Agency Plan

Implementation of the Information Publication Scheme

Australian Government

AusAID

Contents

1   Introduction

AusAID is the Australian Government's Agency for International Development, an executive agency within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio. Its primary role is the implementation and oversight of the Australian Government aid program. The aim of the program is to assist developing countries reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development, in line with Australia's national interest.

Reforms to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) have established the Information Publication Scheme (IPS). The purpose of the IPS is to give the Australian community access to information held by the Australian Government and enhance and promote Australia's representative democracy by increasing public participation in government processes and increasing scrutiny, discussion, comment and review of government activities and decisions.

AusAID is committed to greater transparency through the implementation of the Information Publication Scheme (IPS) and other initiatives. As Australia's Official Development Assistance commitment has increased, public interest in the aid program has correspondingly increased and this will continue. Ongoing maintenance of the IPS will provide more information to Australians about AusAID's activities and help increase public participation, understanding and scrutiny of Australia's aid program.

This plan has been revised to assist AusAID's implementation of the IPS, in accordance with section 8(1) of the *Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 1982*. The list of documents that is a core part of this plan will, in particular, be amended as needed.

1.1   Purpose

The purpose of the plan is to:

a) Comply with section 8(1) of the FOI Act

b) Assist the development and maintenance of AusAID's IPS

c) Continue processes to discover and disclose AusAID's documents, in accordance with the objectives of the FOI Act

d) Facilitate public consultation on AusAID's response to the IPS.

1.2   Objectives

The objectives of this plan and the IPS are to:

a) Manage AusAID's documents with relevance to the IPS

b) Identify all information required to be published, including this plan, under section 8(2) of the FOI Act

c) Review and ensure on a regular basis that information published under the IPS is accurate, up-to-date and complete (section 8B FOI Act)

d) Ensure that information published under the IPS is discoverable, understandable and re-usable

e) Ensure that the format of online content will conform with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (Version 2)

f) Publish identified information on the AusAID website, regularly review the material and update as required

g) Have a better informed Australian community and resulting greater scrutiny of the aid program.

2 Implementing the Information Publication Scheme

An AusAID Assistant Director General (ADG) is responsible for leading AusAID's implementation of the FOI reforms, including establishment and administration of the IPS.

2.1   AusAID's IPS

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

- Responses to informal requests for information from the public, research and academic organisations, domestic and international aid organisations
- Responses to FOI requests
- Information actively published on the agency website
- Printed reports and other printed material.

AusAID's IPS identifies and publishes information assisting the public's understanding and engagement with the activities and decisions of the agency.

2.2   Roles and Responsibilities

For the implementation of AusAID's IPS, the ADG of the Communications, Ministerial and Transparency Branch is supported by the following groups within AusAID:

2.2.1   The Ministerial and Parliamentary Section (MPS) has the following roles:

a) Consultation within the agency to identify information covered by the FOI reforms

b) Prepare documents for publication as a result of FOI requests

c) Fulfilling requests for information that are not met by the IPS including information in other formats such as hardcopies or on disc (this service may attract a charge for time and materials)

2.2.2   The Aid Transparency Section has the following roles:

a) Preparation of the revised Agency Plan for executive endorsement

b) Responding to public feedback and incorporating changes in the planning and administration of AusAID's IPS

c) Liaison with AusAID branches to identify and forward documents for publication

d) Leading the IPS Reference Group

e) Creation, publication and maintenance of an information register, which includes the Disclosure Log, of information released under FOI requests

f) Maintain an AusAID website that meets the requirements of the FOI Act, guidelines of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC), AusAID's commitments and obligations to accessibility standards and the AusAID website design

g) Preparation of documents for publication with special responsibility for accessibility standards

h) Publication of information identified under the scheme

i) Control and maintenance of the information register to ensure information is up-to-date and accurate

2.2.3 *The Information Services Branch has the following roles*

a) Development of the IPS website

b) Assistance with the development of other systems such as the information register

2.2.4 *Other AusAID branches have the following roles*

a) The Assistant Director General of each AusAID branch that may contain information that is covered by the IPS will appoint an IPS Coordinator for that branch.

b) IPS Coordinators will form the IPS Reference Group under the leadership of the IPS Leader in ATS

c) IPS Coordinators will:

    1. Identify information in their branch covered by the IPS including mandatory and optional information

    2. Clear this information for publication with their Assistant Director General

    3. Forward cleared documents to IPS team for registration and publication

    4. Respond to requests for reviews and update new information to maintain the currency of the IPS

2.3 IPS – post implementation

AusAID is committed to meeting its obligations under the IPS and means AusAID continues to identify new material for publication. As part of this, AusAID will continue to respond to formal and informal requests for information by the public and other stakeholders. As of 24 September 2012, the Agency had 1985 documents listed on the IPS Registry.

