

# **Freedom of Information Statement 2025**

(Endorsed by Board 30 June 2025)

## Introduction

This Freedom of Information (FOI) Statement is provided in accordance with sections 96 and 97 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* (WA) (FOI Act).

Its purpose is to ensure the public has access to information about the structure and functions of the Gascoyne Development Commission (the Commission), as well as the types of documents it holds. Additional details about our services can be found on our [website](#).

The FOI Act gives members of the public the right to access information held by State and local governments that is not routinely available. It also enables individuals to ensure that personal information held by government is accurate, complete, up to date, and not misleading.

The Commission is committed to supporting public access to documents in a timely manner and at the lowest reasonable cost, in line with the FOI Act's principles of openness, transparency, and accountability

## The organisation

The Gascoyne Development Commission is a statutory authority of the West Australian Government, set up in 1994 under the *Regional Development Commissions Act 1993*. The Commission is run by a boards and is accountable to the Minister for Regional Development. Our purpose is to coordinate and promote the economic and social development of the Gascoyne.

**Our Vision:** The Gascoyne will be an internationally recognised region where people love to live, learn, work, contribute, retire, and visit.

**Our Purpose:** Our purpose is to connect communities, industry, and the environment to generate sustainable economic and social development outcomes. This occurs through our strong project delivery, enabling and advocacy roles, each of which are focused on leveraging the Gascoyne's unique blend of environmental and cultural assets, social capital, small business, and primary production capabilities.

**Strategic Plan:** GDC's [Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#) outlines our purpose, role, strategic priorities and key initiatives.

**Annual Report:** Our [Annual Report](#) outlines our operations, performance and achievements for the financial year. For previous reports, see our annual reports page on our website.

## Legislation administered

The Gascoyne Development Commission was established on 1 January 1993 under Section 21 of the *Public Service Act 1978*. It became a Statutory Authority following the proclamation of the *Regional Development Commissions Act 1993* on 8 April 1994.

The Commission operates under, and is guided by, the following legislation:

***Regional Development Commissions Act 1993***

Establishes Regional Development Commissions to coordinate and promote economic development in regions of Western Australia. It also provides for the creation of Regional Development Advisory Committees, the Regional Development Council, and the continuation of existing regional development bodies under this Act.

***Constitutions Acts Amendment Act 1899***

Amends and consolidates changes to the Constitutions Act 1889.

***Industrial Relations Act 1979***

Governs the prevention and resolution of industrial disputes, outlining the mutual rights and responsibilities of employers, employees, and their representative organisations.

***Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 2023***

Provides the legislative framework for workers' compensation and rehabilitation in Western Australia.

***Equal Opportunity Act 1984***

Promotes equal opportunity and provides legal remedies in cases of discrimination based on sex, marital status, pregnancy, family responsibilities, race, religious or political beliefs, or sexual harassment.

***Work Health and Safety Act 2020***

Addresses the health and safety of workers and workplace-related risks across Western Australia.

***State Superannuation Act 2000***

Provides for superannuation schemes for government employees and establishes the Government Employees Superannuation Board and Fund.

***Freedom of Information Act 1992***

Ensures public access to government documents and allows individuals to confirm that personal information held by government is accurate and up to date.

***Disability Services Act 1993***

Establishes the Disability Services Commission and Advisory Council, supports the rights of people with disabilities, and outlines the funding, provision, and regulation of related services.

***Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993***

Sets out minimum employment standards for employees in Western Australia.

***Public Sector Management Act 1994***

Regulates the administration and management of the Western Australian public sector, replacing the Public Service Act 1978.

***State Records Act 2000***

Provides for the proper creation, maintenance, and management of State records.

***Financial Management Act 2006***

Regulates the financial management and reporting responsibilities of government

departments and statutory authorities, including the investment of public funds.

#### *Procurement Act 2020*

Modernises and standardises the procurement processes for goods, services, and works across the WA Government.

