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*Freedom of Information Act 1992*

Small Business Development Corporation

# **Information Statement**

*JUNE 2011*

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# Introduction

The Western Australian *Freedom of Information Act* 1992 (FOI Act) was proclaimed to come into full operation on 1 November 1993. Part 5 section 94 of the Act requires each government agency, including the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) to prepare and publish annually an Information Statement that contains:

- a statement of the structure and functions of the agency;
- a description of the ways in which the functions affect members of the public;
- details of public participation in policy formulation;
- a description of the kinds of documents held by the agency; and
- arrangements for public access to documents.

This document has been prepared to satisfy Part 5 of the FOI Act, and is correct as at 5 July 2010.

This document may be viewed on the SBDC's website at [www.smallbusiness.wa.gov.au](http://www.smallbusiness.wa.gov.au) or it can be obtained from:

Small Business Development Corporation  
Information Centre  
Level 2  
140 William Street  
PERTH WA 6000  
Tel: (08) 6552 3300

Copies can also be obtained from the SBDC's ground and first floor reception points at the above address.

**Business Hours:** Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 5.00 pm

Enquiries regarding Freedom of Information issues should be directed to the Freedom of Information Coordinator as follows:

**Contact Name:** Ms Michelle Rosenberg  
**Tel:** (08) 65523211  
**Email:** [Michelle.Rosenberg@smallbusiness.wa.gov.au](mailto:Michelle.Rosenberg@smallbusiness.wa.gov.au)  
**Fax:** (08) 6552 3399  
**Address:** Small Business Development Corporation  
Level 2  
140 William Street  
PERTH WA 6000  
**Postal Address:** GPO Box C111  
PERTH WA 6001

The Statement may assist potential applicants in directing their FOI application to the correct agency. If the Small Business Development Corporation's Information Statement does not list the kind of documents you are seeking, you may need to pursue your enquiries with another agency.

## ***Who We Are***

The Small Business Development Corporation (“the SBDC”) is an independent statutory authority in Western Australia established under section 2 of the *Small Business Development Corporation Act 1983*. The Minister for Small Business has responsibility for the Small Business portfolio.

The SBDC is comprised of an independent Board and a staff of 58.5 full-time (equivalent) employees. The SBDC’s employees are committed to providing quality customer service by ensuring the highest levels of accuracy, efficiency and delivery speed for its products and services.

## ***Our Role***

The role of the SBDC is to be broker facilitator, advocate and catalyst for the development of small business in Western Australia; to be innovative and practical in operations and to excel in an environment of change.

The SBDC is focused on the development of the small business sector and is committed to:

- championing the cause of small business;
- developing programs and services to meet the needs of small business;
- establishing and strengthening relationships between the SBDC and key agencies (public and private sector); and
- maintaining and enhancing the independence, innovation and responsiveness of the SBDC.

## ***Our Vision***

To be the driving force for small businesses to be major contributors to the State’s economy.

## ***Our Mission***

To create opportunity and wealth for small business in Western Australia.

## ***Our Values***

- independent,
- innovative;
- responsive; and
- rewarding, stimulating and enjoyable workplace

## **The Board**

The SBDC is governed by an independent Board established under section 5(1) of the *Small Business Development Corporation Act 1983*. The Board is the SBDC Accountable Authority in accordance with section 55 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*. The Board comprises:

- one person appointed by the Minister as a member and Chairman of the Corporation;
- six persons appointed by the Minister as members of the Corporation, of whom two shall be persons representative of small business in the areas of the State outside the metropolitan region; and
- the Managing Director ex officio.

Board Membership is drawn from the private sector with each member having close ties with the Western Australian small business community. The Board is the State Government's principle advisory body on small business.

The SBDC reports directly to the Minister for Small Business and is guided by the principles and practices of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*.

## **Corporate Structure**

The Corporation consists of four sections, each lead by a Director who reports to the Managing Director. These sections are:

### **Small Business Services**

The delivery of quality information and referral services to existing, new and potential small business operators. Assistance is provided in specialty areas including commercial tenancy, franchising, dispute resolution, regulation review, government and industry liaison, and in all general areas of running and establishing private enterprise. Business Migration provides sponsorship opportunities for business migrants looking to establish business in Western Australia.

The SBDC's - *information centre* contains a large collection of information relevant to starting and running a small business. The Centre is also the site for the Business Licence Information System where all State; Commonwealth and Local Government licence information is maintained and disseminated to clients.

