



Information and Privacy
Commissioner/Ontario
Commissaire à l'information
et à la protection de la vie privée/Ontario

News Release

September 14, 2010

Commissioner Cavoukian unveils *Access by Design* and special events to celebrate *Right to Know Week*

The fifth annual *Right to Know Week* in Canada starts on September 26, 2010. Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner, Dr. Ann Cavoukian, has a number of special events planned to focus attention on the public's right of access to government-held information.

Right to Know Week is timed to coincide with international *Right to Know Day*, on September 28. On that day in 2002, freedom of information organizations from more than a dozen countries met in Sofia, Bulgaria, and agreed to partner in the promotion of an individual's right of access to government information and the growth of open, transparent government.

Commissioner Cavoukian will officially unveil her concept of *Access by Design*, which consists of 7 Fundamental Principles that encourage public institutions to take a proactive approach to releasing information, making the disclosure of government-held information an automatic process wherever possible – access as the default.

Among the special events planned by Commissioner Cavoukian are:

- A luncheon panel in Toronto, on Tuesday, September 28, that will outline how the Commissioner's *Access by Design* program benefits both the general public and government organizations. Panelists from both provincial and municipal government sectors will provide their success stories, demonstrating how they achieved openness. (You can order tickets online to the luncheon {*Positive Disclosure Breeds Efficient Government*} through the IPC's co-sponsor for this event, the Toronto chapter of IPAC, <http://www.ipac.ca/Toronto/CurrentEvents>.)
- The unveiling of the IPC's expanded *Access by Design* section of the Commissioner's website (www.ipc.on.ca).
- A live online chat, with Commissioner Cavoukian and Assistant Commissioner (Access) Brian Beamish on Wednesday, Sept. 29. The Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner will be online from 11 a.m. to noon (at www.righttoknow.ca), where they will answer general questions about access to government information and how *Access by Design* can improve the current process.
- IPC staff will be setting up information tables at major malls in three Ontario cities during *Right to Know Week* (the Oshawa Centre, Sept. 29; Limeridge Mall in Hamilton, Sept. 30, and the Yonge-Eglinton Centre in Toronto on Oct. 1 – in each case, from noon to 4 p.m.). IPC publications will be distributed and IPC staff will answer questions about freedom of information and *Access by Design*.



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- Other activities promoting *Right to Know Week* include presentations by the IPC's communications co-ordinator, Bob Spence, to media students on how reporters can use FOI as an investigative tool.

Among the special events leading up to *Right to Know Week*, Assistant Commissioner Beamish will be participating on a panel at the Canadian Bar Association's *Privacy and Access Rights in the Age of Technology: The State of Canadians' Information Rights in 2010 and Beyond*, a conference being held September 19 and 20, 2010, in Ottawa. His panel will be discussing: *Liberating Information, Shifting from Reactive Disclosure to Open Government*. The access panel moderator is Allison Knight, legal counsel at the IPC (http://www.cba.org/pd/details.aspx?id=NA_PRV10).

The Information and Privacy Commissioner is appointed by and reports to the Ontario Legislative Assembly, and is independent of the government of the day. The Commissioner's mandate includes overseeing the access and privacy provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, as well as the *Personal Health Information Protection Act*, which applies to both public and private sector health information custodians, in addition to educating the public about access and privacy issues.

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