### **Agency structure and decision-making functions**

Each Regional Development Commission is considered an “agency” under the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* (FOI Act) because it is listed in Column 2 of Schedule 2 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*. This classification makes each Commission a “public body” as defined by the FOI Act. As such, each Commission is subject to the FOI Act independently from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD).

The Commission reports to the Minister for Regional Development (the Minister). Under the *Regional Development Commissions Act 1993*, the Minister may issue general or specific directions regarding the Commission’s powers, functions, and duties. The Commission is required to comply with these directions.

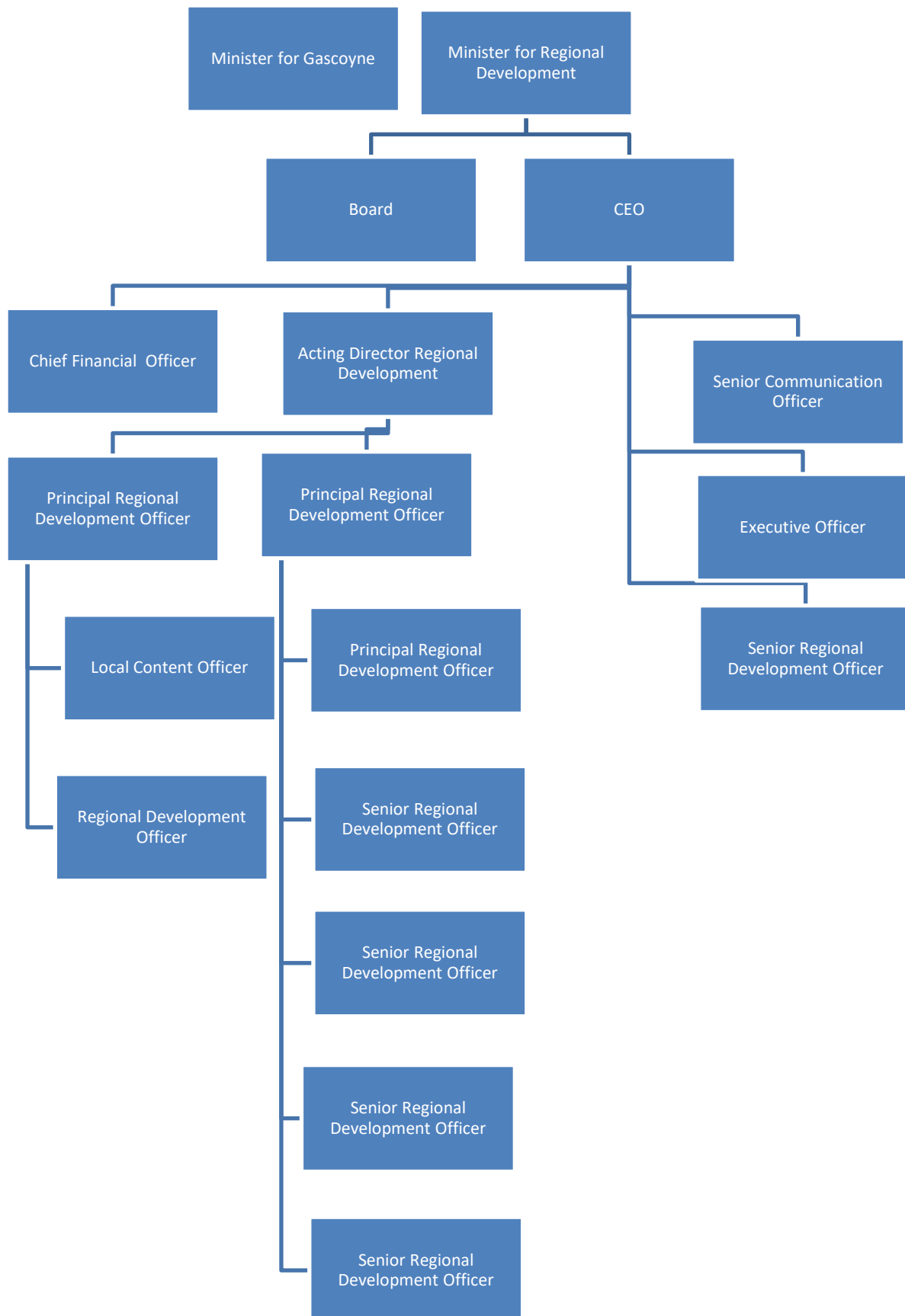
The Commission is overseen by a board which meets five to six times a year. The board provides strategic direction, sets policy priorities, advises the Minister on regional issues, and determines budget priorities for the Commission.

