

INTERNET PRIVACY CODE OF PRACTICE

Policy Name:	INTERNET PRIVACY CODE OF PRACTICE
File Number:	2 3 1 20
Committee	CEO
<u>Date Introduced / Updated:</u>	September 2010
Policy Review Date:	2012
Objective:	To ensure that statutory provisions relating to the protection of private information sourced through access to Hunter Councils websites.

POLICY AND OBJECTIVES STATEMENT

The business units of Hunter Councils Inc and Hunter Councils Ltd are subject to the provisions of the NSW Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and the Privacy Act 1998.

Hunter Councils *Internet Privacy Code of Practice* has been developed in accordance with section 31 of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act and indicates how Hunter Councils will comply with the Information Protection Principles (IPPs) in the Act and any modifications to the IPPs as they apply to email and websites managed by Hunter Councils.

The websites addressed by this Code of Practice include, but may not be limited to:

- Hunter Councils Inc - www.huntercouncils.com.au
- Local Government Training Institute - www.lgti.com.au
- Hunter Councils Regional Procurement – www.regionalprocurement.com.au
- Hunter Councils Environment Division – www.huntercouncils.com.au/environment
- Screen Hunter Central Coast – www.screenhuntercentralcoast.com.au
- Hunter Records Storage – www.hunterrecordsstorage.com.au

SCOPE

This Code of Practice relates to all websites managed by Hunter Councils.

A link to its provisions will be publicly available on www.huntercouncils.com.au. A link will also be progressively included on all other Hunter Councils websites.

PROVISIONS RELATING TO HUNTER COUNCILS WEBSITES

INTERNET PRIVACY CODE OF PRACTICE

1. Personal Information from Web visits that is automatically collected

Hunter Councils may make a record of your visit and log any of the following automatically collected information for statistical and business purposes:

- the user's server address
- the user's domain name and IP address
- the date and time of the visit
- the pages accessed
- documents downloaded
- the previous site visited, and
- the type of browser used.

2. Other Personal Information that may be collected

If you send a message to one of our websites, Hunter Councils may record your email address or other information supplied.

Hunter Councils will gather more extensive information from your visit than stated in (1) above as a result of the following circumstances:

- Unauthorised attempts to access files which are not published Hunter Councils pages
- Unauthorised tampering or interference with files published on Hunter Councils sites
- Unauthorised attempts to index the contents of Hunter Councils sites by other web sites
- Attempts to intercept messages of other Hunter Councils users
- Communications which are defamatory, abusive, vilify individuals or groups or which give rise to suspicion that an offence is being committed
- Attempts to otherwise compromise the security of the web server, breach the laws of the State of NSW or Commonwealth of Australia, or interfere with the enjoyment of Hunter Councils websites by other users.

3. Other Personal Information that may be collected

a) Security Information

Hunter Councils sites have security measures in place to protect against loss, misuse and alteration of the information contained on these sites.

A login name and password are required to visit some secure areas and, before personal information is published on the site, visitors are required to enter their password as well. This is to ensure that the information is displayed only to the intended person. You should ensure that your password is kept securely and cannot be discovered by anyone else.

b) Cookies

Hunter Councils websites do not use cookies to collect personal information.

It is possible to disable the accepting of cookies by your web browser, however by doing so may restrict your ability to access some web pages.

c) Registration Forms

If personal information is collected via a website this will be done by a sufficiently secure means. Individuals will be provided with alternative means of providing personal information to Hunter Councils other than via the website.

For certain applications, our registration forms require clientele to give contact information (like name and email address)

d) External Links

Some Hunter Councils sites contain links to other sites. When you link to another site we recommend you read the privacy statement of that site. Hunter Councils is not responsible for the privacy practices or the content of such websites and any use of products and services on these sites are solely at your own risk.

4. Use of personal information

Personal information you supply on-line or via registration forms may be used to Hunter Councils staff in conducting the business of Hunter Councils. Such uses include matters related to administration, provision of services and the dissemination of information to staff and customers.

To improve the services provided, Hunter Councils may extract and publish aggregated information about usage patterns from these records. For example, our usage reports may examine trends based on the following information – your server address, your top level domain name (for example .com, .gov, .au etc), the date and time you visit the site, the pages accessed and documents downloaded, the previous site visited, the type of browser used and operating system.

5. Disclosure of personal information

All Hunter Councils staff has a legal duty to protect the privacy of your personal information and ensure it is used only for the purpose to which you have agreed.

Hunter Councils will not disclose any personal information concerning you, including your email address, to parties outside Hunter Councils except in accordance with the NSW Privacy and Personal information Protection Act or as required by Commonwealth or State agencies in accordance with legislative requirements.

Hunter Councils reserves the right to make disclosures to relevant authorities where the use of any of its websites raises a suspicion that an offence is being, or has been, committed. In the unlikely event of an investigation, Hunter Councils will provide access to data to any law enforcement agency that may exercise a warrant to inspect our logs.

6. Public Forums

Some Hunter Councils sites may have chat rooms, forums, message boards, and/or news groups available to its users. Please remember that any information that is disclosed in these areas becomes public information and you should exercise caution when deciding to disclose your personal information.

7. Data Quality/Access

Hunter Councils will always try to maintain accurate, complete and up-to-date information regarding staff, visitors and customers. The necessary procedures are in place to facilitate amendments and verification of personal information. If you wish to access personal information about yourself, or if you think that your personal information needs changing, please contact Hunter Councils.

8. Online Transactions

In some cases, Hunter Councils websites permit users to submit information or conduct transactions for official Government business or legal purposes.

As there may be specific legal provisions relating to the use of information submitted for the purpose of conducting an official transaction with Hunter Councils or one of its units, the scope of the user's privacy in those cases will be explained on the transaction page.

9. Updating Policy

Due to the developing nature of privacy principles for online communication, this policy may be modified or expanded in light of new developments or issues that may arise from time to time.