

Geoscience Australia

Information Publication Scheme

Agency Plan



**Australian Government**

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**Geoscience Australia**

# Information Publication Scheme – Agency Plan

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# Introduction

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## Introduction

Geoscience Australia has prepared this Agency Plan (**the Plan**) in accordance with section 8(1) of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) as amended (**the FOI Act**).

Part II of the FOI Act, which deals with the Information Publication Scheme (**the Scheme**), comes into effect on 1 May 2011.

All references to sections in this Plan are to sections of the FOI Act.

## Purpose

The primary purpose of this Plan is to comply with section 8(1).

Under section 8(1), the Plan must show:

1. what information Geoscience Australia proposes to publish for the purposes of Part II of the FOI Act;
2. how, and to whom, Geoscience Australia proposes to publish information for the purposes of Part II; and
3. How Geoscience Australia otherwise proposes to comply with Part II.

The Plan will help Geoscience Australia to put in place appropriate procedures to proactively disclose its information holdings, in accordance with the objects of the FOI Act.

## Objectives

Geoscience Australia's objectives in relation to this Plan are to outline appropriate mechanisms and procedures to:

1. manage Geoscience Australia's information holdings relevant to the Scheme;
2. proactively identify and publish all information required to be published, including this Plan (in accordance with section 8(2));
3. proactively identify and publish other information held by Geoscience Australia (in accordance with section 8(4));
4. review and ensure on a regular basis that information published by Geoscience Australia under the Scheme is accurate, up-to-date and complete (in accordance with section 8B);
5. ensure that information published under the Scheme is able to be discovered by the general public, is understandable and re-useable;
6. ensure that the format of online content conforms with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2.0; and

7. Measure the success of Geoscience Australia's implementation of the Information Publication Scheme.

# Implementing the Scheme

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## 1. Establishing the Scheme at Geoscience Australia

### 1.1 Who is responsible for leading Geoscience Australia's work on implementing FOI reforms, including establishing and administering the IPS

Geoscience Australia's General Manager, Corporate is responsible for leading Geoscience Australia's work on implementing FOI reforms generally. This includes establishing and developing the Scheme at Geoscience Australia, maintaining the Scheme at Geoscience Australia in accordance with any assistance or guidelines provided by the Information Commissioner, and ensuring that all requests for access to documents of Geoscience Australia received from 1 November 2010 are processed in accordance with the amended FOI Act.

### 1.2 Geoscience Australia's existing information asset management framework and meeting the Scheme's requirements

From 1 May 2011, Geoscience Australia is required to publish and make publicly available a range of information. The information required to be published is specified in section 8(2).

#### (a) Information published by Geoscience Australia prior to the implementation of the Scheme

Geoscience Australia publishes a range of a material on its website, [www.ga.gov.au](http://www.ga.gov.au), including:

- (i) Information regarding Geoscience Australia scientific topics on home page;
- (ii) Geoscience Australia's Strategic Plan 2010-2012;
- (iii) A statement of Geoscience Australia's role;
- (iv) Information on Geoscience Australia's Executive Board;
- (v) Geoscience Australia organisational structure, management team and business groups;
- (vi) The Geoscience Australia Work Program which outlines operational Divisions with descriptions of each Division's programs.
- (vii) The Geoscience Australia Service Charter which includes:
  - (A) Who we are;
  - (B) What we do;
  - (C) Whom we serve;
- (viii) Freedom of Information arrangements, including consultant services reporting;
- (ix) Geoscience Australia's Annual Reports (2007-2010);
- (x) The Portfolio Budget Statements (2010-11);
- (xi) Our Facilities;
- (xii) Our Associated Partners;
- (xiii) Events being hosted by Geoscience Australia;
- (xiv) Current Ministerial media releases in the Media Centre; and
- (xv) Contact details for Geoscience Australia and Portfolio agency offices.

**(b) Partial satisfaction of some Scheme requirements**

Most of the information published on Geoscience Australia's website prior to the implementation of the Scheme satisfies section 8(2). However, some information is absent or requires amendment. This includes the following items.

- (i) The Media Centre does not contain archived media statements as recommended by the Information Commissioner. These are on the Minister's website. A link to the relevant page on the Minister's website will be established.
- (ii) Publication of information in documents to which Geoscience Australia routinely gives access in response to FOI applications is required under section 8(2)(g).

**(c) Measures to be taken by Geoscience Australia to satisfy remaining Scheme requirements**

To satisfy remaining Scheme requirements, Geoscience Australia will review the Geoscience Australia website as it stands to ensure that it is accurate, up to date and that the revisions noted above as required are carried out as listed in Section 8 (1)(b).

**1.3 Register of information for publication and a disclosure log**

Geoscience Australia regards the Geoscience Australia website as its register of information subject to any interference outside Geoscience Australia's control. The website is constructed so that material likely to be of interest to the public or stakeholders appears on the website or is accessible through hypertext links.

