

**Department of Agriculture, Water and the  
Environment**

**Privacy Policy**

Complete Privacy Policy

**June 2022**

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## About this policy

The purpose of this privacy policy is to:

- clearly communicate the personal information handling practices of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (**department**),
- enhance the transparency of the department's operations, and
- give individuals a better and more complete understanding of the sort of personal information the department holds, and the way the department handles that information.

This privacy policy has been developed to follow the 'layered policy' format, which means that it offers layers of greater or lesser detail so people can read as much as they wish and find what they need. If all you want is a snapshot of our personal information handling practices, you can look at the summary of the department's privacy policy available at

[www.awe.gov.au/about/commitment/privacy](http://www.awe.gov.au/about/commitment/privacy).

It offers an easy to understand summary of:

- how the department collects, uses, stores and discloses personal information, and
- how you can contact the department if you want to access or correct personal information the department holds about you.

If you wish to make any comments or suggestions about the privacy policy, you can do so by contacting the department via:

Email: [privacy@awe.gov.au](mailto:privacy@awe.gov.au)

Mail: Privacy, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2601.

This privacy policy applies to the department and to offices which the department assists in complying with the *Privacy Act 1988* (**Privacy Act**), the Australian Privacy Principles (**APPs**) and the Australian Government Agencies Privacy Code (**Privacy Code**). Please contact the department if you have any queries regarding the application of this policy.

If you would like to request the privacy policy be made available in an alternate format or language, such as for the vision impaired, or for those from non-English speaking backgrounds, please also contact the department. Reasonable steps will be taken to provide alternate access.

This privacy policy is reviewed and updated annually.

## The department's obligations under the Privacy Act

This privacy policy sets out how the department complies with its obligations under the Privacy Act.

The [Privacy Act](#) regulates how government agencies collect, use, store and disclose personal information, and how individuals may access and correct personal information held about them. The APPs are contained in the Privacy Act and set out specific standards, rights and obligations that apply to the handling of personal information. The [Privacy Code](#) sets out additional privacy requirements of Australian Government agencies.

As an Australian Government agency, the department is bound by the Privacy Act, the APPs and the Privacy Code. These obligations extend to the department's employees, contractors and agents.

You can learn more about the Privacy Act, the APPs and the Privacy Code on the website of the [Office of the Australian Information Commissioner \(OAIC\)](#).

## **Personal information**

The Privacy Act defines ‘personal information’ as:

*‘information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:*

- *whether the information or opinion is true or not, and*
- *whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.’*

## **Sensitive information**

‘Sensitive information’ is a subset of personal information and generally has a higher level of privacy protection than other personal information.

Sensitive information is personal information that contains information or an opinion about an individual’s:

- racial or ethnic origin
- political opinion or association
- religious beliefs or affiliations
- philosophical beliefs
- trade or professional associations and memberships
- union membership
- sexual orientation or practices
- criminal record
- health or genetic information; or
- certain biometric information.

## **The kinds of personal information collected and held by the department**

The department collects and holds a variety of personal information. This information can include:

<b>Information Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
Personal information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• name</li><li>• age or birth date and gender</li><li>• contact details (address, phone, facsimile, email address)</li><li>• bank account details</li><li>• tax file number of employees and contractors</li><li>• photographs, videos or audio recordings of individuals</li><li>• employment and voluntary work details (including occupation, qualifications, CV and remuneration)</li><li>• education details (level of education, study assistance and courses)</li><li>• financial information – this may include credit card transactions, bank and property information</li><li>• insurance details</li><li>• vessel and vehicle details</li><li>• details of third parties (including referees, emergency contact, next of kin)</li><li>• publicly available information of individuals who are identified on social media platforms</li><li>• driver’s licence and passport information (including to verify identity, perform a digital footprint check, or for staff travel)</li><li>• travel details</li></ul>

