

Office of the
State Archivist

ON THE
RECORD



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Join us to discuss the Commission of Inquiry

The [final report](#) of the *Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings* was tabled in Parliament on 26 September. The Tasmanian Government will deliver its formal response for implementing the 191 recommendations in December.

We will be holding a virtual (Teams) meeting in February 2024 to discuss the recordkeeping implications of the report. Please [contact us](#) if you'd like to join. We'd like to hear your thoughts on the recordkeeping challenges faced by your organisation and how we might help.

Please remember that our [records retention notice](#) still applies. This means you need to keep all records of relevance until the end of the Commission and any resulting reviews, appeals or actions.

New Office of the State Archivist website launches soon

We're excited to say our new website will go live soon. The new website has a simple,

user-friendly site structure, and better search features. It meets accessibility standards and allows for embedded videos and online forms. We've taken down some outdated content. A redirect will be in place to the new website URL, but if you have any bookmarked webpages, you will need to update them.

We'd like to thank our stakeholder consultation group for their valuable feedback during development. We'd also like to thank Crystal Adams, our Project Officer, and Patrice Burke, Tamsin Lowe, Mel Hughes and Carl Roddam who have supported Crystal over the last year.

Please [tell us](#) if you find any problems or you can't find what you are looking for.

Update on Tasmanian Archives business units

The Tasmanian Archives consists of three business units, we have recently completed recruitment for the three leadership positions:

- Tasmanian Archives and Special Collections is managed by Karin Haveman, and they manage the storage and preservation of archival material and the transfer of state records into the Tasmanian Archives.
- The State Library and Archive Service is managed by Bec Taylor and provides access to material in the Tasmanian Archives including government file retrieval.
- The Office of the State Archivist is managed by Gemma Smith and provides information management advice and guidance and disposal authorisation.

In Brief

Commonwealth Government announces COVID-19 Inquiry

The [Commonwealth Government COVID-19 Response Inquiry](#) was announced in September. The Inquiry will review the Commonwealth's Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and make recommendations to improve responses in future pandemics. The Inquiry is not a Royal Commission, but an independent panel of three people, supported by a taskforce in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. A final report is due by the end of September 2024.

The Inquiry is largely focused on the Commonwealth Government. The Terms of Reference state that it will review governance including "responsibilities of state and territory governments", but that "actions taken unilaterally by state and territory governments are not in scope".

We don't typically issue freezes in response to Inquiries of this type. We recommend you read the [Terms of Reference](#) and contact the taskforce to determine if the Inquiry is relevant to your organisation. Remember that investigations or inquiries in progress

override disposal schedules or disposal authorisations. This means you need to identify and preserve all relevant records until the inquiry and any subsequent actions are completed.

Interim guidance on government use of generative Artificial Intelligence

The Digital Transformation Agency and the Department of Industry, Science and Resources have released [Interim guidance for agencies on government use of generative Artificial Intelligence platforms](#). The guidance is for Australian government agencies to use as the basis for providing advice to their staff. You may find this guidance useful.

Australian Government responds to the Privacy Act Review Report

The Australian Government has [responded](#) to the *Privacy Act Review Report*. Of the 116 proposals in the Report, the Government agreed to 38, agreed in-principle to 68 and notes 10. The five key areas of reform include:

- Bringing the Privacy Act into the digital age
- Uplifting protections requiring entities to be accountable for handling personal information
- Increasing clarity and simplicity for entities and individuals
- Improving control and transparency for individuals over their personal information
- Strengthening enforcement powers for the Office of the Australian Information Commission.

Legislation is expected to be introduced in 2024. The reforms align with the Australian Cyber Security Strategy, the Digital ID, the National Strategy for Identity Resilience, and Supporting Responsible AI in Australia.

Community attitudes on access to government information

The 2023 [Cross-jurisdictional Information Access Survey](#) was released by information commissioners and ombudsmen across Australia in September. The survey measures citizens' awareness of the right to access government information, and their experiences.

The majority (91%) of Australians nationwide felt their right to access information from government services was 'very' or 'quite important'. This was consistent across jurisdictions. Most respondents in each jurisdiction were aware they had the right to access government information. Respondents from Western Australia were most likely to be aware of this right (72%), and Tasmanians least likely to be aware (56%).

In the News

[A cut too far: The people who can't give up paper](#), *BBC*, 25 September 2023. The world's gone digital and yet many professions and industries still rely on paper every day. When will they scrunch up and toss away the last page?

[Australia's home affairs department kept no real-time records of ChatGPT use, raising](#)

[‘serious security concerns’](#), *The Guardian*, 9 August 2023. FOI document reveals staff could not recall what they entered into AI chatbot.

[Electronic signature law passes after years in limbo](#), *InnovationAus.com*, 5 September 2023. All documents which are required or permitted to be signed under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cwlth) can signed electronically or in the usual ‘wet-ink’.

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