2.4 Information Architecture

This section describes how AusAID information is published under the IPS

a) To enhance consistency for public users of the IPS, AusAID's IPS may be accessed via the AusAID home page and links to other agency websites

b) Information published under the scheme:

    1. Is published with information about the country, aid theme, author, creation and removal dates that applies to each document (metadata)

    2. Is published under the following headings

        i. Agency Plan

        ii. Who we are

        iii. What we do

        iv. Our reports and response to parliament

        v. Routinely requested information and disclosure log

        vi. Consultation arrangements

        vii. Our priorities

        viii. Our finances

        ix. Our lists

        x. Contact information

    3. Is free from copyright or other restraints to usage

    4. Is fully accessible under best practice standards

    5. Is searchable both on content and metadata

2.5   Information to be published

Owner (Branch)	Document Type	including, but not limited to
Agency Plan		
Parliamentary, Security & Property	Agency Plan (For implementing the Information Publication Scheme)	
Who we are		
Human Resources	Organisation Chart	
	Contact Details	
What we do		
Information held by AusAID to assist the agency make decisions or recommendations affecting the delivery of the International Aid Program		
	Agency Guidelines	
	Rules and Tools	
	Policies and Procedures	
Country and Thematic Teams	Strategies	Country Strategy
		Delivery Strategy
		Strategy reviews
		Thematic Strategy
	Program documents	Initiative Concepts (following peer review)
		Initiative Designs (following peer review)
		Initiative Progress Reports
		Completion Reports
		Annual Performance Reports
	Performance and Quality	Independent Evaluations
		Significant AusAID-contracted analysis
	Internal and external research and analysis	Significant partner-contracted and internal research and analysis
	Brochures	
Human Resources	Details of Statutory Appointments	
Governance and Social Development	Governance Panel User's Guide	
	Procedures for Engaging Capacity Development Panel Members	
Community Partnerships & Latin America	NGO Accreditation and list of NGOs	
	Partnership agreements	
	List of developing countries	
	Details of overseas aid gift deduction scheme	
	AusAID-NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) Guidelines and Guiding	

Owner (Branch)	Document Type	including, but not limited to
	principles	
	Human Rights Grant Scheme guidelines	
Humanitarian and Peacebuilding	Humanitarian and emergency response policies	
	Funding Agreements	
Executive	Audit Committee Charter	
	Internal Audit Charter	
	ANAO Reports	
	AusAID Risk Management Policy (2009)	
	AusAID Fraud Control Policy (2007)	
	AusAID Guidelines for reporting suspected or detected fraud (2005)	
	Fraud Policy Statement (2005)	
	Information about fraud	
	Announcements and Speeches	
Agreements and Value for Money	Contracts Charter	
Our reports and responses to parliament		
Communications & Media	Annual Reports	
Parliamentary, Security & Property	Parliamentary requests for Information	
	Senate Estimates Questions on Notice	
	Responses to Questions on Notice and in Writing	
	Submissions to Committees	
Information Services	List of Departmental Files	
	List of Departmental Contracts	
Routinely requested information and disclosure log		
Communications & Media	List of Advertising Projects	
Parliamentary, Security & Property	FOI procedures and requests	
Consultation arrangements		

AusAID routinely consults with domestic and international, government and non-government organisations. Future opportunities for public participation and consultation will be placed on this website.

Our priorities		
Executive	Corporate plans	
Our Finances		
Financial Management	Financial Statements	
Budget	Budget information	
Contact us		
	Contact information is already on the AusAID website	

2.6   Optional information

AusAID publishes additional information on a case-by-case basis subject to the following criteria where:

a) Key stakeholders seek or expect AusAID to provide information

b) Information is important or useful to the Australian public or the international development communities

c) The Australian public requires the information to engage effectively with the Australian Government

d) Information will promote greater transparency or accountability

e) The information is not sensitive, private or excluded from publication under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

2.7   Administering the agency Information Publication Scheme

AusAID's primary mechanism for maintaining its IPS is the IPS Information Register.

a) The IPS Register records each document as it is identified for publication with the following information:

1. Document Name

2. Document Type (from the indentified categories)

3. Country (if relevant)

4. Aid Theme (for themes if relevant)

5. Author (AusAID or external author in the case of external research or analysis)

6. Clearance information (when and by whom)

7. Date Authored

8. Update Date (if the information is to be kept up-to-date)

9. 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).

b) The IPS Reference Group will meet periodically to review the administration of the scheme, advise and participate in improvements and identify and prepare for publication additional information.

2.8   Review

Compliance with the IPS will be assured by

a) Continuing oversight by the ADG responsible for FOI and IPS

b) Regular review of the scheme by the IPS Reference Group

c) Compliance assurance by AusAID's internal audit.