Information Type	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the products and services you have purchased or which you have enquired about, together with any additional information necessary to deliver those products and services and to respond to your enquiries</li> <li>opinions</li> </ul>
Sensitive information (a subset of Personal information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigeneity (such as in relation to the department's Reconciliation Action Plan, or an indigenous program or strategy)</li> <li>religious beliefs or sexual orientation (such as from participants in the department's Diversity and Inclusion Network)</li> <li>criminal records (including as part of a national criminal history check for employment purposes)</li> <li>health information (including to ensure the work, health or safety of the department's workers or other individuals)</li> </ul>

### ***Dealing with the department without being identified or using a pseudonym***

The department will allow you to remain anonymous or use a pseudonym if you wish, when dealing with the department unless it is impractical or not possible to do so. Situations where you do not have to identify yourself or you can use a pseudonym may include when you seek general information about a program, grant, consultation process, importing or exporting process (for example). Identification will generally only be necessary where it would be appropriate or necessary to identify yourself, such as if you are enquiring about the status or details of your own application for a particular program.

## **How the department collects and holds your personal information**

### ***How the department collects your personal information***

The department will generally collect your personal information directly from you, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so. There may be times when the department may collect personal information from your authorised agent, a third party or where the information is publicly available (including information posted on a social media platform).

Unsolicited personal information is also provided to the department from time to time by individuals (or other entities).

### ***Other entities that may collect your personal information on behalf of the department***

The department may collect your personal information from individuals or organisations acting on behalf of the department, or which are involved in implementing the department's programs, including contracted service providers.

The department may collect your personal information collected by other Australian Government agencies and State or Territory, local and international government bodies. The department commonly collects your personal information through, or from the following, agencies or bodies (this list is not exhaustive):

- Department of Health
- Department of Human Services
- Department of the Environment and Energy
- Department of Finance
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development

- Department of Home Affairs
- State based health departments
- State based environment departments
- State based information departments
- Other portfolio agencies
- Industry groups or industry members who assist with the certification of goods (for example, the import or export of animal, plant or biological goods)
- Law enforcement agencies
- Medical practitioners for health assessments
- Financial institutions
- Legal representatives
- Universities
- Contracted service providers that assist in the department’s human resources, communications or information technology functions.

**Methods of collection**

The department collects personal information through a range of channels, including (but not limited to):

- paper and electronic forms
- manual or online databases
- telephone, facsimile and written correspondence (including emails)
- department websites (including online portals)
- publicly available social media websites
- online services
- surveys
- meetings
- taped interviews or audio-visual recordings.
- security vetting procedures and digital footprint checking software.

At or before the time the department collects your personal information (or as soon as practicable afterwards), the department will provide you with a privacy notice unless it is unreasonable or impractical to do so.

**Information handled through our website and online services**

A variety of information is handled using the department’s website and online services. Some of this may be personal information, which is summarised in the table below:

Information type	Treatment
Emails and electronic forms	<p>The department’s servers may record your email address if you send the department a message online. Your email address will not be added to a mailing list unless you have provided it to the department in order to subscribe to one of the department’s subscription services.</p> <p>When you send the department a message online the department’s servers may also record your usage data in the form of page URLs that you have visited on the department’s websites. These URLs will be used for research purposes only within the department.</p> <p>Where you choose to send the department a completed electronic form that includes your personal details, the department collects personal information such as your name, address and email address. The information collected by email or electronic forms will be used only for the purpose for which you provided it,</p>

