



Policy Statement

The Department of Mines and Petroleum (DMP) will ensure that its regulatory, decision making and investment attraction processes, together with the technical information and data supporting them are publicly available for the benefit of the Western Australian community.

Objective

The objective of DMP's Transparency Policy (the Policy) is to formally give effect to overarching government policy in relation to transparency and the community benefit of access to information.

This means that the department's stakeholders have easy access to the data, documents and information in relation to administration, regulation and investment attraction in the Western Australian resources industry, unless there are specific legislative provisions to restrict access to the information.

Rationale

DMP's Strategic Plan (2015 to 2018) includes an engagement principle to be 'Responsive' – "We keep stakeholders informed of issues that affect them by providing transparent, timely, consistent and accessible information...".

This Policy provides a single, overarching set of high-level principles to unify transparency actions across DMP business areas.

It is also compatible with the Western Australian Government's approach to make documents and information held by Government agencies accessible to the community through the Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA) (FOI Act), either free or at a low cost.

Open access to DMP's data and information will result in better policies and business practices in government, improved public sector accountability and transparency, and attract investment in Western Australia's resources sector.

Principles

The release of data, documents and information held by DMP will be guided by the following principles:

1. promoting open government by treating information as a resource that should be accessible for the community to access and use;
2. timeliness and accessibility;
3. enhancing community awareness, understanding and engagement; and
4. providing clarity around regulatory and decision making processes.

Application

DMP is committed to upholding the State's Whole of Government Open Data Policy 'to improve management and use of the public sector's data assets in order to deliver value and benefits for all Western Australians.' This includes greater release of appropriate and high-value data to the public in ways that are easily discoverable and usable.

DMP will be as open as possible about its decision making processes and the data it holds to maximise the benefits of information made available.

DMP will adhere to the position that if there is no legal reason to protect the information, it should be open to public access.

Therefore DMP will:

- apply a presumption of openness and adopt a proactive publication stance;
- assist the public to obtain access to documents through the use of information technology; and
- allow access to information promptly and at free or low cost.

DMP will make its policy clear and stipulate that it is authorised and permitted to make information, accepted by DMP in the course of its business, available to the public, unless legally restricted.

In considering if legal barriers may prevent DMP from releasing information, DMP will adhere to the requirements of the legislation it administers and apply the principles supporting the FOI Act. Where DMP identifies legal barriers to releasing information that would be released under the FOI Act, DMP will take the first opportunity to amend the legislation to remove the legal barrier.

Anyone seeking information retains the right to make an application under the FOI Act.

Benefits

This policy seeks to promote:

- clarity in decision making processes;
- increased confidence and trust in the community through greater understanding and awareness;
- the principle that public sector information is a resource that should be available for access and use;
- access to information that is current, relevant, easily accessible and disseminated in a timely manner;
- access to information that can attract investment in the WA resources sector;
- opportunities for communication with stakeholders and the community;
- economic, social and environmental gains through better informed decision making; and
- increased availability of new information and data to advance and initiate research.

Reference links

DMP Strategic Plan: Our Plan for Success to 2019

http://www.dmp.wa.gov.au/Documents/About-Us-Careers/DMP-OurPlanforSuccess_2019.pdf

Freedom of Information Statement: Document type, availability and accessibility

http://www.dmp.wa.gov.au/Documents/About-Us-Careers/DMP-FOI_statement.pdf

Western Australian Whole of Government Open Data Policy

<https://www.dpc.wa.gov.au/Consultation/Pages/WAWholeofGovernmentOpenDataPolicy.aspx>