

Information Publication Plan (IPP)

Draft Agency Plan

ACIAR

12/12/2011

ACIAR is an agency subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1982 and is required to comply with the Information Publication Scheme (IPS) requirements. This agency plan describes how ACIAR proposes to do this, as required by section 8(1) of the FOI Act.

Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1. Purpose	3
1.2. Objectives.....	3
2. Implementing the Information Publication Scheme	4
2.1. Establishing ACIAR's IPS contribution	4
2.2. Roles and responsibilities.....	4
2.3. May 2011 and beyond	5
2.4. Information architecture	6
2.5. Information required to be published	7
2.6. Optional information	8
2.7. Administration	8
2.8. Review	8

1. Introduction

The Australian International Centre for Agricultural Research (ACIAR) is an agency subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) and is required to comply with the Information Publication Scheme (IPS) requirements.

ACIAR is an arm of the Australian Government's Official Development Assistance Program under the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio. Its charter is to commission research that leads to more productive and sustainable agriculture through collaborative projects involving Australia and developing-country partners. In helping developing countries to help themselves ACIAR aims to help them become self-sufficient in tackling their own problems.

As Australia's Official Development Assistance commitment has increased, public interest in the aid program has correspondingly increased and this will continue. Implementation of the IPS ensures a range of information on ACIAR's activities is publicly available. This helps increase public participation, understanding and scrutiny of Australia's aid program. ACIAR is committed to greater transparency through the implementation of the Information Publication Scheme (IPS).

This agency plan has been prepared to assist ACIAR implement and administer the IPS, in accordance with section 8(1) of the FOI Act and to give the Australian public the opportunity to comment and provide feedback on this plan. This plan also aligns with the Australian Government's Transparency Charter for the Australian Aid Program, which follows the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness and the launch of the Government's aid policy in July this year, [An Effective Aid Program for Australia: Making a real difference - Delivering real results](#).

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of the plan is to:

- Comply with section 8(1) of the FOI Act
- Assist the planning and development of ACIAR's IPS
- Initiate processes to proactively discover and disclose ACIAR's documents, in accordance with the objectives of the FOI Act
- Facilitate public consultation on ACIAR's response to the IPS

1.2. Objectives

The objectives of this plan and the IPS are to:

- Manage ACIAR's documents with relevance to the IPS
- Proactively identify all information required to be published, including this plan, under section 8(2) of the FOI Act
- Review and ensure on a regular basis that information published under the IPS is accurate, up-to-date and complete (section 8B of the FOI Act)
- Ensure that information published under the IPS is discoverable, understandable and re-usable

- Ensure that online content conforms with the *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (Version 2)* (WCAG 2.0)
- Publish all identified information on the ACIAR website, regularly review the material and update as required
- Measure the community uptake and other aspects of ACIAR's IPS

2. Implementing the Information Publication Scheme

The Knowledge Manager, Corporate is leading ACIAR's implementation of the FOI reforms, including establishment of the IPS, including:

- initial consultation within the agency to assist other areas in identifying information covered by the FOI reforms
- preparation of the Agency plan for executive endorsement and public consultation
- responding to public feedback and considering changes in the planning and administration of ACIAR's IPS
- liaison with ACIAR staff to assist them to identify and forward documents for publication
- leading the IPS working group
- creation and publication of an information register, which includes the disclosure log for information released under FOI requests
- control and maintenance of the information register to ensure information is up to date and accurate

2.1. Establishing ACIAR's IPS contribution

ACIAR is committed to providing information to the public about its functions and activities that is useful, relevant, up to date and accurate. ACIAR currently provides:

- information published on the agency website
- printed reports and other material available to the public
- responses to information requests from the public and research and academic organisations.
- responses to FOI requests

ACIAR's IPS will proactively identify and publish information that will assist the public to understand and engage with the activities and decisions of the agency.

2.2. Roles and responsibilities

The Knowledge Manager, Corporate will be supported by the IPS Working Group, the Communications Team and by officers across the agency to establish ACIAR's contribution to the IPS.

The IPS working group will develop a draft spreadsheet of information required or permitted to be published under s8(2) and 8(4) by:

- auditing documents currently published on the ACIAR website (<http://aci.gov.au>) and identify the documents that will form part of the IPS

- creating a list of IPS documents (including those not already published on the ACIAR website)
- identification of any IPS documents that are not accurate, up to date or complete
- nominating suitable staff members to take responsibility for ensuring particular IPS documents which are not accurate, up to date or complete, are revised ASAP.

The ongoing role of the IPS Working Group will include:

- setting up a system for fulfilling requests for information that are covered by the IPS but not available electronically, including information in other formats such as hardcopies or on disc.
- design and development of the ACIAR website that meets the requirements of the FOI Act, guidelines of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) and ACIAR's commitments and obligations to accessibility standards (WCAG 2.0)
- preparation of documents for publication with special responsibility for accessibility standards
- publication of information identified under the scheme
- maintenance of the IPS website
- assistance with the development of other systems such as the information register
- responsible for implementation of government compliance and accessibility requirements such as the [Web Accessibility National Transition Strategy](#) based on recommendations from the [Government 2.0 Taskforce](#).

2.3. May 2011 and beyond

Public consultation on the Agency Plan will be welcomed from the time of its publication.

ACIAR is committed to meeting its obligations under the IPS. For reasons including that certain documents are currently undergoing major revision, not all operational information will be available for download immediately. In each case, alternative arrangements for obtaining or discussing the relevant information will be in place and will be publicised on the IPS site.

