

# KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

## OFFICE OF THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

### CERTIFICATION OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

I hereby certify that the performance indicators are based on proper records, are relevant and appropriate for assisting users to assess the performance of the Office of the Information Commissioner and fairly represent the performance of the Office of the Information Commissioner for the financial year ended 30 June 2003.



B KEIGHLEY-GERARDY  
INFORMATION COMMISSIONER  
15 August 2003

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2002/2003

- **DESIRED OUTCOME:** Access to documents and observance of processes in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* (the Act).
- **DESCRIPTION:** The Office of the Information Commissioner provides a freedom of information (FOI) complaint mechanism and advisory service which is independent, objective and fair; and which balances the competing needs of applicants, agencies and Parliament, subject to the requirements and processes prescribed in the Act. The Information Commissioner has a statutory duty to undertake these functions and the office accordingly has two outputs – Output 1: Resolution of Complaints and Output 2: Freedom of Information Advice and Awareness.

When dealing with disputes, the objective is to avoid being unduly legalistic or formal in the way proceedings are conducted, which is the intent of the legislation. When a resolution by way of conciliation between the parties cannot be achieved, the Information Commissioner is required to make a determination by publishing a written decision with reasons.

Advice and Awareness activities also emphasise the spirit of the legislation and, wherever possible, agencies are either encouraged to release information outside the FOI process or, where necessary, follow the correct processes for dealing with an application under the Act. Policy development within agencies is encouraged so that the obligations placed on agencies under the Act have minimal effect on their day-to-day operations. Many potential disputes are also resolved informally with assistance from the office.

Therefore, the performance indicators of the office reflect the satisfaction of parties who utilise the services of the office, show the extent to which conciliation is achieved and measure efficiency by relating workload to costs.

## EFFECTIVENESS

		1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Satisfaction of parties with the external review process	<b>Target</b>	90%	88%	87%	90%	90%
	<b>Outcome</b>	88%	86%	92%	86%	85%

A survey of all 185 participants in the external review process was administered and 74% (137) responded by returning a completed questionnaire. The survey is administered immediately following finalisation of each review. The indicator shows the level of satisfaction with the review process, including the professionalism of our staff; the extent to which feedback was provided as matters proceeded; and the extent to which parties were given the opportunity to have input. The survey seeks the participant's views on whether there was an independent, objective and fair hearing with an emphasis on user-friendly processes which met their needs.

		1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Satisfaction of agencies with advice and guidance provided	<b>Target</b>	100%	98%	98%	98%	(a)
	<b>Outcome</b>	98%	98%	(a)	98.5%	(a)

(a) Survey is now conducted every 2 years

There is a range of advisory services encompassing publications, advice on request, Internet based services, briefings and workshops and formal presentations to agencies. Since the commencement of the FOI Act, surveys have been administered annually to all state and local government agencies. The trend has indicated a consistently high level of satisfaction with the advisory services provided by the office, so in order to reduce the burden on agencies, the survey is now conducted biennially.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS *continued*

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
The extent to which applications for external review were resolved by conciliation	80%	70%	61%	60%	61.5%

Conciliation is the preferred method of dispute resolution where possible, provided undue delay does not occur. This indicator shows the extent to which a conciliated outcome is achieved. The measure shows the percentage of cases where a complainant and other involved parties are satisfied with the conciliated result, and thus do not require a formal determination to be prepared and published by the Information Commissioner. A conciliated outcome has the benefit of avoiding an unduly legalistic approach and minimises the number of published decisions, thus minimising costs. The variation in the conciliation rate from year to year reflects fluctuations in the complexity of complaints and the extent to which parties choose to seek a published determination.

### EFFICIENCY

#### *Output 1: Resolution of Complaints*

		1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Average cost of external reviews finalised	<b>Budget</b>	\$4605	\$5044	\$3552	\$4779	\$4642
	<b>Actual</b>	\$4992	\$3380	\$5321	\$4206	\$4645

This reflects the costs incurred in resolving complaints, which is reported in more detail in the annual report and in the WA Government annual budget statements for the Consolidated Fund. The variation in the actual and budget average cost is due primarily to fluctuations in the number of applications for external review received in particular financial years.

#### *Output 2: Advice and Awareness Services*

		1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Average cost of advice and awareness per application lodged	<b>Budget</b>	\$75	\$86	\$75	\$60	\$58
	<b>Actual</b>	\$68	\$71	\$68	\$56	\$57

This indicator shows the average cost of advice and awareness services, for each application lodged with agencies across the public sector. Further detail about this output is also provided in the annual report and the published budget statements for the Consolidated Fund .



## AUDITOR GENERAL

### INDEPENDENT AUDIT OPINION

To the Parliament of Western Australia

OFFICE OF THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER  
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2003

#### **Audit Opinion**

In my opinion, the key effectiveness and efficiency performance indicators of the Office of the Information Commissioner are relevant and appropriate to help users assess the Office's performance and fairly represent the indicated performance for the year ended June 30, 2003.

#### **Scope**

##### *The Information Commissioner's Role*

The Information Commissioner is responsible for developing and maintaining proper records and systems for preparing performance indicators.

The performance indicators consist of key indicators of efficiency and effectiveness.

##### *Summary of my Role*

As required by the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985, I have independently audited the performance indicators to express an opinion on them. This was done by looking at a sample of the evidence.

An audit does not guarantee that every amount and disclosure in the performance indicators is error free, nor does it examine all evidence and every transaction. However, my audit procedures should identify errors or omissions significant enough to adversely affect the decisions of users of the performance indicators.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D D R Pearson'.

D D R PEARSON  
AUDITOR GENERAL  
September 19, 2003