Under the *Regional Development Commissions Act 1993*, the Minister appoints all Board members, including the Chair, Deputy Chair, and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who serves as an ex-officio member. Apart from the CEO, Board members are appointed for terms of up to three years. Membership is structured so that:

- One-third are residents of the Gascoyne region;
- One-third are nominated by local government; and
- One-third are appointed at the Minister’s discretion.

While the Commission operates independently, DPIRD provides administrative support and is the employing agency for staff working at the Commission. These staff are accountable to the Commission’s CEO.

The organisational structure of the Gascoyne Development Commission as at June 2025 is shown overleaf.



## Public participation

There are two Community Representative positions on the Commission's Board. These roles are open to residents of the Gascoyne region. Expressions of interest are invited periodically through public advertisements as terms expire and vacancies arise. Nominees are assessed based on their executive-level decision-making capabilities, demonstrated involvement in the economic, environmental, or social development of the Gascoyne region, and their ability to collaborate effectively on a broad range of regional issues.

The Commission values input from the public and external organisations on the development and delivery of its projects, initiatives, and policies. Community participation is encouraged through the following avenues:

- Providing oral or written submissions to the Commission;
- Presenting feedback or proposals to the board on matters overseen by the Commission; and
- Offering expert or specialist advice on an ad hoc basis.

## Documents held by the Commission

The Commission maintains a wide range of documents related to its services, including publications such as fact sheets, technical information, and industry development advice. These publications are available to the public and can be provided in alternative formats upon request.

Publicly accessible documents are published on the Commission's website at [www.gdc.wa.gov.au](http://www.gdc.wa.gov.au). These include current and past Annual Reports, as well as various policies and strategic plans, which can be found in the [publications section](#). From time to time, the Commission may also release additional reports, subject to the Minister's discretion.

Other types of documents which requires a Freedom of Information (FOI) application include, but are not limited to:

- Audit reports and supporting documentation
- Business plans
- Correspondence
- Ministerial correspondence
- Minutes, agendas and papers of meetings
- Personnel information
- Records relating to administrative operations
- Service Level Agreements
- Memorandums of Understanding
- Strategic Development Plans
- Tender and quotation responses

## Information management

Under the *State Records Act 2000* (SR Act), the Commission is required to maintain an approved Record keeping Plan. This plan outlines how records are created, managed, stored, and ultimately destroyed. The Commission will submit the draft Record Keeping Plan to the State Records Commission and will review and update it regularly in accordance with Section 28(5) of the State Records Act.

The Commission uses a single electronic document and records management system (EDRMS), SharePoint, to store and manage corporate information. This includes electronic records, hard copy documents, and digitised files. All documents registered in the EDRMS are organised into classified files, structured according to the Commission's organisational framework.

In addition to SharePoint, the Commission maintains a number of other operational corporate databases and information systems used to manage customer information and other relevant data.

Personal information collected by the Commission is handled in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles, as outlined in Schedule 3 of the *Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988*. The Commission's policy framework includes procedures designed to protect personal information from misuse, both within the agency and by external parties.

## Operation of Freedom of Information in the Gascoyne Development Commission

The *Freedom of Information Act 1992* (FOI Act) promotes openness and transparency by granting the public a general right of access to documents held by State and local government agencies. The Commission is committed to upholding these principles by providing access to documents at the lowest reasonable cost and allowing individuals to ensure that any personal information held is accurate, complete, up to date, and not misleading.