Information type	Treatment
	<p>unless an exception applies.</p> <p>For those who do not wish to use the internet to transmit information, the department provides alternative ways of providing information. For example, forms may be printed (or obtained in hard copy) and lodged by post.</p>
Payment information	<p>If you choose to pay for a service or product using secure credit card payment facilities available on the department's website, you will be asked to provide your credit card details. Credit card details are encrypted from the moment they are entered into an electronic form. All other information entered into an electronic form will be encrypted upon submission to the department.</p> <p>The department stores encrypted credit card details only until the industry standard charge back period has expired (currently 10 months).</p>
Clickstream data	<p>The department makes a record of your visit to the website and logs the following information for statistical purposes: the user's Internet Protocol (IP) address, the date and time of the visit to the site, the web pages accessed and documents downloaded, the previous site visited, and the user's web browser and operating system.</p>
Google Analytics	<p>In addition to web server logs, the department's website also uses Google Analytics, a web analytics service provided by Google Incorporated (Google). Reports obtained from Google Analytics are used to help improve the department's website. Google Analytics uses 'cookies' to help analyse how users use the site.</p> <p>The information generated by the cookie about your use of the website (including your IP address) will be transmitted to and stored by Google on servers in the United States of America. Google will use this information for the purpose of evaluating your use of the department's website, compiling reports on website activity for website operators and providing other services relating to website activity and internet usage. Google may transfer this information to third parties where required to do so by law, or where such third parties process the information on Google's behalf. Google will not associate your IP address with any other data held by Google.</p> <p>By using the department's website, you consent to the processing of data about you by Google in the manner and for the purposes set out above. Please refer to Google's privacy policy for further information.</p>
Website analytics used by third party websites	<p>The department may use third party platforms or websites (such as Facebook, Twitter, Campaign Monitor, LinkedIn and YouTube) to deliver or communicate content about its programs and activities.</p> <p>The sites managed by those third parties have their own privacy policies and may send their own cookies to your computer. This is different to the department's use of its own website analytics (such as Google Analytics) for evaluating how individuals use the department's websites.</p> <p>The department does not control the setting of third party cookies. The department recommends that you check the third party websites for more information about those cookies and how to manage them.</p>
MailChimp	<p>The department uses MailChimp to provide online tools to create, send and manage emails for the purposes of distributing department newsletters and similar communications.</p>



Information type	Treatment
	<p>MailChimp may collect personal information, such as distribution lists that contain email addresses, and other information relating to those email addresses.</p> <p>For further information about the type of personal information MailChimp collects, refer to the MailChimp Privacy Policy available at:  <a href="https://mailchimp.com/legal/privacy/">https://mailchimp.com/legal/privacy/</a></p> <p>MailChimp is based in the United States of America (USA) and the information collected about your use of the website (including your IP address) will be transmitted to and stored by MailChimp on servers located outside Australia.</p> <p>The department is required to inform you that by subscribing to one of our email newsletters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• you consent to your personal information being collected, used, disclosed and stored as set out in MailChimp’s Privacy Policy and agree to abide by MailChimp’s Terms of Use.</li> <li>• you understand and acknowledge that this service utilises a MailChimp platform, which is located in the USA and relevant legislation of the USA will apply.</li> <li>• Australian Privacy Principle 8.1 contained in Schedule 1 of the Privacy Act will not apply.</li> <li>• you understand and acknowledge that MailChimp is not subject to the Privacy Act and you will not be able to seek redress under the Privacy Act but will need to seek redress under the laws of the USA.</li> </ul> <p>You can opt out of the department’s mailing list if you choose the ‘unsubscribe’ service provided by MailChimp in every email, or by contacting  <a href="https://www.awe.gov.au/about/contact">https://www.awe.gov.au/about/contact</a></p> <p>You can also disable or refuse cookies or disable Flash player; however, you may not be able to use the services provided by MailChimp if cookies are disabled.</p>
SurveyMonkey	<p>Where appropriate, the department collects information through SurveyMonkey, a United States-based service. Through SurveyMonkey, the department conducts surveys. SurveyMonkey adheres to its own privacy policy which is available at:  <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/legal/privacy-policy/">https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/legal/privacy-policy/</a>.</p>
Biosecurity Portal	<p>The Biosecurity Portal allows importers, Customs Brokers and Approved Arrangements to book and manage inspections.</p> <p>Personal information collected by the Biosecurity Portal is treated as confidential and is protected by the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth). When registering as a new user on the Biosecurity Portal, the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment will record your name, e-mail address, telephone number, occupation, organisation, and other personal information provided to meet security requirements and for the delivery, administration and ongoing development of the Biosecurity Portal services.</p> <p>The Biosecurity Portal is integrated with myGovID and the Powerapps Portal. The Biosecurity Portal receives personal information (including first name, last name, ABN and email address) from myGovID and passes this information to the Powerapps Portal. Both myGovID and the Powerapps Portal use cookies.</p>

