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Media release

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IPC Annual Report 2019/20 released

The NSW Information and Privacy Commission NSW (IPC) CEO, Information Commissioner and Open Data Advocate Elizabeth Tydd today released the IPC Annual Report 2019/20 (The Report) which also includes a report of the work of the NSW Privacy Commissioner, Samantha Gavel for the period.

The Report documents the work, activities and organisational achievements of the IPC during the reporting period and outlines the IPC's focus for the year ahead across both information access and privacy in NSW. It also includes the Report on the Operation of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* by the Privacy Commissioner.

Ms Tydd noted that the Annual Report demonstrates the IPC's effectiveness and efficiency in managing increased work volumes.

"Over the past 5 years reviews, complaints and advice provision by the IPC increased by 88%. This increase in regulatory work, demonstrates the pivotal role the IPC plays in the NSW integrity landscape.

"Digital government has resulted in an intensifying importance of information access and privacy rights. Information access and privacy applications to the IPC increased by 15% in 2019/20 this further demonstrates the increasing value citizens place on these rights. The IPC has capably met this challenge with an 8.5% increase in finalisation of cases".

The IPC continued to support NSW public sector agencies with the provision of independent advice and guidance to address information governance challenges in the development and implementation of digital services that are designed to deliver timely outcomes for the public.

"Governments' demonstrated commitment to the preservation of privacy and information access rights will be the determinative factor in achieving success in digital transformation. We will continue to be unwavering in our commitment to protect and promote these rights to ensure that digital transformation delivers benefits equally to government and citizens", said Commissioner Tydd.

The increase in rights awareness by the community and reliance upon digital solutions intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic will continue.

"Our proactive work in conducting major investigations, including audits, increased with four major regulatory initiatives undertaken in 2019/20 and a reduction of 44% in days to finalisation. This is impactful regulatory work that when objectively measured produces sustained elevation of compliance and enhanced cultural commitment. Publishing these reports and guidance, together with our informative and influential promotional activities, ensure that information access and privacy rights are visible and accessible," said Ms Tydd.

Privacy Commissioner, Samantha Gavel noted that the IPC has had a 31.6% increase in the provision of information access and privacy advice, this is largely due to the increased number of government digital projects.



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“This significant increase is largely referable to the IPC’s provision of expert advice in respect of the NSW Government’s digital transformation agenda. Upholding and promoting NSW citizens’ right to information access and privacy is central to the work of the IPC. Our service to the public has been enhanced through our finalisation of applications, provision of guidance to members of the public, strategic regulatory initiatives and our active promotion of these rights,” she said.

Ms Gavel added that privacy issues continue to be a key consideration of the work being done by NSW Government agencies and privacy initiatives which reflect this include release of Fact Sheets on the Role of the Privacy Commissioner: Consulting the IPC on Initiatives and Projects; Privacy by Design, De-identification of personal information and De-identification of personal information. 79 voluntary breach notifications were made to the Privacy Commissioner during the reporting period.

2019/20 highlights included:

- providing 575 information access and privacy advices to support compliance by agencies, an increase of 31.6% on the 2018/19 reporting period
- finalisation of 814 reviews and complaints, reviewing information access and privacy rights, an increase of 8.5% on the 2018/19 reporting period.
- Commissioners provided submissions to 11 reviews and inquiries conducted by government including 7 joint submissions by the Information Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner
- dealing with 2782 enquiries from the public, representing a 5.7% increase on the 2018/19 reporting period
- 513,794 page views of its website, a 3.7% increase on the 2018/19 reporting period
- improving awareness of privacy and information access rights with the release of 18 new publications and reviewing 75 existing publications

To access the IPC Annual Report 2019/20 click [here](#).

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For further information, please contact:

IPC media team on 0435 961 691 or email ccadigital@ipc.nsw.gov.au

About the Information and Privacy Commission:

The Information and Privacy Commission NSW (IPC) is an independent statutory authority that administers New South Wales’ legislation dealing with privacy and access to government information. The IPC supports the Information Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner in fulfilling their legislative responsibilities and functions and to ensure individuals and agencies can access consistent information, guidance and coordinated training about information access and privacy matters.

About the NSW Information Commissioner

The NSW Information Commissioner’s statutory role includes promoting public awareness and understanding of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act); providing information, advice, assistance and training to agencies and the public; dealing with complaints about agencies; investigating agencies’ systems, policies and practices; and reporting on compliance with the GIPA Act.



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About the NSW Privacy Commissioner

Samantha Gavel was appointed as NSW Privacy Commissioner on 4 September 2017. Her role is to promote public awareness and understanding of privacy rights in NSW, as well as provide information, support, advice and assistance to agencies and the general public.

For further information about the IPC visit our website at www.ipc.nsw.gov.au

