Ministry of Agriculture and Food FIPA Access Assessments

This organization was listed as an independent public body at the start of 2024 under British Columbia's <u>Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</u> (FOIPPA) and the <u>Information Management Act</u> (IMA).

FIPA conducts empirical research as part of its program activities. Its access assessment activities are meant to monitor freedom of information. https://fipa.bc.ca/research-resources/access-assessments/

This PDF contains the requests that were sent to this public body, as well as the records that were subsequently released.

These records were originally collected as data for a more in-depth study as part of FIPA's empirical research. That involved submitting focused freedom of information (FOI) requests to determine how this public body, which we classified as a core government organization, was interpreting and applying FOIPPA and IMA legislation.

That project is called *Access Regimes: Social Studies of Recordkeeping, Bureaucracy, and Secrecy under Freedom of Information Law.* Further information about that study can be found on the Open Science Foundation's <u>registration platform</u>.

Distinct from the original study, FIPA has also assessed whether this public body meets expectations identified in an IPSOS poll we commissioned. That poll can be found on the FIPA website here. https://fipa.bc.ca/ministry-of-agriculture-and-food/

About FIPA

The BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association (FIPA) is a non-partisan, non-profit society that was established in 1991 to promote and defend freedom of information and privacy rights in Canada. While we are based in BC, our membership extends across Canada, and we regularly partner with organizations throughout the country.

Our goal is to empower citizens by increasing their access to information and their control over their own personal information. We serve a wide variety of individuals and organizations through programs of public education, public assistance, research, and law reform. We are one of very few public interest groups in Canada devoted solely to the advancement of freedom of information and privacy rights.

Requests sent to core government organizations

Request item 1

Current organizational charts that indicate freedom of information personnel and information management personnel; (ARCS 105-02).

Summary

Charts that outline where freedom of information personnel and information management personnel exist within an organization.

Rational

Organizational charts help identify who is responsible for fulfilling certain obligations.

Request item 2

Delegation of authority charts for the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act; (ARCS 265-20).

Summary

Charts that outline who has certain powers under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Rational

Delegation of authority charts are standard instruments across the implementation of any law with delegable and discretionary powers.

Request item 3

Policies or procedures regarding freedom of information (not privacy), including policies and procedures regarding the routine release of information and proactive disclosure, but excluding the *FOIPPA Policy & Procedures Manual*; (ARCS 292-00, 292-27).

Summary

Freedom of information policies.

Rational

Policies are the core of implementing any new public initiative.

Request item 4

Final reports regarding public body-specific performance reporting, program evaluations, or project implementation plans or reviews with respect to freedom of information; (ARCS 400-02, ARCS 400-10, ARCS 400-20, ARCS 400-40, ARCS 400-50, ARCS 440-02, ARCS 400-20).

Summary

Internal reports about freedom of information.

Rational

How public bodies monitor their performance matters.

Delegation of authority charts for the *Information Management Act*, as applicable; (ARCS 265-20).

Summary

Charts that outline who has certain powers under the Information Management Act.

Rational

Delegation of authority charts are standard instruments across the implementation of any law with delegable and discretionary powers.

Request item 6

Interoffice memoranda about freedom of information and records/information management; (ARCS 195-20, 195-45).

Summary

Memos about freedom of information and records/information management.

Rational

Internal communications can structure organizational activity.

Request item 7

Metadata Application Profiles and Information Destruction Models, as well associated policies and procedures and implementation plans and reports.

Summary

Metadata schemas for records management systems.

Rational

Metadata is an essential part of establishing control over records.

Request item 8

Office of primary responsibility designations/matrices; (ARCS 432-12).

Summary

Lists of offices responsible for certain organizational records.

Rationa

Lists like this are often a reflection of the classification logics used to manage records.

Request item 9

Technical manuals for records management systems.

Summary

User manuals for records management software.

Rational

Manuals contribute to how staff interact with technology.



File lists and indexes; (ARCS 432-10).

Summary

Lists of regularly created files.

Rational

File lists are a prerequisite to an up-to-date file classification plan.

