

PrivacyLive: your right to know

25 September 2017

A lively panel discussion on Right to Know Day – this Thursday 28 September -- will highlight New Zealanders' legal rights to access government information and personal information about themselves.

The PrivacyLive lunchtime forum, co-hosted by the Office of the Ombudsman and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner, will be open to the public and streamed live.

Ombudsman Leo Donnelly, former Assistant Privacy Commissioner Katrine Evans, and Bryce Edwards from Transparency International will discuss the importance of the right to access information. The forum will be chaired by Radio New Zealand News Director and former political editor Brent Edwards.

'The Privacy Act and the Official Information Act are among New Zealand's most important pieces of legislation', Leo Donnelly said, 'giving New Zealanders the right to request personal information that organisations hold about them or that affects them, and to complain if the information is withheld'.

'The PrivacyLive event, taking place on Right to Know Day, will be a timely opportunity to remind people that we're here to protect their right to know', he said.

'The explosion of social media, in particular, means our expectations of privacy and of open government are evolving and being constantly tested. It's important that people know what information they have the right to request, and how', Leo Donnelly said.

'As an Ombudsman, it's important for me to emphasise that under the OIA, official information isn't just what's written down – it can also be information held in officials' heads. Information that's recorded and information that's known are not always the same thing, but both can be equally important for citizens' participation in our democracy'.

Right to Know Day will be marked by several countries on 28 September, including Canada and Australia. The day will also feature a live-streamed event from Brisbane, with journalist Kerry O'Brien reflecting on the media landscape over the 30 years since the Fitzgerald Inquiry into Police corruption.

PrivacyLive takes place from 12pm to 1pm, 28 September, Mokopuna Room, Te Wharewaka o Poneke Function Centre, Wellington Waterfront. Register here to attend: <https://right-to-know-day-privacy-live-forum.lilregie.com/step1>. The forum will be live-streamed on Periscope and available afterward on YouTube.

The 2017 Solomon Lecture from Brisbane will be streamed live from 11am to 1pm NZ time on 28 September at www.ustream.tv/channel/the-edge-external-events

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