

RTI Uplift Project Steering Committee Minutes

Time and Date	10.00 – 11.30am, Tuesday 18 February 2025
Location	Large Meeting Room, Level 7, Executive Building, 15 Murray Street

Attendance	Lydia Horne, Manager, Executive Government Services – DPAC (Chair)
	Michelle Lowe, Director, Office of the Secretary – DoJ
	Jenny Kaldor, General Manager, Legal Services – DoH
	Alison Lander, Director, Secretariat & Legal Services - DSG
	Paula Becker, Director, Legal Services – DECYP
	Lee Taylor, Sergeant - DPFEM
Observers	Ellen Thompson, Senior Project Officer - DPAC
	Corinne Hegarty, Executive Officer – DPAC (Minutes)
	Natalie Warne, Manager Appointments and RTI - DoJ
	Bridget Hutton DPAC
	Carmen Kelly DPAC
Apologies	Heather Neate, Program Manager, RTI - NRE TAS
	Gemma Smith, Program Manager – DPAC
	Bec Ladd, Manager Legal Services - DECYP

1. Welcome, agenda and apologies.

The Chair opened the meeting at 10:04am, welcomed the members and provided an acknowledgement of country.

2. Minutes

The Committee ratified the minutes from the previous meeting and approved to make the minutes available online.

3. Guest presenters: RTI Review

An overview was provided to the Committee by Professor Tim McCormack and Adjunct Professor Rick Snell regarding their independent review of Tasmania's Right to Information (RTI) framework, including the Office of the Ombudsman.

The independent review of Tasmania's RTI framework will examine and report on the

adequacy, effectiveness and implementation of the RTI Act. The focus and approach will be on the “outputs” of the RTI Act: accountability; participation; stewardship.

The review team will be working with all the heads of all Tasmanian Government Agencies and public authorities in accessing all material relevant to the Terms of Reference and discussing how heads of agencies are progressing work on the recent government commitments.

A Final Review Report will be provided to the Premier by 30 June 2025. The Report will be made publicly available within 14 days of formal receipt and the Government will provide its response within three months of the completion of the Review.

The review team will conduct a transparent and broad consultation process, engaging with the Tasmanian community, the Tasmanian State Service, Parliamentarians and others.

The review team will be reviewing current RTI systems across the state service, the RTI Act, the Personal Information Protection Act and information management systems.

A draft RTI Review work in progress paper has been developed and the review team will share the paper with the Committee. The review team have had an initial meeting with the Ombudsman and discussed reviewing the Right to Information Manual 2010 and what the Ombudsman needs to complete a review of the manual and implement fully functional performance monitoring of RTI reviews. It is noted that the Integrity Commission reported that these practices should be included going forward.

The review team emphasised the importance of building trust between the RTI delegates and applicants. The review team gave the example of acknowledging receipt of applications as a way to provide applicants with a consistent experience, where that consistent experience will help to build trust.

The review team will consider routine disclosure, as an important mechanism under the Act for providing access to government information. The Department of Health’s dashboard was cited as an excellent example of this type of disclosure. The meeting discussed active disclosure (i.e. providing information on request) as a way in which agencies currently provide a significant amount of information. The review team indicated this is something they would try to incorporate in the review investigations and public consultation.

The meeting discussed the intersection of the RTI Act and PIP Act and the issues arising from the inadequacies of the RTI Act as a mechanism for seeking personal information, suggesting that such requests may have a bespoke approach.

The review team noted that the information environment has changed significantly since the legislation was first introduced.

The review team are happy to talk with Secretaries and delegates and to have frank and confidential discussions as needed.

The review team will report back to the Committee to discuss their work in progress and thanks everyone on the Committee for the work they are doing with the RTI Uplift project.

4. UTAS modules

The Project Manager confirmed that the project’s scheduled completion date is August 2025.

The Project Manager thanked the Department of Health and the Department of State Growth RTI delegates that are visiting UTAS tomorrow to provide their personal insight and feedback for the training package.

The Project Manager thanked the Committee and the testers for all the feedback provided so

far on the modules and requested those who have not yet done so to please forward any other feedback to the Project Manager.

The Project Manager confirmed that the case study will be removed, and the team will look at other case studies from the State Archivist to include in the module.

The Committee raised the following feedback:

- module one is too long
- the language used is too hard
- include only a basic explanation of exemptions under the RTI Act; and
- include an excellent record keeping example that the testers could relate to relevant to their agencies.

The Project Manager will collate the feedback provided by the Committee and testers and share it with UTAS.

The full training package will be ready for testing in July and is on track for completion in August. It is important for the Committee to note that there are opportunities to provide ongoing feedback to the Project Manager right up until the project's completion.

The Project Manager confirmed that they have been working with a range of stakeholders, including Information Management Services to ensure accessibility standards are met.

5. Other Business

The Project Manager provided an update to the Steering Committee regarding the project's status and the new routine disclosure data sets will be discussed at the next meeting.

The draft RTI Processes Policy has been completed and will distribute to the Committee at the next meeting for feedback keeping in line with the project's timeframes. The policy includes all agencies' current policies as well as feedback provided by RTI delegates current practices.

Meeting closed at 11:32 AM and the next meeting is scheduled for 18 March 2024.

Actions:

1. The Project Manager to collate feedback provided by the Committee and send to UTAS by Friday 21 February 2025.