Information type	Treatment
	<p>Below is a summary of the cookies used by these portals.</p> <p><b>myGovID</b></p> <p>myGovID is administered by Services Australia and uses session-based cookies. Session based cookies are temporary cookie files transferred to your computer and erased when you close your browser. These cookies are used by myGov to allow you to perform functions within myGov once you have signed in and to gather anonymous website usage data to help improve myGov.</p> <p>myGovID does not use persistent cookies. These are cookies that remain on your hard drive until you erase them, or they expire.</p> <p>You can change your web browser setting to reject cookies, however, some functionality on the myGov website may be affected if you reject cookies.</p> <p>For more details, please see:  <a href="https://my.gov.au/mygov/content/html/privacy.html">https://my.gov.au/mygov/content/html/privacy.html</a></p> <p><b>Powerapps Portal</b></p> <p>The Powerapps Portal uses a range of different cookies for a variety of purposes. Most of these cookies are session-based cookies. For more information about the Powerapps Portal please see: <a href="https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/powerapps/maker/portals/admin/portal-cookies">https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/powerapps/maker/portals/admin/portal-cookies</a></p>
Fivecast ONYX	<p>Fivecast ONYX is a cloud-based ‘software-as-a-service’ data collection and analysis platform that delivers insights from open source data.</p> <p>The department may use Fivecast to check the digital footprint of particular individuals for employment checks, security vetting, compliance and law enforcement purposes. This may occur as part of the department’s function in managing its workforce and public office holders, as well as in order to undertake the department’s administrative and statutory portfolio functions and activities.</p> <p>Fivecast may be used to review and collect publicly available information about an individual’s use of social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.</p> <p>Fivecast can only access information that has already been disclosed in the public domain - this may include information posted online by the individual concerned and/or their associates.</p> <p>Fivecast can only be used by authorised users and for departmental purposes.</p>

***How the department holds your personal information***

The department is considered to ‘hold’ your personal information where it:

- physically possesses a record containing your personal information, or
- has the right or power to deal with the information, even if it does not physically possess it (such as where the personal information is stored on servers owned or operated by a third party, to which the department has access to, or in archived files).

### ***Storage and security***

The department holds personal information in a range of audio-visual, paper and electronic based records (including in cloud-based applications and services). The department complies with the Australian Government Protective Security Policy Framework for protecting departmental resources (including information) from harm or unauthorised access. Personal information is held in accordance with the collection and security requirements of the APPs, the department's policies and procedures, and the Commonwealth's Protective Security Policy Framework.

If personal information held by the department is lost, or subject to unauthorised access or disclosure, the department will respond in line with the OAIC's [Data breach preparation and response – a guide to managing data breaches in accordance with the Privacy Act](#). The department aims to provide timely advice to affected individuals if a data breach is likely to result in serious harm.

### ***Personal information held by third parties***

Under the Privacy Act, the department is required to take measures to ensure that when the department discloses your personal information to a third party, that the third party complies with the same privacy requirements applicable to the department.

The department has privacy clauses in all its legal documents, including funding deeds, services and contracts. This is to ensure third parties that the department deals with are required to handle personal information in a manner that is consistent with the APPs.

Where the department collects your personal information from a third party, the department will take steps to inform you of that collection. This may occur through this Privacy Policy, providing a privacy collection notice, or our staff contacting you directly.

### ***Retention and destruction of personal information***

The department will take reasonable steps to destroy or de-identify your personal information if the department no longer needs it for any purpose for which the information may be used or disclosed, unless:

- it is contained in a Commonwealth record, or
- the department is required by law or a court/tribunal order to retain the information,

in which case the department will comply with relevant legal requirements, including the *Archives Act 1983* (Cth).

