Australian Government Information Management Office (AGIMO) Circular

Subject: Whole of Government arrangements for the National Library of Australia (NLA) to collect, preserve and make accessible in perpetuity Commonwealth Government online (digital) publications and websites

Approved by the Secretaries’ ICT Governance Board Out-of-Session on 7 May 2010

Circular No: 2010/001

To all agencies under the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997 (FMA Act)

Purpose

These Whole of Government arrangements will assist the NLA in its requirement to collect library materials for the national interest. The arrangements will:

- Simplify administrative procedures by removing requirements to obtain prior permissions;
- Enhance management of the Government’s information assets by improving the likelihood of collecting and preserving content for long term access;
- Enhance management of the Government’s information assets by eliminating a barrier to the timely capture of content, thus improving the likelihood of capturing content at critical times;
- Enhance management of the Government’s information assets by ensuring stable access to more Government publications through the NLA’s archival presence and persistent URI citation; and
- Support the Government’s move towards open government, making public sector information accessible and help in providing sustainable value, through long-term preservation and access to Government 2.0 initiatives.

Copyright in the material collected by the NLA is not transferred to the NLA and remains with the Commonwealth Government as stated on the agencies’ original sites. Subject to technical and other limitations, copyright statements associated with
the content are collected ensuring information concerning copyright ownership is clear and accessible.

Key Points

The following arrangements to support the NLA’s collecting of digital online content (1) apply to and should be noted by Financial Management and Accountability (FMA) Act agencies.

Without the need for prior permission from or advice to agencies:

1. The NLA may collect, including harvesting content by means of crawl robots, any online digital content published (2) by the Commonwealth Government.

2. The NLA may apply preservation processes to such content collected, including the making of copies and changing of formats.

3. The NLA may make collected content publicly accessible in perpetuity.

These arrangements may apply to online digital content collected at any time by the NLA for developing and maintaining a comprehensive national collection of library materials relating to Australia and Australians, in accordance with the functions of the Library as stated in the National Library Act 1960.

Definitions

(1) The ‘National Library’s collecting of digital online content’ refers to content collected by and on behalf of the Library and maintained at the National Library. These collections include, but are not limited to, PANDORA (Australia’s Web Archive) and the Australian Domain Harvest Collections.

(2) ‘Online digital content published’ means materials made available to the public on the Internet and via the World Wide Web and notwithstanding directives indicated in robots.txt files or HTML ‘noindex’ and ‘nofollow’ meta-tags.

Background

The National Library of Australia (NLA) selectively collects materials published online (ranging from single documents to complete websites) and makes this collection publicly available. This activity was established in 1996 to address, in a digital environment, the functions of the NLA as set out in the National Library Act 1960 – Section 6, which include:

(a) to maintain and develop a national collection of library material, including a comprehensive collection of library material relating to Australia and the Australian people; and

(b) to make library material in the national collection available to such persons and institutions, and in such manner and subject to such conditions, as the Council determines with a view to the most advantageous use of that collection in the national interest.
The NLA’s collecting of online Commonwealth Government publications is selective and dependent upon the technical and resource constraints associated with harvesting remote online materials. This policy does not ensure content is collected and does not fulfill the archival responsibilities of agencies.

Action Required:

Agencies are required to note the arrangements.

Agencies that do not wish to comply with the agreed arrangements must seek approval from the Expenditure Review Committee (ERC) through the SIGB to opt-out arrangements.

Contacts

If you have any questions regarding this AGIMO Circular, please contact Paul Koerbin, Manager Web Archiving, National Library of Australia at pkoerbin@nla.gov.au or phone on 02 6262 1411.

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