Applicants may be entitled to access documents in electronic or hard copy form, or through inspection.

Wherever possible, the Commission will provide access to documents outside the formal FOI process.

## Access application

The Commission requires a formal written application for documents requested under the Western Australian *Freedom of Information Act 1992*.

A valid application must:

- be in writing addressed to the Freedom of Information Coordinator, Gascoyne Development Commission, 33 Robinson Street, Carnarvon 6701. Postal address PO Box 781, Carnarvon 6701, by post, hand or email ([info@gdc.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@gdc.wa.gov.au));
- be accompanied by a \$30 application fee for non-personal information;

- give an Australian address for correspondence;
- give enough information to enable identification of the documents being requested; and
- indicate what kind of access is required.

When seeking access to general information it is preferable to first discuss the issue with the Commission's Freedom of Information Coordinator by phoning (08) 9941 7000.

The Commission processes Freedom of Information applications in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*.

Download the Commission's FOI Application form from the [GDC's website](#).

## Fees and charges

A scale of fees and charges is set out in the FOI Regulations. Apart from the application fee for non-personal information (information that is not personal information about the applicant) all charges are discretionary.

No fees or charges apply for applications that are limited to requests for access to personal information about the applicant only.

The following charges can be applied by the Commission when processing a Freedom of Information application for non-personal information:

Type of fee	Charge
Personal information about the applicant	No fee
Application fee (for non-personal information)	\$30.00

If an application is likely to divert a substantial and unreasonable portion of the Commission's resources away from its other operations, the Commission may decide to impose charges. Charges that may be imposed, include:

Type of fee	Charge
Charge for time dealing with the application (per hour or pro rata)	\$30.00
Access time supervised by staff (per hour or pro rata)	\$30.00
Photocopying staff time (per hour or pro rata)	\$30.00
Transcribing from tape, film or computer	\$30.00
Duplicating a tape, film or computer information	Actual cost
Delivery, packaging and postage	Actual cost

An estimate of charges will be provided if the cost is expected to exceed \$25.00. In cases where charges are likely to be higher than \$25 the applicant can request details of the estimated charge as soon as possible after lodging their application.



The Commission reserves the right to request a deposit of between 25-75% in advance for the work to be undertaken.

### **Methods of payment**

The Commission accepts cheque/money order made out to the Gascoyne Development Commission or EFT payment. Please contact the Commission for bank details.

### **Processing the application**

Under the FOI Act the Commission is required to respond to applications for information (other than personal information) as soon as practical and in any event before the end of the “permitted period”. The permitted period is 45 days after the access application is received for all applications. Where an application is for amendment of personal information, pursuant to Part 3 of the FOI Act, the permitted period is 30 days.

### **Notice of decision**

Within the ‘permitted period’ the Commission will provide the applicant with a notice of decision which will include:

- the day on which the decision was made;
- the name and designation of the officer who made the decision;
- if access is refused, reasons for classifying the matter exempt;
- if access is approved, arrangements for giving access; and
- rights of review and procedures to be followed.

### **Refusal of access**

While the FOI Act encourages an open government through the release of documents and information, there is provision under Section 23, to refuse access on a range of grounds, these include:

- Exempt documents with an exemption certificate;
- A document that does not belong to this Commission;
- A document that where access would contravene a limitation (relates to private collections);
- A document that is an edited copy;
- A document containing personal information relating to a child who has not turned 16; and
- A document containing personal information relating to a person who is intellectually handicapped.

### **Rights of review**

The FOI Act provides for a review and appeal process. Applicants may seek an Internal Review if they are dissatisfied with the decision of the Freedom of Information Coordinator. If they are still dissatisfied following the internal review, then a review by the Information Commissioner may be requested. If still not satisfied,

applicants may appeal to the Supreme Court.

