Australian arm of the global anti-corruption coalition, Publish What You Pay calling for greater transparency in the mining, oil and gas sectors.
- Together, our speakers bring perspectives from information regulation, integrity and transparency to today's discussion.
- Please join me in welcoming Commissioner Tydd and guests onto the stage.

****FIRESIDE CHAT**

- Thank you Commissioner Tydd, Dr Williams and Mr Moore for such an insightful discussion.
- For the next 10 minutes or so, we will open the floor to questions from our in-person and online audience.

****FIRESIDE CHAT Q&A**

- That wraps it up for the fireside chat and Q&A session. We'll now break for 30 minutes for morning tea.
- For those here in Canberra, refreshments are available [LOCATION].
- For our online attendees, we'll turn off the camera and mic during the break. Please rejoin us at 10:50am, when we'll continue the event with our Practitioner update.

****MORNING TEA**

- Welcome back everyone. I hope you enjoyed the break.
- We're now moving into the practical part of today's program, with a series of OAIC-led practitioner sessions.
- These sessions will focus on:
 - Recent Vexatious Applicant Declarations and IC review decisions
 - Disclosure Log Desktop Review
 - FOI Guidance update
- To begin, I'll hand over to Justin Lodge, A/g General Manager, FOI Case Management Branch, Information Rights Division.

**** PRACTITIONER UPDATE 1**

- Thank you Justin. I'd now like to hand over to Sara Peel, Principal Director, Compliance team, Regulatory Action Division for our second practical session.

****PRACTITIONER UPDATE 2**

- Thank you Sara. I'd now like to hand over to Rocelle Ago, General Manager, Intake, Eligibility and Guidance Branch, Information Rights Division, for our third and final practical session.

****PRACTITIONER UPDATE 3**

- Thank you Rocelle and our previous OAIC presenters for those practical insights.
- For the next 10 minutes or so, we will open the floor to questions for Justin, Sara and Rocelle from our in-person and online audience.

****PRACTITIONER Q&A**

- That wraps it up for the fireside chat and Q&A session. We'll now move directly into our final discussion for today, our practitioner panel.
- Our panel brings together representatives from across the Australian Public Service to discuss:
 - How does Transparency and Access = Information Integrity?
 - How can reliable information and openness strengthen accountability and trust?
 - Countering the spread of mis-information and dis-information through proactive agency strategies.
- The panel will be chaired by Alice Linacre PSM, FOI Commissioner. Alice commenced as Australia's FOI Commissioner on 29 September 2025 for a 5-year term. Alice is an experienced senior public servant and administrative lawyer. She previously held senior roles in a number of commonwealth government departments, including most recently the Attorney-General's Department and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Alice also has experience in private legal practice. In 2022, Alice was awarded the Public Service Medal for outstanding public service in the provision and management of legal

services and resources to support the government's response to critical events, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Joining Commissioner Linacre are:
 - Nicholas Shizas PSM, Deputy Commissioner and Chief General Counsel at the Australian Taxation Office. Nick has over 18 years experience as a lawyer including as a leader in the ATO's taxation litigation practices and is currently responsible for the ATO's general law risks and provides strategic legal advice on a wide range of significant issues. Nicholas is also accountable for the ATO's Internal Audit and Integrity functions. As the ATO Integrity and Privacy Champion, Nicholas has driven initiatives that embed ethical leadership, enhance integrity frameworks, and support staff navigating complex issues. Nicholas is committed to strengthening capability, integrity, and collaboration within the Commonwealth legal profession.
 - Debbie Arnold, First Assistant Secretary, Ministerial Engagement and Communications at the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Debbie has played a key leadership role in driving the department's response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. Prior to joining DVA, Debbie spent more than a decade at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, where she held a number of senior leadership positions, including Chief of Staff to two Secretaries and Senate Parliamentary Liaison Officer. Debbie brings extensive experience across strategic policy, executive leadership, parliamentary engagement and organisational reform, underpinned by a strong track record of delivering complex outcomes across the Australian Public Service.
 - Katy Lin, Assistant Secretary, Legal Policy Branch at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. In this role she oversees the department's FOI and General Counsel functions, provides support to the Prime Minister's Office and works in partnership with AGD to provide advice and shape outcomes across the AGD portfolio. Ms Lin has extensive experience in foreign policy, diplomacy, multilateral negotiations and national security. Prior to assuming her current role, Ms Lin was the Head of the Australian Sanctions Office in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and served overseas in postings in Bangkok and Australia's Mission to the United Nations in New York.
- Please join me in welcoming Commissioner Linacre and guests onto the stage.

****PRACTITIONER PANEL**

- Thank you Commissioner Linacre, Mr Shizas, Ms Arnold and Ms Lin for such an insightful discussion. Again, for the next 10 minutes or so, we will open the floor to questions from our in-person and online audience.

****PANEL Q&A & FOIC WRAP-UP**

- *That wraps it up for the practitioner panel discussion and Q&A session. **Note: FOIC to transition from Q&A to closing remarks.***
- Displayed now on the screen is a QR code, which will lead you to an event feedback survey. We'd appreciate your feedback on the event and the sessions held today. Thank you.

****EVENT CLOSE**

AIC's introductory remarks

- Thank you, Ash, and welcome, everyone to the OAIC's IAID 2026 event.
- Today is a celebration of access to government-held information in a digital age that now couples social media with AI.
- The UNESCO theme for the 2026 "International Day for Universal Access to Information" – Upholding Information Integrity in the Digital Age: The Role of Access to Information in Addressing Information Disorder – is poignant.
- Information disorder describes the collective challenges of misinformation, disinformation and malinformation, and in particular the broader ways in which the online information space is 'polluted', skewed and manipulated, and the social harms that may result
- Information integrity is the antidote to information disorder.
- Information integrity is secured through the construction of conditions for creation, preservation and access to information that are contemporary and enduring
- The right to access information also provides the counterbalance to the current surge in conspiracy sentiment – truth can be unlocked through access to government information and, in particular, government data.
- The OAIC's theme for this year's IAID is *Transparency + Access = Information Integrity*, which complements the UNESCO theme by highlighting the important role of both transparency and access in promoting information integrity.
- Transparency of, and access to reliable government information are vital to information integrity and can help address the challenges posed by misinformation, disinformation and information disorder.
- It may be timely to note the UN's recent resolution, on 4 September, promoting map projections that more accurately reflect the true size of continents than that of the 16th-century Mercator projection, encouraging governments, schools, international organisations and technology companies to use the Equal Earth map projection.
- Behind that resolution lies a question of whether the Mercator map projection has distorted not only geography but our understanding of the world, history and power.
- The UN's resolution promoting the Equal Earth map could be seen as serendipitous in the lead-up to an IAID which shines a light on the role of access to information in combatting information disorder, albeit information disorder in the digital age.
- Our campaign materials for supporters of IAID 2026, involving the globe of the world, were in fact designed before the UN's resolution, and are a nod to the single, consistent Access to Information ICON that the Association of Information Access Commissioners (AIAC) endorsed earlier this year, which agencies are implementing, and which we encourage your agency to implement if not already. We hope you find our campaign materials on our 2026 IAID webpage and use them freely in your own promoting and celebrations of IAID 2026.
- I hope that you enjoy today's event, and gain insights on the role of transparency, as well as access to information, in upholding democracy in the digital age, and promoting information integrity.

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