**1.4 Identification of information that is required to be published, or may be published, or may be available in other forms**

Geoscience Australia has reviewed its website to assess its current compliance with the revised requirements in the FOI Act. The next step will be a data collection. Geoscience Australia will request all operational units to review their contributions to the website and to:

- Certify that the information currently on the website is the sum total of Geoscience Australia information that can be made available to the public and stakeholders in accordance with the FOI Act. Where additional information could be published, managers will be requested to itemise the information and estimate when it should be ready for publication;
- certify that the information currently on the website is accurate, complete and up to date;
- confirm that the Divisional Web Coordinator will be responsible for the ongoing function of identifying material for publication and for checking periodically that the published material is accurate, complete and up to date; and
- reassess over time what data is routinely provided under FOI with a view to publishing it on the website.

Geoscience Australia Corporate Branch will periodically require that these functions be repeated and the website updated accordingly.

Where information should be available other than through the website users will be advised how to access the information.

## **1.5 Ensuring that information published under the Scheme is discoverable, understandable, machine-readable, accessible and useable**

The Geoscience Australia website has been developed to ensure content is available to the widest possible audience, including readers using assistive technology or accessibility features. By adhering to guidelines for accessible web design, Geoscience Australia acknowledges the diversity of communication methods, available technologies and abilities of web-users in the community. Geoscience Australia has commenced a process to bring public web presence to WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard by 2014.

The website is HTML 1.1 compliant. Geoscience Australia aims to make its website content as accessible as possible and follows the guidelines and standards of the W3C. Geoscience Australia uses cascading style sheets (CSS) to ensure a consistent 'look and feel'. Users of the latest browsers (such as Firefox 3+, IE6, Opera 2, Netscape 6 and Safari) which comply with the W3C guidelines and standards will view content as it was designed. Older browsers (such as Netscape 4, Firefox 2 or Internet Explorer 4) will not show the design as it was intended, however, all content will still be available.

## **1.6 Creative commons licensing**

Geoscience Australia notes that the Commonwealth has made the policy decision to regard Commonwealth copyright materials as licensed according to creative commons principles (<http://creativecommons.org.au/tag/australian-federal-government>) as the default position. Original materials on Geoscience Australia's website and most materials appearing on, or linked through, Geoscience Australia's website will be available for use by anyone on a creative commons licence. Exceptions will be documents appearing on, or linked through, the Geoscience Australia website where the copyright is owned by a non-Commonwealth entity. In most cases the publication will contain a copyright notice identifying the copyright owner.

## **1.7 Access charges**

Geoscience Australia does not propose charging access fees, other than those permitted under the FOI Act, for access to Geoscience Australia information.

## 2. Information architecture

Geoscience Australia will publish information to members of the public through its website, [www.ga.gov.au](http://www.ga.gov.au).

The format, language and accessibility arrangements are as described above in paragraph 1.5.

Geoscience Australia may deposit copies of information as appropriate, and as the relevant types of publication are utilised. These may include over time:

- hard copy documents deposited in accordance with the Commonwealth Library Deposit and Free Issue Schemes; and
- audiovisual documents provided to the National Film and Sound Archive.

It is not anticipated that Geoscience Australia will have any material suited to publication on [www.data.gov.au](http://www.data.gov.au) in the first instance. However, this issue will be kept under constant review and as opportunities to publish on this website arise publication will be arranged.

### 3. Information required to be published

In accordance with section 8(2) Geoscience Australia will publish on the website, as of 1 May 2011:

- (a) The Agency Plan (section 8(3)(a));
- (b) Who we are, including an updated organisational chart (section 8(3)(b));
- (c) What we do, including information on Geoscience Australia's functions, decision making powers, operational guidelines and other materials used within Geoscience Australia in making decisions or recommendations affecting members of the public (section 8(2)(c) and (j));
- (d) Geoscience Australia's reports and responses to Parliament (section 8(2)(e) and (h));
- (e) Geoscience Australia's information (if any) routinely requested under the FOI Act and Geoscience Australia's disclosure log (sections 8(2)(g) and 11C);
- (f) Arrangements whereby members of the public may comment on specific policy proposals (section 8(2)(f)); and
- (g) Contact details for Geoscience Australia generally and for Geoscience Australia's FOI contact officer (section 8(2)(i)).

#### 4. Optional information

Geoscience Australia currently publishes a range of a material on its public corporate webpage, <http://www.ga.gov.au/>. In accordance with section 8(4), Geoscience Australia intends to include links on its dedicated website for the Scheme to additional material currently published on its public corporate webpage.

## 5. Administering Geoscience Australia's Scheme

The General Manger, Corporate will have overall responsibility for administration of the Scheme within Geoscience Australia.

Geoscience Australia Strategic Planning and Compliance team will perform most of the administrative functions, under the direction of the General Manager, Corporate.

Geoscience Australia's Strategic Planning and Compliance team will also ask operational units to identify any information they have created or obtained that is only available in hard copy or audiovisual form with a view to depositing it under the Library Deposit Scheme or with the National Film and Sound Archive.

Geoscience Australia is committed to publishing a disclosure log in accordance with section 11C.

Should Geoscience Australia introduce charging for access to information, apart from charges imposed under the FOI Act, full details of the charging regime will be published on the website.

## 6. Review

Geoscience Australia will review this Agency Plan at least annually. Geoscience Australia will review the operation of the Scheme within Geoscience Australia at least every five years in accordance with the Australian Information Commissioner's guidance on Scheme reviews.