## **Purposes for which the department collects, holds, uses and discloses your personal information**

The department may collect personal information about you where this is reasonably necessary for, or directly related to, one or more of its functions or activities.

The department may collect your sensitive information where you consent, where the collection is authorised or required by law, or the collection is otherwise allowed under the Privacy Act.

The purpose for the department collecting your personal information is important as it limits how the department can use and disclose your personal information. Unless an exception under the Privacy Act applies, the department will:

- only use or disclose your personal information for the purpose it was collected,
- notify you of this purpose at the time of collection, or as soon as practicable after collection, and

- only use or disclose your personal information for another purpose where it is able to do so in accordance with the Privacy Act.

There are a number of general purposes for which the department may collect your personal information. The table below outlines the purposes for which personal information is typically collected, including information about how personal information may be used and disclosed consistent with that purpose. It also includes some brief information regarding how the department restricts access to your personal information.

Purpose of collection	Use and disclosure
<p>To manage the department's workforce and public office holders.</p>	<p>Personal information may be collected, used and disclosed as necessary to perform the department's functions relating to the engagement, management and planning of its workforce and public office holders.</p> <p>These purposes may include undertaking activities relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identity and employment checks, and security vetting</li> <li>• engagement, on-boarding, separation, transfer and assignment of employees, contractors and public office holders</li> <li>• ongoing security and integrity assessment, and compliance activities</li> <li>• payroll, leave, travel, training and performance management</li> <li>• emergency protocol management and business continuity planning</li> <li>• workplace health and safety</li> <li>• facility and asset management (including vehicles)</li> <li>• facilitating working arrangements (including workstation booking and set up)</li> </ul> <p>and related purposes.</p> <p>The department uses a desk and workforce booking system to support flexible ways of working, staff mobility and collaboration. The desk booking system uses staff names, email addresses, AGS number and the organisation unit to which staff belong.</p> <p>Personal information may be disclosed to (or collected from) relevant officers in the department, the Australian National Audit Office and Australian Public Service Commission, overseas agencies, other Australian Government agencies, Commonwealth entities and relevant State / Territory government entities.</p> <p>In the case of workplace investigations or compensable claims, personal information may be disclosed to Comcare, Comcover or law enforcement and external legal advisors.</p>
<p>To provide secretariat functions to the department and independent committees, boards, panels, councils and other related bodies.</p>	<p>Personal information will be used to contact members regarding meetings, providing meeting papers, providing payments, finalising minutes on the outcomes of the meetings and other secretariat related functions. In some circumstances the department may share secretariat duties with other Commonwealth or state based government agencies. In these circumstances,</p>

Purpose of collection	Use and disclosure
	personal information will be disclosed or accessed by secretariat officers from the other responsible government agency. Secretariat members' personal information may be disclosed on relative department, ministerial or industry body websites.
To communicate with advisory groups, businesses, committees, individuals, panels, projects and stakeholder groups.	Personal information will be used to communicate with individuals. It may be disclosed to relevant third parties and in some circumstances may disclose the contact details of members on a restricted database, for members of particular interest groups.
Appointing and maintaining individuals to statutory authorities, accreditation programs, committees, councils and other portfolio bodies.	Personal information will be used and/or disclosed to decision makers (which may include external parties, including ministers or the chair of such committees). Biographical information may be disclosed on the department's website or in media announcements regarding particular appointments.
To communicate, maintain and provide information to grantees, stakeholders or other interested parties who contact the department (or the minister/parliamentary secretary) regarding applications, submissions, contracts, requests for tender and consultancies.	Personal information may be disclosed to third parties who manage or maintain the project on behalf of the department.
To maintain information details relating to permits, intentions, licensing, financial processes or approving applications for domestic, imported or exported plant, food, animal or biological goods.	Personal information will be used for the approval of applications or licenses, the decision maker will have access to the relevant personal information. Personal information may be disclosed on the department's website or to other Australian or overseas entities.
To provide stakeholders and other interested parties copies of department information, publications and newsletters.	Personal information may be disclosed to third parties who undertake mail out services on behalf of the department.
To manage, assess, evaluate and monitor department legislative compliance, policies and programs (including assistance packages, tax offsets, grants (including discretionary) and FOI requests).	Personal information will be used for the purposes of collection. The department may disclose personal information to the Australian Tax Office, other state government departments, external bodies, consultants or related officials responsible for the assessment or oversight of grants or to evaluate the effectiveness of grants. The Australian National Audit Office and other potential external audit providers will undertake audits of department programs and at times this will include the disclosure of personal information. In line with relevant legislation, and requirements under the Privacy Act, personal information of successful grant recipients is published on the department's website.
To record and make payments to employees, grantees, consultants, contractors and other stakeholder groups.	The Tax File Number ( <b>TFN</b> ) is a unique identifier issued by the Commissioner of Taxation.  The department will collect and use an individual's TFN in accordance with the Privacy Act, including to make

