



FOI Information Statement

This information sheet explains what an information statement is, what an information statement must contain, and how an agency must publish its information statement.

FOI Act Section 9

Section 9 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* (FOI Act) deals with the publication of information about an agency and information that an agency holds.

Among other things, the Minister responsible for a State Government agency must publish an up-to-date information statement at least every 12 months. Local Government Councils and Universities must also publish an up to date information statement at least every 12 months.

What is an Information Statement?

Every agency subject to the FOI Act is required to produce an information statement. Information statements include:

- the structure and functions of the agency
- how the functions of the agency affect members of the public
- the various types of documents held by the agency which are available for access and
- a description of how the public can obtain access or seek amendment to documents.

The purpose of the information statement is to provide people wanting access to information held by State and Local Government and Universities a snapshot of the types of documents held by that agency, what that agency does, and how a person can access the information they require.

What Must an Information Statement Contain?

Section 9 of the FOI Act also sets out what an information statement must contain. Below is a detailed summary of the information every agency must include in their information statement:

- a description of the structure and functions of the agency
- a description of the ways in which the functions of the agency affect the public
- a description of any arrangements that exist to enable the public to participate in formulating the agency's policies and the delivery of its functions
- a description of the various kinds of documents held by the agency available for inspection, purchase or available free of charge
- a description of the arrangements that exist to enable the public to obtain access to documents or to amend their personal records held by the agency and

- a description of the agency's procedures in relation to giving access to documents and to the amendment of records containing personal information of individuals - this description should include the contact details of the officer to whom inquiries can be made and an address at which FOI applications should be lodged.

An information statement must also contain information about the Agency's policy documents by:

- identifying each of the agency's policy documents
- specifying the designation of the officer to whom inquiries concerning the procedures for inspecting and purchasing policy documents should be made and
- specifying the address at which, and the times during which, policy documents may be inspected or purchased.

An agency is not, however, required to publish information that could compromise its security or confidentiality requirements that would also result in the statement being an exempt document in itself.

Publication and Availability of Information Statements

Agencies must publish an up-to-date information statement in its annual report or on a website maintained by the agency as prescribed by the Freedom of Information (General) Regulations 2002.

Furthermore, the FOI Act requires that agencies must make available for inspection and purchase copies of their most recent information statement and policies to members of the public.

There are two types of agencies described in section 11 of the FOI Act that do not need to publish information statements or comply with any part of section 9 or 10 of the FOI Act. These two types of agencies are: an agency that is a Minister, and an agency that is exempt by regulation from the obligations of Part 2 (sections 9 and 10).

Example of an Information Statement

For an example of an information statement, please search the annual report or website of any State Government agency, Local Government authority or University.

For More Information

Please contact State Records if you require more information about FOI information statements by email foi@sa.gov.au or by telephone (08) 8204 8786.