

Privacy Commissioner announces first Right to Know Day

3 May 2016

New Zealand's first 'Right to Know Day' will take place on 12 May, 2016.

Right to Know Day is a day dedicated to raising awareness of the legal right New Zealanders have to see their own information that agencies hold. For example, if a business has a customer's contact details, that customer has the right to see those details.

The Privacy Commissioner is marking Right to Know Day by releasing an online tool called AboutMe. This tool makes it easier for individuals to ask agencies for their personal information by helping to draft a template email with all the details agencies need to respond to information requests.

AboutMe will help agencies by standardising requests for personal information and ensuring that they include all the relevant detail. This will be particularly useful for small to medium sized agencies that do not receive many information requests.

Privacy Commissioner John Edwards said "Roughly 60% of the complaints we receive each year have to do with access to personal information. We hope to reduce that number by making people aware of this component of the Privacy Act and making it easier for them to assert their right to see their own information.

"The larger agencies that deal with personal information requests all the time have processes to ensure that they capture all the detail they need. This is not the case with smaller agencies such as small businesses, clubs and societies. AboutMe – and Right to Know Day in general – will make it easier for these organisations to comply with their obligations under the Privacy Act."

Right to Know Day is part of Privacy Week, a week devoted to raising privacy awareness. In addition to Right to Know Day, the Privacy Commissioner is:

- sponsoring privacy-themed artwork,
- releasing UMR survey results on public attitudes towards privacy,
- hosting privacy forums in Auckland and Wellington with UN Special Rapporteur for the Right to Privacy Professor Joe Cannataci and Australian Information Commissioner Timothy Pilgrim
- hosting two Technology and Privacy Forums
- releasing a report with the results of a spot check on access rights in a significant private sector industry.

ENDS

For further information or to schedule an interview with John Edwards, call Sam Grover: 021 509 735