**OPEN DATA STRATEGY, LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION 2013 - 2016**

**Introduction**

The Legal Services Commissioner is an independent statutory officer appointed under the *Legal Profession Act 2007* (the Act). The Legal Services Commission (the Commission or the LSC) comprises the Commissioner and the staff of the Commission. The Commission first opened for business on 1 July 2004 on the commencement of the *Legal Profession Act 2004*.

Our two most fundamental purposes are to provide users of legal services a timely, effective, fair and reasonable means of redress for complaints and to promote, monitor and enforce appropriate standards of conduct in the provision of legal services. These purposes serve an even more fundamental purpose: to help protect and promote public confidence in the legal system, the administration of justice and the rule of law.

The open data initiative was announced by the Premier at the 2012 Parliamentary Estimates Committee hearings on 9 October 2012. The aim of the open data initiative is to release as much data as possible to encourage the private sector to develop innovative new services and solutions for the State.

The Commission attaches considerable importance to being an appropriately open and transparent organisation. We already provide extensive information through our website and have actively been publishing a range of data for many years:

* about our work[[1]](#footnote-1)
* about complaint data through LPPortal initiative[[2]](#footnote-2)
* about our performance in our monthly and annual reports[[3]](#footnote-3).

**Purpose**

The purpose of the Commission’s Open Data Strategy 2013–2016 is to outline the plan of action for the Commission to achieve the Government’s commitment to open data. The policy principles that underpin the strategy are that data published on the open data website, available from www.data.qld.gov.au will be:

• available for open use

• available for free

• available in accessible formats and easy to find

• released within set standards and accountabilities.

The focus of this strategy is the release of data collected and held on the Commission’s database – known as LPCentral - in the course of performing our statutory functions under the Act.

**Our Data**

The Commission collects a range of complaint data including, but not limited to, complaints about lawyers and law practices and includes data regarding complaints by areas of law, respondent type, nature of complaint as well as other information such as geographic complaint data, gender and age of respondent.

In short, this is data currently provided in our monthly and annual reports.

**Our strategy**

The objective of the Commission in regard to Open Data is to release appropriate data in a format that will encourage research and understanding of trends in complaints with respect to the legal profession.

Importantly, given the content of the data held by the Commission, the Commission is committed to managing data such that an individual’s personal information is stored securely and protected from unauthorised access. To this end, data will be managed in accordance with section 705 of the Act and relevant State legislation.

Our strategy contains five main pillars:

**1. Governance:** In the short term, objectives are to create appropriate governance structures to enable the ongoing management and release of data. This will involve creating approved processes established for classifying, authorising and releasing data sets. Clear and concisely documented governance facilitates an understanding of accountability, decision-making and participation. It enables processes to be better defined, thereby improving effectiveness, efficiency and communication. Accordingly, the Manager-Compliance will be responsible for developing defined and documented accountabilities for governance of open data release and management processes.

**2. Identification:** In the short term, we will identify appropriate data by surveying LPCentral for underlying data sources and engaging with stakeholders about their needs and interests.

**3. Assessment:** In the medium term we will assess the suitability of data for release in accordance with the Act, other relevant legislation, administrative instruments, policies and guidelines.

Not all data held by the Commission is suitable for release. The process of identifying and assessing data for publication acknowledges the need for it to be accessible to external audiences. Data subject to valid privacy, security or privilege limitations may be restricted or released in a modified form.

**4. Publication:** In the medium term, we will publish data (Appendix 1) in line with set standards. The Commission will publish de-identifed complaint data. This will include publishing any appropriate data which is currently available from the Commission’s monthly and annual reports.

**5. Future Program:** The Commission is committed to continued improvement in both the processes to identify and manage future data and the improvement of data quality. The Commission’s procedures will assist in an ongoing improvement in data quality. Stakeholder feedback is important. The priority of data release will be driven by available resources with the expectation that data will be made available under an open license arrangement.**Appendix 1**

**Datasets to be released and release timeline**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dataset name | Description of data | Target date of publishing | Frequency of update | Open licence (Yes/No) |
| Complaint data | Information regarding complaint trends about lawyers. | 1 July 2014 | Annual | Yes |
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1. Which is available on the Commission’s website - http://www.lsc.qld.gov.au [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. http://www.lsc.qld.gov.au/lpportal [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. http://www.lsc.qld.gov.au/about-us/our-performance [↑](#footnote-ref-3)