

Newspapers Canada releases 9th annual National Freedom of Information Audit

Newspapers Canada releases 9th annual National Freedom of Information Audit Toronto, ON (October 16, 2015). The 2015 audit reviews the performance of Canadian governments and various public institutions with respect to their access to information regimes. As such, it provides the public with the opportunity to see the degree to which our governments are in compliance with their own FOI legislation, as well as facilitating comparisons among jurisdictions.

“The audit represents an important tool for asserting the public’s right to access government information,” says John Hinds, CEO of Newspapers Canada. “The results of this audit show that we've still got a long way to go before we really have a culture of openness and accountability around government data.”

This year’s Newspapers Canada FOI audit tells the story not only of Newfoundland and Labrador’s success and Ottawa’s failure, but also of foot-dragging by police forces, and widespread resistance at all levels of government to releasing computer data in formats useful in the digital age.

As in previous years, the 2015 FOI audit was done in collaboration with Fred Vallance-Jones, associate professor of journalism at the University of King's College, and his team. To obtain the data for the audit, a team of researchers requested the same information from the federal and provincial government, as well as a selection of municipalities across the country.

“I've been doing this study since 2008 and I keep hoping for the day when everyone gets an A and I can call it a day,” says Vallance-Jones. “Sadly, some are getting worse, and particularly troublesome is the worsening performance by the federal government.” The 2015 FOI Audit report is now available online at www.newspaperscanada.ca/FOI.

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About Newspapers Canada

Newspapers Canada contributes to the ongoing evolution of the newspaper industry by raising awareness and promoting the benefits of newspapers to advertisers, media planners, and creative agencies. The organization is a joint initiative of the Canadian Newspaper Association (CNA) and the Canadian Community Newspapers Association (CCNA). Combined, CNA and CCNA represent over 875 daily, weekly and community newspapers in every province and territory in Canada.

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