**Internal review:** Applicants who are not satisfied with the decision of the FOI Coordinator can apply to the Commission for an Internal Review of that decision. Applications for an Internal Review must be lodged at the Commission within 30 days of receipt of notice of the Commission's decision. The Commission will respond within 15 days or any longer period agreed between the applicant and the Commission. The Internal Review will be carried out by the Chief Executive Officer. There is no charge for an internal review.

**External review:** Applicants who are still dissatisfied after the Internal Review has been completed may seek a review by the Information Commissioner within 60 days of receiving the notice. This request must be made in writing, giving details of the decision to which the complaint relates.

Complaints should be made to the Information Commissioner and addressed as follows:

The Office of the Information  
Commissioner Albert Facey House  
469 Wellington Street  
PERTH WA 6000

A complaint to the Information Commissioner must:

- Be in writing;
- Include a copy of the Commission's decision; and
- Provide an Australian address.

Any party to a complaint may appeal to the Supreme Court on any question of law arising out of a decision of the Information Commissioner, except for a decision as to the deferral of access to a document, the charges to be imposed for dealing with an access application and the payment of a deposit on account of charges.

### **Access to information**

An applicant may be entitled to access documents in electronic or hardcopy form, or by way of inspection. Arrangements for access are negotiable and will be as considered appropriate and acceptable to both the Commission and the applicant.

Access will usually be available between 8.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday at the Commission's office, 33 Robinson Street, Carnarvon WA 6701. Prior arrangements can be made with the FOI Coordinator before visiting the offices with a view to inspecting information. This will help to ensure that all requested information is assembled for viewing. Some may have to be retrieved from archives. Any enquiries concerning access to documents or other matters relating to Freedom of Information should be directed to the Freedom of Information Coordinator, Gascoyne Development Commission.

## Personal information

The Commission maintains employee records containing both personal and employment-related information. These records are stored within the Commission's secure online human resource management system and in individual personnel files.

The online system is protected by security controls, while physical personnel files are securely stored and locked daily. Access to these records is strictly limited to Human Resource staff. Employees wishing to access their own personnel files may do so only under the direct supervision of the Senior Administration Officer or Director Regional Development.

There is no fee for submitting an application to amend personal information or to request that a notation or attachment be added where the Commission decides not to amend the record. All such applications must be made in writing.

Personal information may include factual details, routine data, opinions, or evaluative material such as advice or recommendations provided by third parties. Applications to amend this information will be processed promptly and, in any case, within 30 days of receipt.

The right to request amendments exists to ensure personal information held by the Commission does not:

- Cause unfair harm to the person concerned;
- Misrepresent facts; or
- Create a misleading impression.

Applicants must be requesting amendments to information about themselves, and proof of identity is required before the application can be processed.

Applications must:

- Be submitted in writing;
- Provide sufficient detail to identify the document containing the personal information;
- Specify the information believed to be inaccurate, incomplete, out of date, or misleading;
- Include reasons and, if necessary, supporting documentation; and
- Indicate the preferred method of amendment, as provided under the FOI Act, such as:
  - Altering the information;
  - Striking out or deleting content;
  - Inserting new information; or
  - Adding a note relating to the existing information.

Upon reaching a decision, the Commission will issue a written notice within 30 days. If the amendment is approved, the notice will include details of the changes and, where practical, a copy of the amended document.

If the amendment is refused, the Commission will advise the applicant of the reasons

for the decision and outline the rights to request a review or appeal. Applicants may also request that a notation be added to the record, disputing the accuracy of the information.

For any enquiries about personal information, please contact the Freedom of Information Coordinator at the Gascoyne Development Commission.

### **FOI enquiries**

FOI Coordinator  
Gascoyne Development Commission  
[info@gdc.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@gdc.wa.gov.au)  
Ph: (08) 9941 7000

Feedback on this Information Statement may be provided to [info@gdc.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@gdc.wa.gov.au)