

# Open Government Initiative - Open Data

IE011-OD

Q1. What challenges do you face as a department in making data available to the public?

- Pro-active is wrong, it should just be active
- When people use proactive, they mean pre-emptive
- Resources available
- Accuracy of the data
- The system allows many other employees to put things in, so it's not always accurate. People are rushed, different skill sets, and doesn't follow an exact procedure
- It's not always up to date
- It takes a lot of time to make that data accurate and ready for the public
- Not every report has it available to pull out the specific data that the public are looking for
- Some systems are not designed for the public to get information out of; sometimes it doesn't convey the proper information
- Lack of proper consistency training in data input – systems seem to be individualized
- Our system is designed for input, not output, which presents a challenge
- Personal privacy is an issue—must be protected; what is the intent of people wanting such information
- Confidentiality is a big deal
- If there was a good record systems management in place, it will help will supplying such information
- Create a code that says confidential, or not confidential
- The public doesn't realize the amount of work that goes into a request or understand that information released can't have private information in it
- If the government were serious about this OGI, there would be more resources dedicated to it
- The investment of upfront changing our policy, and bringing it resources, will help meet these objectives – it can't be just more work on what people already have
- A whole staff or person in each department to assist with OGI
- Training for the expertise to make data available to the public
- Formats that aren't accessible to broad public i.e GIS mapping
- Blocked by confidentiality
- Resources to release and prep
- Current operational demands/resources – ad hoc?
- Privacy issues
- When volume of requests exceed volume of staff available to attain the information for them
- Personal privacy (need to be sensitive to confidentiality issues)
- Resources / time

- Resources
- Confidentiality
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- Confidentiality of information
- Types of information can be left open for interpretation
- Accuracy of data
- Resources
- Compiling of data
- Processing of financial transaction is spread over GPA who issues P.Os.
- Resources – the info is being asked of people who are already busy
- Level of detail
- Ever changing data – when do you draw the line
- Fear of making a mistake
- Reliance on Industry stakeholders to provide the data to the department on a voluntary basis – relationship building
- Respecting confidentiality
- Timeliness to provide a response

## Q2. How can your department be more proactive in making data available to the public?

- Some things we don't have to be more active in releasing, such as cabinet secrecy
- Open should be the default, needing a reason not to release
- Identify what data sets are being used, so you have an idea what to make available
- You have to plan this out – what's required to do this
- You may want to cross geography information, but it has to be at the same level, and same consistency – such as health information mixed with CYFS information
- We need consistent forms of data and data input
- We should look at places where they have a good system, and base it off them
- The information needs to benefit the public somehow – it can't just be for a political issue
- Prioritizing what should be made available first; what should be worked on most
- We need to get best practice, best consistency, and some resources
- Maybe we should stick with the system we currently have
- The public don't want a table full of data
- We are probably already fulfilling the public's need for data but don't know it
- Helping data search engines be better; make it easier for public to find already available data
- Define what data are required
- Establish process for receiving ad hoc requests and filing
- Custom too grandeur
- Regularly add section to our online job portal and communicate that will occur
- Put more resources
- Buy in of departmental staff

- What required in reports
- Identify what can be available
- Provide resources to transform administrative data into usable public data – Community Accounts, NL Stats Agency
- We need to know what they want
- If we know what is for public, it can be collected with that intent instead of trying to make our data fit the request
- Figure out what does what
- Redundancy – who is collecting what
- Turning into something crazy if you aren't comparing apples to apples, but you think you are
- Use excel format
- Single point of access to all available information – e.g. Department of Finance, Stats Agency, Community Accounts – All available in one place
- Create a card catalogue
- Search engine for all government documents and data instead of just government website search engine
- Make data available for all charts used in government documents

### Q 3. What feedback do you have on the draft online web form?

- Add question “do you know how to find data on our website?”
- “how would you go about accessing data?” we need to be representative of all the population, not just technology savvy
- A random sample, methodological approach to get views of everyone, not just those who are interested
- It's going to be media and bloggers and academia who are answering
- Make labour and business different answers
- It has to be a random sample to truly find out what most people want, not just a select few
- You don't want just the ticked off people
- The design can be more artful and friendly
- Ask fewer questions – fewer is always better
- Types of data accessed.
- Ease of use.

### Q4. Additional comments.

- Have disclaimer about data and what people use it for we are not responsible
- Know your data so when people use it wrong, we are able to say ‘no this is why this is wrong’ to prevent people blaming GNL for misinformation

- Meet with the interest groups who access data the most instead of trying to interview someone who doesn't care
- You have to keep in mind this is a political exercise; this is about bad politics about bill 29, this is reactive
- We have to keep in mind political sensitivities
- We're imposing more work on our staff for something no one reads
- You're going to have to come up with political buy in, so any party will keep all this work
- The communications around this needs to be solid; give more knowledge on other districts, and how we are doing in comparison
- We already put a lot of information out there on our government website
- Solution is to have sessions for people to come learn on how they can find things, and on what's currently available
- Be open with the public how much it'll cost to be more open, to put out more data. If it costs 3 million, tell them it'll cost 3 million.
- Notions of information should be clarified