Purpose of collection	Use and disclosure
	<p>payments to an individual (such as the payment of wages) and when reasonably necessary to verify identity. When collecting an individual's TFN, the department will endeavour to notify the individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of the taxation, personal assistance or superannuation law which authorises the department to request or collect the TFN;</li> <li>• of the purpose for which the TFN is collected and used; and</li> <li>• that declining to provide a TFN is not an offence but may result in the person paying more tax.</li> </ul> <p>Personal information (including financial information) may be disclosed to the Reserve Bank of Australia, a banking or financial institution or a Commonwealth, State or Territory government entity where this is necessary to ensure certain payments are made.</p>
<p>To allow for the selection of award winners, grantees, consultancies or contractors for department programs or business.</p>	<p>Personal information will be used for the purposes of assessing successful award winners, grantees, consultancies or contractors. Personal information will generally not be disclosed outside the department.</p>
<p>Managing submissions and enquiries made to the department.</p>	<p>Personal information will be used to maintain contact information to allow for follow up or dissemination of submissions made to the department. Personal information may be published on the department's website.</p>
<p>To maintain information and contact details for the purposes of implementing programs administered by the department, auditing, compliance, cost recovery, regulatory purposes, leasing, levies, inspections, enforcement activities, investigations (legal / non-legal) and financial dealings.</p>	<p>In some circumstances personal information may be published on the department's website or disclosed to third parties (private, government and statutory organisations) in line with legislation and the requirements of the Privacy Act.</p> <p>Enforcement and investigative activities may include the disclosure of personal information to other relevant Commonwealth and State based enforcement agencies, as well as the Commonwealth's legal advisors.</p>
<p>To maintain details of academics, professionals, speakers, scientists and subject matter experts who provide advice or information to the department, or conduct training or assessment on behalf of the department on a non-ongoing basis.</p>	<p>In some circumstances personal information maybe be disclosed to third parties directly associated with the program's functions or when required on the department's website.</p>
<p>To nominate applicants for national or international awards, scholarships or fellowships.</p>	<p>Personal information is likely to be disclosed to external sponsors and/or assessors and successful applicants. It may also be disclosed on the department's website or relevant websites.</p>
<p>To provide information or respond to any complaints, compliments or enquiries (including social media).</p>	<p>Personal information may be disclosed to other portfolio agencies.</p>

Purpose of collection	Use and disclosure
To undertake research, surveys and reports of agricultural activities and businesses.	Personal information may be disclosed to other portfolio agencies and SurveyMonkey.
To administer portfolio legislation.	Personal information may be used to administer portfolio legislation or may be disclosed to other agencies in the course of administering portfolio legislation.

### **Privacy Impact Assessments**

The department is committed to undertaking Privacy Impact Assessments (**PIA**) for high privacy risk projects.

The **Privacy Code** requires that PIAs are conducted for all high privacy risk projects. Section 12(2) of the Privacy Code states that a project may be a high privacy risk project if the agency reasonably considers that the project involves any new or changed ways of handling personal information that are likely to have a significant impact on the privacy of individuals.

The department maintains a public register of the PIAs it conducts which is available on the department's website at: <https://www.awe.gov.au/about/commitment/privacy>.

