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## **PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES – NEW REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The purpose of this circular is to advise councils of the new reporting requirements under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994* (the Act). The Act sets out a comprehensive framework for protecting public officials who disclose wrongdoing in accordance with the Act.

New reporting obligations under the Act commence on 1 January 2012.

Councils will be required to prepare an annual report on their obligations under the Act within four months after the end of a reporting year.

Councils will also be required to provide the NSW Ombudsman with statistical information regarding their compliance with their obligations under the Act on a six monthly basis.

The report is to be provided to the NSW Ombudsman within 30 days after the end of the relevant six month period or by such later time as the Ombudsman may approve.

The information to be provided in the annual and six monthly reports is outlined in the Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011. Councils will need to collect this information from 1 January 2012. A copy of the regulation is provided with this circular.

The reports will provide useful data to analyse whether the Act is operating effectively to protect public officials who disclose wrongdoing and whether public authorities are complying with the Act.

General Managers should nominate officers who will be responsible for preparing the annual and six monthly reports and ensure that the required information is collected from 1 January 2012.

Should General Managers have any questions or require assistance with the reporting requirements, they should contact the Public Interest Disclosures Unit at the NSW Ombudsman via email to [pid@ombo.nsw.gov.au](mailto:pid@ombo.nsw.gov.au).

General Managers should ensure this circular is brought to the attention of all councillors and relevant staff.

**Ross Woodward**  
**Chief Executive, Local Government**  
**A Division of the Department of Premier and Cabinet**