

VicForests is committed to ensuring the privacy of individuals who provide it with personal information.

VicForests is required to comply with the requirements of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)*. This policy outlines the way in which VicForests uses and discloses personal information, and how it complies with the Information Privacy Principles outlined in the Act.

Definitions

'Personal Information' means information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database), that is recorded in any form and whether true or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion, but does not include information of a kind to which the *Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)* applies. Personal information may include an individual's name, address, sex, age, financial details, marital status, education or employment history.

'Sensitive Information' means information or an opinion about an individual's racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, membership of a political association, religious beliefs or affiliations, philosophical beliefs, membership of a professional or trade association, membership of a trade union, sexual preferences or practices or criminal record that is also personal information.

1. Collection of Personal Information

VicForests only collects personal information that is necessary for one or more of its functions or activities. Details of these functions and activities are available at www.vicforests.com.au.

Contact details, usually work details, are collected from contractors during VicForests tendering and/or contracting processes. Sometimes VicForests also invites submissions from the general public and collects contact details for the purpose of responding to submissions.

Wherever possible, VicForests will collect information from the individual directly. At or before the time the information is collected, VicForests will advise an individual:

- that the individual can obtain access to the information collected and how this can be done;
- the purpose for which the information is collected;
- names of other organisations that may be given access to the information (if any);
- any law that requires the information to be collected; and
- if there are any consequences for not providing the information.

2. Use and Disclosure of Personal Information

VicForests uses personal information for the purpose for which it was collected. This information may be used for any reasonable secondary purposes which directly relates to the primary purpose of collection. For example the contact details of a person who owns land neighbouring VicForests coupes may be collected for the purpose of notifying that person of when harvesting operations are to commence. This information may then be used in responding to a query made by that person regarding VicForests activities.

VicForests may use the information for an unrelated purpose:

- with the consent of the individual;
- if the use is in the public interest, does not identify the particular individual and it is impracticable for VicForests to seek the individuals' consent before use;
- required or authorised by law; or

- to lessen or prevent a serious and imminent threat to an individual's health, safety or welfare or the safety or welfare of the public.

VicForests does not sell any of the personal information it collects.

VicForests engages third parties to perform certain business functions. Therefore, it is sometimes necessary to disclose personal information to those suppliers. Where disclosure takes place, VicForests seeks to ensure that personal information is handled in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles.

3. Data Quality

VicForests will seek to ensure that the personal information collected, used or disclosed is accurate, complete and up to date. In many instances VicForests relies upon the individual to provide accurate and complete information when the information is being collected and to advise VicForests should circumstances change over time.

4. Data Security

VicForests will take reasonable steps to protect personal information from misuse, loss, unauthorised use, access, disclosure and alteration. VicForests use a number of procedural, physical, software and hardware safeguards, together with access controls, secure methods of communication and back-up and disaster recovery systems to protect information from misuse and loss, unauthorised access, modification and disclosure.

Personal information held by VicForests is destroyed or permanently de-identified when it is no longer required.

5. Openness

On request by a person, VicForests will take reasonable steps to let the person know, generally, what sort of personal information it holds, for what purposes, and how it collects, holds, uses and discloses that information.

6. Access and Correction

An individual has the right to seek access to their personal information. If an individual requests access to, or the correction of, personal information held by VicForests, VicForests will, as soon as practicable, but no later than 45 days after receiving the request:

- provide access, or reasons for the denial of access;
- correct the personal information, or provide reasons for the refusal to correct the personal information; or
- provide reasons for the delay in responding to the request for access to or for the correction of personal information.

Where appropriate requests for access to documents containing personal information may be handled in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)*.

Where providing access would reveal evaluative information generated within VicForests in connection with a commercially sensitive decision-making process, VicForests may give the individual an explanation for the commercially sensitive decision rather than direct access to the information.

If VicForests holds personal information about an individual and the individual is able to establish that the information is not accurate, complete and up to date, the organisation must take reasonable steps to correct the information so that it is accurate, complete and up to date.

7. Unique Identifiers

A unique identifier is a code that consists of alphabet characters and numerals that is applied to an individual and distinguishes them from other individuals, for example a driver's licence number.

VicForests does not assign, use or disclose unique identifiers to individuals unless it is necessary to do so to perform any of its organisational functions efficiently.

8. Anonymity

When seeking general information from VicForests, an individual does not have to identify themselves. If an individual wishes to make an enquiry, no personal information will be collected or recorded unless VicForests needs it to get back to them with an answer. However, if an individual is raising a specific issue or participating in formal commercial or stakeholder engagement processes identification will generally be necessary.

People can visit the VicForests website anonymously as the site does not collect or record personal information other than information they choose to provide by email or internet forms.

9. Transborder Data Flows

VicForests only transfers personally identifying information outside the state of Victoria where this is required for the purpose for which it was collected and seeks to ensure it is given the same level of privacy protection it would receive in Victoria.

10. Sensitive Information

VicForests will not collect sensitive information about an individual unless:

- the individual has consented; or
- the collection of information is required under law; or
- the collection of information is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat to the life or health of any individual, where the individual whom the information concerns is incapable to give consent; or
- the collection of information is necessary for the establishment, exercise or defence of a legal claim.