



Office of the Information  
& Privacy Commissioner  
Nova Scotia

# Understanding Your Right to Know

## WHY IS CANADA 59<sup>TH</sup> IN THE WORLD?

### Join us for a Discussion on 28 September, International Right to Know Day, To Talk About How to Promote Transparent Government

The right to access information held by public bodies, known as the right to information, is internationally recognised as a human right and protected under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The right provides a range of benefits, including promoting democratic participation, combating corruption and helping to foster effective, accountable and responsive government. Although Canada was among the early adopters of right to information legislation, our laws are now seriously outdated. An assessment of national laws by the Centre for Law and Democracy puts the federal *Access to Information Act* at 59<sup>th</sup> position in the world. Most provinces and territories fare little better; Nova Scotia ranks 50<sup>th</sup>.

Against this gloomy backdrop, a ray of light has emerged. Newfoundland and Labrador has undertaken the most ambitious reform programme in recent memory and a new law adopted earlier this year has turned the province into a global leader. This event, held on International Right to Know Day, will discuss the right to information in a Canadian context, and consider how to strengthen and promote transparent government across the country.

#### **Moderator:**

Catherine Tully, Information and Privacy Commissioner, Nova Scotia

#### **Panellists:**

Steve Kent, Deputy Premier, Newfoundland and Labrador

Toby Mendel, Executive Director, Centre for Law and Democracy

Maria Lasheras, Chief Information Access and Privacy Officer, Nova Scotia

Sean Murray, Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, Newfoundland and Labrador

**Halifax City Hall: 28 September 2015, 6 pm-8 pm**