

Murray-Darling Basin Authority Information Publication Scheme Agency Plan

May 2016

Introduction

The Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) is an agency subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (the FOI Act) and is required to comply with the [Information Publication Scheme](#) (the IPS) requirements. This agency plan describes how the MDBA proposes to do this, as required by s 8(1) of the FOI Act.

The MDBA is an independent statutory agency established by the *Water Act 2007* (Cth) (the Water Act) and is part of the Agriculture and Water Resources portfolio.

The MDBA's principal aim is to manage the Basin's water resources in the national interest.

The agency plan describes how the MDBA proposes to implement and administer the IPS in respect of its own information holdings, by addressing:

- the establishment and administration of the MDBA's IPS contribution
- information required to be published
- charges for access documents under the IPS
- accessibility to information published
- compliance review.

The MDBA will continue to build and foster a culture within the agency, in which appropriate proactive disclosure of its information holdings is embraced, leading to successful implementation and administration of the IPS. This is in recognition that public sector information is a national resource managed for public purposes.

Purpose

The purpose of this agency plan is to:

- assist the MDBA in planning and developing its IPS entry
- show what information the MDBA proposes to publish (referred to as the IPS information holdings), how the information will be published and how the MDBA will otherwise comply with the IPS requirements (s 8(1)).

Objectives

The MDBA's objectives in relation to this agency plan are to outline appropriate mechanisms and procedures to:

- manage the IPS information holdings
- proactively identify and publish all information required to be published (s 8(2))
- proactively identify and publish any optional information to be published (s 8(4))
- review and ensure on a regular basis that information published under the IPS is accurate, up to date and complete (s 8B)
- ensure satisfactory conformance with the *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (Version 2)* (WCAG 2.0)
- ensure satisfactory conformance with other whole of government information policies, including the *Statement of Intellectual Property Principles for Australian Government Agencies* (updated in October 2010)
- adopt best practice initiatives in implementing and administering the MDBA's contribution to the IPS.

Administering the agency's IPS entry

The Water Act identifies a series of information functions for the MDBA including to:

- develop a water rights information service (s103), and
- measure, monitor, record, collect, analyse, and interpret information on water quality, quantity, and the condition of water-dependent ecosystems; and disseminate information and engage with the Australian community (s172).

Accordingly, both as a matter of policy and specific statutory requirement, the MDBA seeks to make its information holdings available to the public as widely and readily as possible. All MDBA publications are published on the website.

The Information Management and Technology Committee (IMTC) is the primary governance body overseeing the development and maintenance of the MDBA's Information Management Strategy and in turn its IPS Agency Plan. The Executive Director, Corporate is responsible for leading the MDBA's compliance with the IPS, supported by the Chief Information Officer.

Compliance with the IPS will be reviewed by the IMTC on an annual basis.

Charges for access to documents under the IPS

The MDBA may charge a person for accessing any IPS document which it is impracticable to publish online:

- at the lowest reasonable cost
- to reimburse specific reproduction costs or other specific incidental costs (s 8D(4)).

The MDBA will publish on its website a reference to any IPS documents that are impracticable to publish online. The website will state that a person seeking access to any of these documents may contact the Publications Officer, or GIS Team as appropriate, to arrange access.

The list of documents will include indicative charges that may be imposed for making that information available and an explanation for the charge. These charges will be consistent with charges in the Freedom of Information (Charges) Regulations 1982 (which generally apply to access requests under Part III of the FOI Act). Annexure A lists the charges for access to documents not available on the website.

IPS information architecture

The MDBA's IPS information holdings will be published on its website www.mdba.gov.au

A link to the IPS page is available on the [Publications](#) page. A search function will be provided on the Publications page.

The MDBA website is designed to be WCAG 2.0 compliant.

The MDBA welcomes feedback on all of its services including the IPS. Any comments or queries about the IPS can be submitted to the MDBA via the [Contact Us](#) page www.mdba.gov.au/contact-us.

Information required to be published under the IPS

The MDBA's information holdings will be published under the following headings:

- Agency plan
- Who we are
 - Includes an organisation chart, details of Authority members, statutory appointees, Executive members, and governance arrangements.
- What we do
 - Outlines the roles and responsibilities and main functions of the MDBA.
- How we do it
 - Includes information the main programs administered by the MDBA including the roll-out of the *Basin Plan 2012* (Cth), managing constraints, environmental watering priorities, water markets and trade, the Living Murray Program, and river information such as live river data, planned river operations, and water storage levels.
- Corporate documents
 - Includes the MDBA's corporate plan, annual reports and other information tabled in Parliament. It also includes portfolio budget statements, files list, fraud control policy, and information relating to tenders, procurement and grants.
- Consultation arrangements
 - Includes information about how the MDBA collaborates and consults with members of the public on policy proposals for which the MDBA is responsible.
- Information provided in response to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests

- Includes information on how to access documents released in response to a request for access to information under the FOI Act.

Other information to be published under the IPS

The MDBA uses maps and spatial data, including remote sensing data daily, to support its various programs and projects. This includes data on hydrology, biota, terrain, vegetation, geology, and important built and natural assets. Subject to licensing provisions and any practical restrictions these holdings will be published on the website under [Publications](http://www.mdba.gov.au/publications) www.mdba.gov.au/publications.

IPS compliance review

The MDBA will monitor the guidelines about IPS compliance reive issued by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) and will review and revise, as necessary, this agency plan at least every three years.

The MDBA will review the operation of its IPS entry and compliance from time to time but at least every five years, in accordance with the guidelines issued by the OAIC.

Factors taken into account in reviewing the MDBA's performance will be the extent to which information is published in accordance with IPS requirements and the specific categories of holdings identified in this agency plan. Any feedback provided by the public, either by way of comment or queries, will also be taken into account.

We will also monitor our performance in accordance with the MDBA's audit plan.

Annexure A

Access charges for documents not available on the website

Format	Charges
Photocopy	10 cents per page
Copy (other than photocopy)	\$4.40 per page
Copy of the document in the form of a computer tape or a computer disk	An amount not exceeding the actual costs incurred by the MDBA in producing the copy
Copy of the document to be sent to the applicant by post or delivered to the applicant	An amount not exceeding the cost of postage or delivery