### **Business Facilitation Services**

To support and supplement the SBDC's business services, a range of information services is provided to members of our diverse client groups.

Business Facilitation Services also provides ongoing assistance and support to the State's *Small Business Centre Network*, comprising 26 centres throughout Western Australia. Small Business Centres provide practical assistance to existing and prospective business owners in their regions. While independent by nature, the Small Business Centres rely on the SBDC for access to a variety of information and other resources.

Integral to Business Facilitation Services, is the corporate communications team which coordinates the development and dissemination of the SBDC's information and promotional material and events.

### ***Policy, Planning and Stakeholder Relations***

The Policy, Planning and Stakeholder Relations team of the SBDC provides information and advice to government on policy issues of relevance and importance to small business. Submissions are prepared, representing the interests of the small business sector and a government liaison/advocacy service is available to small business groups and individuals. The Policy, Planning and Stakeholder Relations team also deal with regulatory concerns (red tape) and prepare information and fact sheets for dissemination among the public and private sectors.

### ***Corporate Resources***

The Corporate Resources team assists in the achievement of the SBDC's goals through the provision of a comprehensive support function comprising:

- financial management including budgeting and accounting services;
- human resource management;
- facilities including asset management, fleet management and procurement;
- online services management;
- information technology infrastructure management;
- administration; and
- records and information management services.

# Documents held by the SBDC

## ***Records Management (RM)***

The Corporate Resources section of the SBDC is responsible for the standards, policies, practices and procedures relating to all SBDC's records.

The *Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS)* TRIM is used to manage the SBDC's approximately 17,400 hard copy files and 170,800 electronic records to create, manage and control records and to enable their retrieval. All active files are stored in secure cabinets within the SBDC, while inactive files are stored at a secure secondary storage facility. Retention and disposal of these records is managed according to the State Records Commission General Disposal Authorities (GDA's) and SBDC's Retention and Disposal (R & D) schedule RD 2003034 as approved by the State Records Commission.

## ***SBDC Files***

Listed below are broad categories of information available on files within the SBDC. The following list does not necessary mean that all documents are accessible in full or in part under the *Freedom of Information Act* 1992. An application to see information contained on files would be considered on its merit.

- Board Management
- Community Relations
- Equipment & Stores
- Establishment
- Financial Management
- Fleet Management
- Government Relations
- Information Management
- Migration Services
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Personnel
- Publications
- Service Delivery Management
- Staff Development
- Strategic Management
- Technology and Telecommunications

## ***Internet Home Page***

The SBDC main internet home page can be found at the website address:

[www.smallbusiness.wa.gov.au](http://www.smallbusiness.wa.gov.au) which provides access to a vast array of small business information such as:

- Starting a Business
- Business Licence Information
- Growing your Business
- Business Support
- Small Business Centres
- Small Business Development Corporation - information centre
- Workshops
- Young Business Network
- e-Commerce
- Advocacy Service
- Home Based Business Network
- Business Migration
- Small Business Exporters Network
- FAQs
- e-Resources
- About SBDC
- Publications
- Site map – a breakdown of the SBDC’s website structure with its links to various website areas
- Minister
- Search

## ***Publications***

The SBDC publishes a wide range of books and periodicals, in both hard copy and electronic format.

These publications are:

- **Annual Reports** (*Information about the SBDC and its activities*)
- **Books** (*Published by the SBDC on subjects to assist small businesses*)
- **Media Releases** (*Statements distributed to the print and electronic media to highlight SBDC and small business sector news items and achievements*)
- **Small Business Briefs** (*Short one page information sheets on specific topics*)
- **Small business inSight** (*Electronic newsletter sent via email on a regular basis to local chambers of commerce, business and industry associations*)

## ***Internal Documentation***

The SBDC administers a number of internal manuals to manage its operations. These are:

1. Accounting manual
2. Advertised vacancy kit
3. Code of conduct
4. Guideline for electronic document storage
5. Employee induction manual
6. Recordkeeping plan RKP 2009072
7. Records policy and procedure manual
8. Records retention and disposal schedule RD 2003034
9. Style guide for written communications
10. Style guide for web publishing

# Freedom of Information (FOI) Operations

The *Freedom of Information Act 1992* enables the public to participate more effectively in governing the State and makes the SBDC more accountable to the public. It is therefore the aim of the SBDC to make information available promptly and at the least possible cost.

