

Improving the operation of the OIA

Strategic priorities for 2016-2020

The Ombudsman is committed to improving the operation of the OIA so that the key purpose of that Act—good government and enhanced respect for the law through access to official information that enables people to participate in government decision making and promotes accountability of government decision makers—is realised.

We will do this through the quick and effective resolution and investigation of OIA complaints, and through a programme of proactive interventions. These interventions will give effect to recommendations made by the Ombudsman in [Not a game of hide and seek—Report of an investigation into the practices adopted by central government agencies for the purpose of compliance with the OIA.](#)

Access to official information that enables people to participate in government decision making and promotes accountability of government decision makers will promote good government and enhance respect for the law – section 4(a) OIA.

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| <p>1 Quick and effective resolution and investigation of OIA complaints</p> | <p>We will aim to complete the majority of OIA complaints (70 per cent), within 3 months of receipt. We will do this through the effective operation of the early resolution process. Early resolution means the complaint is resolved without the need for formal investigation. Complaints that need to be formally investigated will be completed in under a year.</p> | <p>Recommendation 45 <i>Not a game of hide and seek.</i></p> |
| <p>2 Publication of OIA data</p> | <p>We will regularly publish data on OIA complaints. We will work with other agencies to help them collect and publish meaningful data on OIA requests. The public availability of this data will encourage agencies to improve their compliance with the OIA.</p> | <p>Recommendation 44 <i>Not a game of hide and seek:</i></p> <p>Recommendation 110 of the Law Commission's review of the official information legislation.</p> |
| <p>3 Advice, guidance and training for agencies</p> | <p>We will continue to assist agencies seeking advice on OIA requests.</p> <p>We will develop guidance and tools to help agencies to improve their compliance with the OIA. A particular focus will be on the interaction between Ministers and agencies on OIA requests, which we will address through publication of <i>'a model protocol on agencies' consultations and briefings on OIA requests with Ministers' offices'</i>.</p> <p>We will continue to offer OIA training to agencies. We are currently reviewing our external training strategy and programme to ensure it is carried out in the most effective way possible.</p> | <p>Recommendations 33 and 46 <i>Not a game of hide and seek.</i></p> <p>Recommendations 1–7 and 12–13 of the Law Commission's review of the official information legislation.</p> |
| <p>4 Agency self-assessment</p> | <p>We will develop performance measures and a maturity model that agencies can use to assess their own OIA practices and capabilities. We will encourage agencies to publish their self-assessments proactively.</p> | <p>Recommendations 37 and 47 <i>Not a game of hide and seek.</i></p> |
| <p>5 Monitor agencies' OIA practices and capabilities</p> | <p>We will conduct regular proactive investigations of agencies' current OIA practices and capabilities, based on the performance measures and maturity model discussed above, and we will report publicly on our findings. This preventative approach will enable any risks, poor practices or systemic problems to be identified early and addressed by the agency with our assistance if necessary.</p> | <p>Recommendation 48 <i>Not a game of hide and seek.</i></p> |
| <p>6 Collaboration with other agencies</p> | <p>We will collaborate with other agencies that are working to improve their own compliance with the OIA, or agency compliance more generally. This includes the State Services Commission, the Ministry of Justice and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.</p> | |