Each staff member within ACIAR will be responsible for day to day tasks associated with complying with the IPS regarding the information relating to their Program or Corporate area. The IPS Working Group and KM Support team will continue to advise on the application of the FOI Act to documents being identified by staff for uploading, and will be responsible for implementing, reviewing and revising the agency plan.

As part of managing the ongoing administration of the IPS information holdings, ACIAR will develop a Guide to publishing information under the IPS for staff. The guide will:

- describe processes to be followed internally to ensure the accuracy, currency and completeness of published information
- help staff to identify on an ongoing basis any information to be published under the IPS
- describe the process for publishing information.

The agency will engage in better practice initiatives to engage with the community about ACIAR's contribution to the IPS. These include:

- issuing a media release announcing the launch of the IPS
- making IPS documents easily discoverable, understandable and as re-usable as possible
- inviting members of the public to contact the FOI contact officer via the ACIAR website with comments on the IPS information holdings, particularly if any documents are found not to be discoverable, understandable or re-usable

The agency will also put in place a system to enable ACIAR IPS documents, which are not available on the ACIAR website, to be made available upon request.

ACIAR will publish on its website a list of any IPS documents that are impracticable to publish online. The website will state that a person seeking access to any of these documents may contact the relevant area which owns the document to arrange access.

The list of documents will include indicative charges that may be imposed for making that information available and an explanation for the charge. These charges will be consistent with charges in the Freedom of Information (Charges) Regulations 1982 (which generally apply to access requests under Part III of the FOI Act).

It is anticipated that ACIAR will have completed updating our website; including removing superseded material and updating existing content by July 2012.

2.4. Information architecture

ACIAR will publish its IPS information holdings on its website. To enhance consistency for public users of the IPS, ACIAR's IPS will be accessed via the IPS logo link from the ACIAR home page and links for other agency websites.

To ensure that the IPS information holdings (and individual IPS documents) are easily discoverable, understandable and re-usable, ACIAR will:

- publish IPS and FOI icons on the homepage of its website, which will link to the IPS and FOI sections of the website
- wherever possible, provide online content in a format that can be searched, copied and transformed
- publish a sitemap for its website, to help individuals identify the location of information published under ss 8(2) and 8(4)
- provide a search function for its website
- establish links to this agency plan
- seek and respond to community feedback about IPS information holdings.

ACIAR will make its IPS documents:

- available on the IPS section of the website either through a link from the IPS section or published in the IPS section directly
- available for reuse under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia licence as far as possible
- searchable both on content and metadata

- fully accessible under best practice standards.

2.5. Information required to be published

ACIAR will publish documents required to be published under the IPS (s 8(2)) in the IPS section of the website.

ACIAR will publish these documents under the headings listed above:

Agency plan

Who we are

- this will include an organisational chart and information about statutory appointments
- for statutory appointees, ACIAR will publish the name of the person appointed, the length or term of appointment, the position to which the person is appointed (and particulars of the position) and the provision of the Act under which the person is appointed.

What we do

- this will outline the functions and decision making powers of the Agency
- ACIAR will also publish rules, guidelines, practices and precedents relating to these functions and powers.

Our reports and responses to Parliament

- this will include the full text of ACIAR's recent annual reports tabled in Parliament.

Routinely requested information

- this will include information in documents to which the agency gives access in response to FOI requests
- the agency will clearly identify these documents in its disclosure log, published under s11C of the FOI Act - which requires agencies to publish information contained in documents to which the agency has provided access under the FOI Act.

Consultation

- this will include information about how and to whom a comment may be submitted by members of the public, where ACIAR undertakes public consultation on a specific policy proposal.

Contact information

- this will include an email address for a contact officer, who can be contacted about access to ACIAR's information or documents under the FOI Act.

2.6. Optional information

ACIAR will publish on the IPS section of its website other information that it holds (in addition to the information published under s 8(2)), taking into account the objects of the FOI Act (s 8(4)).

ACIAR will publish additional information following these criteria, as necessary:

- Key stakeholders seek or expect ACIAR to provide information
- Information is important or useful to the Australian public or the international development community
- The Australian public requires the information to engage effectively with the Australian Government
- Information will promote greater transparency or accountability
- The information is not sensitive, private or excluded from publication under the Freedom of Information Act 1982.

2.7. Administration

ACIAR's primary mechanism for maintaining its IPS will be the IPS Information Register. The IPS register will record each document as it is identified for publication with the following information:

- Document Name
- Document Type (from the identified categories)
- Country (if relevant)
- Author (ACIAR or external author in the case of external research or analysis)
- Clearance information (when and by whom)
- Date Authored
- Update Date (if the information is to be kept up to date)
- Expiry Date (if the information relates to a point in time. It is expected that most documents will be kept for no more than two years, except where they continue to reflect up-to-date operational information).

It is proposed that the IPS Working Group will meet periodically to review the administration of the scheme, advise and participate in improvements and identify and prepare for publication additional mandatory and optional information.

2.8. Review

- ACIAR will review and revise this agency plan regularly as required
- ACIAR will review the operation of its IPS from time to time and at least every five years, in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Information Commissioner about IPS compliance review.

Version Control

Version	Person	Notes	Date
---------	--------	-------	------

1.0	Joanna Hicks	Draft version for internal consultation	12 December 2011
1.1	Joanna Hicks	Final version for publication	19 December 2011