Request item 11

Final training packages and training implementation history files (excluding correspondence; ARCS 1735-25) for freedom to information and records/information management training.

Summary

Training materials for freedom of information and records management.

Rational

Training is necessary for the successful implementation of FOIPPA and IMA.

Request item 12

Ministry self-assessments for records/information management based on the frameworks provided by the Chief Records Officer.

Summary

Self-assessments conducted according to an internal government standard.

Rational

Part of the Chief Records Officer's mandate is to evaluate records management.

Request item 13

The public body's policies and procedures regarding records/information management (ARCS 432-00).

Summary

Records management policies.

Rational

Policies are the core of implementing any new public initiative.

Request item 14

The public body's Information Resource Management Plans.

Summary

A type of information management plan required by core government policy.

Rational

Information resource plans are a key reporting and planning mechanism under core government policy.



Copies of licenses, contracts, and agreements between the public body and recordkeeping system service providers or contractors.

Summary

Contracts for recordkeeping systems.

Rational

Contracts detail roles and responsibilities with respect to system implementation and maintenance.

Request item 16

Acceptable use of technology policies and procedures.

Summary

Acceptable use of technology policies.

Rational

AUPs govern how employees may appropriately interact with technology over the course of their job.

Request item 17

Final job description files for any employee who regularly performs a role or responsibility in responding to a freedom of information request or fulfilling public body's records/information management program (ARCS 1360-20).

Summary

Job descriptions for records management and freedom of information staff.

Rational

Job descriptions articulate the necessary skills and anticipated responsibilities of people charged with doing FOI or RM work.

Request item 18

"Documenting government decisions" policy instruments (where "instrument" has the same meaning as in <u>Treasury Board Directive 1/23</u>).

Summary

Duty to document policies.

Rational

The Chief Records Officer has developed directives instructing public bodies to develop organization-specific policies for documenting government decisions.

Policies and procedures concerning incidents regarding sections 65.3 [Offence to willfully evade access provisions] and 30.3 [whistle-blower protection] of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Summary

Policies concerning offences to willfully evade FOI requests.

Rational

The offence was created to deter bad practices frustrating the public's right to know.

Request item 20

Final Requests for Proposals (and any attachments to those proposals) concerning records management/freedom of information (not privacy).

Summary

Requests for proposals for freedom of information and records management projects.

Rational

RFPs document a public body's needs in order to identify the solutions they are seeking proposals to address.

Request item 21

Final Requests for Proposals (and any attachments to those proposals) concerning records management/freedom of information (not privacy).

Summary

Requests for proposals for freedom of information and records management projects.

Rational

RFPs document a public body's needs in order to identify the solutions they are seeking proposals to address.

Request item 22

Contracts and statements of work for consultant services for freedom of information related work (if more than one, please provide only the last five).

Summary

Contracts and statements of work for consultants' work related to freedom of information and records management.

Rational

Contracts and statements of work define the boundaries of what work the public body performs and what work it relies on others' to perform.



Copies of records management ontologies/thesauri.

Summary

Controlled vocabularies for records management.

Rational

Controlled vocabularies are a prerequisite to applying metadata.

Request item 24

Copies of checklists, forms, templates, guides, and other tools used in relation to processing freedom of information requests (please include intranet files when responsive, by print PDF or screen capture if necessary).

Summary

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Rational

Workflow materials for freedom of information processing.

Request item 25

Records confirming the appointment and responsibilities of FOI Oversight Liaison Officers and Duty to Document Champions, or roles that perform a similar function if those titles are antiquated.

Summary

Records concerning the appointment of employees responsible for promoting freedom of information and records management.

Rational

Internal promotion of FOI and RM contributes to effective implementation.

Request item 26

Case management procedures for freedom of information requests;

Summary

Case management software helps public bodies keep track of requests and organize their responses.

Rational

Procedures for managing request workflows.

Request item 27

Onboarding manuals.

Summary

Manuals given to employees when they first enter an organization.

Rational

Onboarding employees should include both awareness of FOI and RM.