## ***FOI Applications***

Section 12(1) of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* sets out the criteria on how an application is to be made:

Access applications have to:

- a) be in writing;
- b) give enough information to enable the requested documents to be identified;
- c) give an address in Australia to which notices under this Act can be sent;
- d) give any other information or details required under the regulations; and
- e) be lodged at an office of the agency with any application fee payable under the regulations.

## ***Exempt Information***

Schedule 1 to the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* sets out various provisions under which matter may be exempt information. The *Freedom of Information Act 1992* has exemption provisions to protect from disclosure information, which would have a detrimental effect on the functioning of government or harm the interests of private individuals or commercial organisations.

## ***Notice of Decision***

If you make an FOI application to the SBDC, we provide a written "Notice of Decision", in accordance with section 30 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*, outlining our decision and the reasons for that decision. In accordance with section 13 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*, we will endeavor to reply to you as soon as possible or in any event by the 45 calendar day deadline.

## ***Applications and Enquiries***

Applications and enquiries under the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* should be addressed to:

**Contact Name:** Ms Michelle Rosenberg  
**Tel:** (08) 6552 3211  
**Email:** [Michelle.Rosenberg@smallbusiness.wa.gov.au](mailto:Michelle.Rosenberg@smallbusiness.wa.gov.au)  
**Fax:** (08) 6552 3399  
**Address:** Small Business Development Corporation  
Level 2  
140 William Street  
PERTH WA 6000  
**Postal Address:** GPO Box C111

PERTH WA 6001

## ***Fees and Charges***

A scale of fees and charges set under the *Freedom of Information Regulations* 1993 and section 17 of the *Freedom of Information Act* 1992 refer to the processing charges that may be levied by agencies in “dealing with” FOI applications. If such charges are likely to apply we will forward a preliminary estimate of costs.

### ***Personal Information***

Applications for access to, and amendment of, “personal information” are free.

### ***Non–Personal Information***

Applications for access to “non–personal information” must be accompanied by a \$30.00 application fee. Discounts may be available to financially disadvantaged applicants.

## ***Decision on Access***

According to the *Freedom of Information Act* 1992, access is to be given to records, subject to certain exemptions, which are to protect personal, commercial or business interests of third parties, and public interests. Details of the initial decisions will be provided in writing, giving details and reasons for providing or refusing access to a record.

## ***Amendment of Personal Information***

If you believe that “personal information” held by the SBDC about you is “inaccurate, incomplete, out of date or misleading”, you may apply to have the information amended. No fees or charges apply.

Under section 46(1) of the *Freedom of Information Act* 1992 the application for amendment has to:

- (a) be in writing;
- (b) give enough details to enable the document that contains the information to be identified;
- (c) give details of the matters in relation to which the person believes the information is inaccurate, incomplete, out of date or misleading;
- (d) give the person's reasons for holding that belief;
- (e) give details of the amendment that the person wishes to have made;
- (f) give an address in Australia to which notices under this Act can be sent;
- (g) give any other information or details required under the regulations; and
- (h) be lodged at an office of the agency.

Under section 46(2) of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* the application has to also state whether you would like the amendment to be made by:

- (a) altering information;
  - (b) striking out or deleting information;
  - (c) inserting information;
  - (d) inserting a note in relation to information;
- or in 2 or more of those ways.

## ***Right of Review***

### ***Internal Review***

If you are not satisfied with a decision to deny or partially deny access to information, you have a right to apply for an internal review. An application for an internal review must be lodged with the Corporation within 30 days of the written notice of decision. The internal review will be undertaken by an officer of the Corporation who was not involved in the original decision. You will be advised of the outcome within 15 days.

### ***External Review***

If you are not satisfied with the internal review decision, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner seeking external review of that decision. You are required to lodge your complaint within 60 days of receiving the notice of decision.

A complaint to the Information Commissioner must be:

- in writing;
- have attached to it a copy of the decision; and
- give an address in Australia.

There is no charge for lodging a complaint with the Information Commissioner's office. The address of the Information Commissioner is:

Office of the Information Commissioner  
12<sup>th</sup> Floor, St Martins Tower  
44 St Georges Terrace  
PERTH WA 6000

Should you have any further queries or require any further information about your review rights, or the FOI process, you may contact the Office of the Information Commissioner by:

**Tel:** (08) 9220 7888 or  
Country Toll Free 1800 62 1244  
**Fax:** (08) 9325 2152  
**Email:** [info@foi.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@foi.wa.gov.au).  
**Internet:** [www.foi.wa.gov.au](http://www.foi.wa.gov.au)