### **Overseas disclosure**

The department may disclose personal information to overseas recipients in limited circumstances, where this is reasonably necessary, or directly related to, our work.

This may include, for example, disclosure to peer reviewers anywhere in the world where the appropriate scientific expertise exists, or to a foreign government or agency.

If it is likely that your personal information will be disclosed to an overseas recipient, we will take reasonable steps to notify you and we will only disclose the information as permitted under the APPs. We will also take reasonable steps to ensure the overseas recipient treats your personal information in accordance with the APPs, such as though our contractual agreements.

### **How to access and seek correction of your personal information**

Individuals have a right to request access to their personal information and to request its correction if it is inaccurate, out of date, incomplete, irrelevant or misleading.

The department will take reasonable and practicable steps to provide you access and/or make a correction to your personal information within 30 calendar days, unless the department considers there is a sound reason under the Privacy Act or other relevant law to withhold the information, or not make the changes. The department will not charge you for providing your personal information to you, or for the costs of making any corrections to your personal information.

If the department does not provide you access to your personal information, or refuses to correct your personal information, where reasonable the department will:

- provide you with a written notice including the reasons for the refusal;
- provide you with information regarding available complaint mechanisms; and,
- at your request, take reasonable steps to associate a statement with the personal information that you believe it to be inaccurate, out of date, incomplete, irrelevant or misleading.



Otherwise, if the department corrects your personal information, at your request, the department will also take reasonable steps to notify other agencies or organisations (bound by the Privacy Act) of the correction, if the department has previously disclosed your personal information to those agencies or organisations.

If you are a member of the public or an external stakeholder, you should contact the relevant business area within the department, in writing, for access to or correction of your personal information. For example, applicants for a grant program should first contact the program administrator via email or letter. If you do not know which area of the department holds your personal information you can use the 'contact us' link on the department's website.

Current and former department employees who wish to gain access to, or correct their personal information need to contact the People Services Branch (People Help) in the first instance. People Help can be contacted via email at [PeopleSupport@awe.gov.au](mailto:PeopleSupport@awe.gov.au).

## **How you can complain about the handling of your personal information and how the complaint will be managed**

You can make a complaint if you are concerned that the department has handled your personal information in a way that interferes with your privacy. An act or practice of the department will be an interference with your privacy if it breaches the APPs or the Privacy Code in relation to your personal information.

Breaches can be caused by a variety of factors, affect different types of personal information and give rise to a range of actual or potential harm to individuals. Consequently, there is no single way of managing a breach. Each breach will need to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

### ***How to make a complaint***

If you believe the department has interfered with your privacy you can contact the department to make a complaint.

In order to be able to fully assess your complaint, the department would prefer that you make your complaint in writing. This can be done by email to [privacy@awe.gov.au](mailto:privacy@awe.gov.au) or post to Privacy, Information Law Team, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, GPO BOX 858, Canberra, ACT, 2601.

Please note that if you do not provide sufficient information, the department may not be able to fully assess and respond to your complaint.

The department is committed to an efficient, considered and fair resolution of concerns or complaints. All complaints are taken seriously and you can expect to be treated fairly and equitably.

### ***If you are unsatisfied with the department's response***

If you are not satisfied with the department's handling of your complaint, you can contact the Privacy Commissioner within the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (**OAIC**):

Phone: 1300 363 992

Email: [enquiries@oaic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@oaic.gov.au)

Post: OAIC, GPO Box 5218 Sydney NSW 2001

*Please note:* If you make a complaint directly to the Privacy Commissioner rather than to the department in the first instance, the Privacy Commissioner may recommend you try to resolve the complaint directly with the department first.

It is also open to you to make a complaint to the Commonwealth Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the department's handling of your matter:

Phone: 1300 362 072

Online: [Online Complaint Form](https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/what-we-do/Can-we-help-you) at <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/what-we-do/Can-we-help-you>

Post: Commonwealth Ombudsman, GPO Box 442, Canberra ACT 2601