Request item 28

The public body's duty to document readiness assessments (produced in Winter 2019).



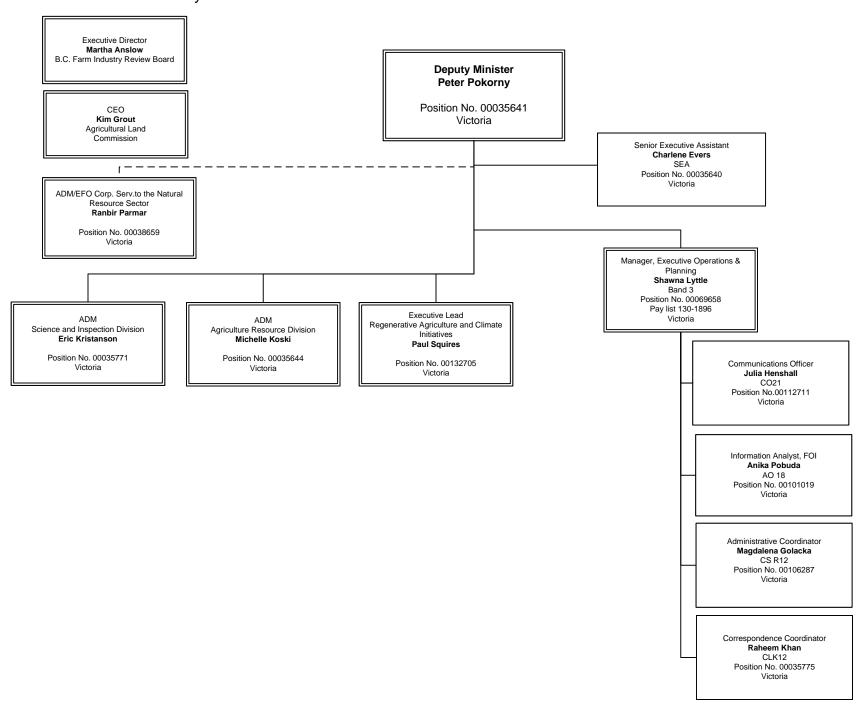
Summary

Reports produced to prepare to implement duty to document.

Rational


These reports established the baseline position from which duty to document was purportedly implemented.

Deputy Minister's Office and Executive Team July 2023





Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests Process



From: AF Communications AF:EX (AGRI.Communications@gov.bc.ca)

To: Undisclosed recipients:;

Subject: Records Management Resources

Sent: 04/25/2022 18:49:46 **Attachments:** image002.jpg

Message Body:

Records Management Resources

As a BC Public Service employee, it?s important to know how to manage your records appropriately and in accordance with legislated requirements. Government Records Services (GRS) has recently refreshed their records management web page. This page includes resources and tools to help you stay on top of this important responsibility. Organized and diligent records management is important to effectively respond to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received in our Ministry. A few specific resources are set out below for your convenience.

Records:

- Email Guide
- Managing Records Outside the Office
- Transitory Information

AF Governments Records Officer:

Sarah Johnson

Phone: 250 356-7329 Email: GRS@gov.bc.ca

FOI:

- Information Access Operation Resources, including exceptions to disclosure
- Ministry FOI Information

AF FOI Information Analyst

Hemant (Sunny) Joshi Phone: 250-940-7562

Email: Hemant.Joshi@gov.bc.ca



JOB PROFILE Position #000101019

TITLE: INFORMATION ANALYST CLASSIFICATION: AO18

MINISTRY: AGRICULTURE WORK UNIT: DEPUTY MINISTER'S

OFFICE

SUPERVISOR TITLE: MANGER OF EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS AND PLANNING

SUPERVISOR POSITION #: 0069658

JOB OVERVIEW

Reporting directly to the Manager of Executive Operations and Planning, the Information Analyst provides leadership and guidance on the implementation of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and makes recommendations on the release of information and the protection of privacy for the Ministry.

