

Government announces preferred candidate for Information Commissioner

News story

John Edwards is the Government's preferred candidate for Information Commissioner, the Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden announced today.



John Edwards is currently New Zealand's Privacy Commissioner and will bring with him a wealth of data regulatory experience, as Privacy Commissioner but also from 20 years of practicing law and specialising in information law.

Mr Edwards will now appear before MPs on the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee for pre-appointment scrutiny on 9th September 2021.

Under the Data Protection Act, the Information Commissioner is appointed by Her Majesty by Letters Patent on the basis of fair and open competition and on the recommendation from ministers (the Secretary of State for Digital Culture, Media and Sport, through the Prime Minister).

Ministers were assisted in their decision-making by an Advisory Assessment Panel which included a departmental official and a senior independent panel member approved by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Notes to editors

- John Edwards was appointed to the independent statutory position of New Zealand's Privacy Commissioner in February 2014.
- He is currently serving his second five-year term, responsible for the implementation of New Zealand's newly passed Privacy Act 2020.
- His Office provides independent comment, advice and compliance action on significant personal information policies and issues.
- He chaired the Global Privacy Assembly (then known as the International Conference of Data Protection and Privacy Commissioners) from 2014-17, and has chaired and hosted a number of international conferences.
- Prior to his appointment, John practiced law in Wellington, New Zealand, for more than 20 years specialising in information law, representing a

wide range of public and private sector clients.

- He has held a number of independent statutory appointments, including as watchdog for those in compulsory mental health care, and intellectual disability services.
- This appointment process was run in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Published 26 August 2021