ACCOUNTABILITIES:

- Reviews, analyses, recommends, develops and authorizes responses to access requests for sensitive, confidential and complex information within specified timeframes.
- Reviews and ascertains the nature and extent of requests, making preliminary decisions, such as whether the request is within the ministry's jurisdiction or if another public body has a greater interest.
- Works with Ministry staff on cross-ministry FOI requests, reviewing and analysing content to ensure that severing is consistent throughout.
- Analyzes requested records to determine if any mandatory or discretionary exceptions specified in the FOIPP Act apply and what materials can be released ensuring risks, legal and security issues to the author, applicant, third parties and/or the client are considered.
- Reviews records provided by staff to determine if they are within the scope of the request and to ensure
 that all relevant records have been provided and are accurate by removing duplicate records and ensuring
 attachments are included where required.
- Determines the need to withhold and/or release information or records ensuring risks, legal and security issues to the author, applicant, third parties and/or the ministry are considered.
- Makes determinations to involve senior management and/or executive if there are any extraordinary issues that arise during the processing of a request.
- Severs required information, in accordance with statutory requirements, prior to the release of information.
- Acts as ministry liaison with Information Access Operations (IAO) to discuss requests, negotiate required responses, time extensions, etc.
- Reviews Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) requests, provides information to support severing that is applied and works with IAO and OIPC to ensure any inquiries from the applicant are answered.
- Maintains off-sited records, reviews destruction notices and works with the program areas if records need to be located.
- Provides information and direction to Ministry staff on record keeping, FOIPPA legislation and FOI requests.
- Develop methods, tools or materials to track ongoing issues, timelines and decision-making.

Date: August 1, 2024

• Performs other related duties in the Deputy Minister's Office as required, such as coordination information and materials for Estimates, UBCM, FNLG etc.

JOB REQUIREMENTS:

Education and Experience

- Degree/Diploma in Information Management, Public Administration or;
- Other directly-related discipline and minimum 1 years of recent experience performing FOI analytical work or:
- An equivalent combination of education/training and experience.
- Experience interpreting and applying information access legislation, policies and directives (examples include: policies and laws of the provincial, federal, or municipal governments).

Preference may be given to applicants who have one or more of the following types of experience:

- Direct experience in interpreting freedom of information /privacy or similar legislation.
- Enrollment or completion of BC Information Privacy (BCIP) certification
- Experience in managing caseloads.
- Experience working in a high-volume environment.
- Knowledge of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Document Disposal Act and procedures related to the collection, use and disclosure of information.
- Successful completion of security screening requirements of the BC Public Service, which may include a
 criminal records check, and/or Criminal Records Review Act (CRRA) check, and/or enhanced security
 screening checks as required by the ministry (Note: It is important that you read the job posting carefully to
 understand the specific security screening requirements pertaining to the position).

BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCIES:

- Analytical Thinking is the ability to comprehend a situation by breaking it down into its components and identifying key or underlying complex issues. It implies the ability to systematically organize and compare the various aspects of a problem or situation and determine cause-and-effect relationships ("if...then...") to resolve problems in a sound, decisive manner. Checks to ensure the validity or accuracy of all information.
- Information Seeking is driven by a desire to know more about things, people or issues. It implies going beyond the questions that are routine or required in the job. It may include "digging" or pressing for exact information; resolution of discrepancies by asking a series of questions; or less-focused environmental "scanning" for potential opportunities or miscellaneous information that may be of future use.
- **Impact and Influence** is the ability to influence, persuade, or convince others to adopt a specific course of action. It involves the use of persuasive techniques, presentations or negotiation skills to achieve desired results.
- Service Orientation implies a desire to identify and serve customers/clients, who may include the public, co-workers, other branches/divisions, other ministries/agencies, other government organizations, and nongovernment organizations. It means focusing one's efforts on discovering and meeting the needs of the customer/client.

Date: August 1, 2024

•	Teamwork and Co-operation is the ability to work co-operatively within diverse teams, work groups and across the organization to achieve group and organizational goals. It includes the desire and ability to understand and respond effectively to other people from diverse backgrounds with diverse views.
	Date: August 1, 2024