

**State
Compliance
to the Mandatory
Proactive Disclosure
Requirements of the
Right to Information Act
[Law Number 1/2014]
of the Maldives**

25 August 2022

**ASSOCIATION FOR
DEMOCRACY
IN THE MALDIVES**





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Acronyms used

ACC	-	Anti-Corruption Commission
ADM	-	Association for Democracy in the Maldives
AGO	-	Attorney General's Office
CBO	-	Community Based Organisation
CSC	-	Civil Service Commission
CTO	-	Chief Technology Officer
DDAP	-	Digital Development Action Plan
DJA	-	Department of Judicial Administration
ICOM	-	Information Commissioner's Office of the Maldives
MoECCT	-	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology
MoCST	-	Ministry of Communication, Science and Technology
MTCC	-	Maldives Transport and Contracting Company
MWSC	-	Male' Water and Sewerage Company
NA	-	National Archives of Maldives
NRR	-	National Resilience and Recovery Plan
NDC	-	National Data Centre
NDI	-	National Democratic Institute
PO	-	President's Office
RTI	-	Right to Information
SAP	-	Strategic Action Plan

Abstract

The RTI-37 project is a study of the state compliance to Section 37 of the Right to Information Act (law number 1/2014) of the Republic of Maldives. Section 37 outlines twelve areas of proactive disclosure by the State. A sample of 73 state institutes were tested for compliance on proactive disclosure through Right To Information (RTI) submissions. The assessment will serve as a tool for strengthening access to information in the island nation which has been experiencing a challenging and tumultuous political journey since its adoption of a democratic constitution in August 2008.

Key words: information, compliance, score, RTI, proactive, disclosure

The assessment of state compliance to Section 37 of the Right to Information Act is part of a project to promote the right of access to information in the Maldives. The Section 37 of the law is assessed particularly due to its primary requirement for state institutes to proactively disclose specific types of information. ADM believes that the compliance rate to a mandatory proactive disclosure will demonstrate the general attitude of the state towards disclosure of information to the public.

The assessment is able to prove its hypotheses that state institutes do not comply with the Section 37 of the RTI Act, and that inadequate awareness of the law contributes towards non-compliance.

The RTI-37 Project is conducted by the Association for Democracy in the Maldives [ADM] in partnership with Accountability Maldives. [ADM](#)¹ is a non-governmental organisation focusing on fundamental rights in the Maldives and [Accountability](#)

1 <https://democracymaldives.org/>

[Maldives](#)² is a citizen-led movement to promote the right to information in the Maldives.

2 <https://zinmaadhaaru.com/>

Democracy in the Maldives

Following thirty years of autocratic government by Maumoon Abdul Gayyoom, the Maldives ratified its democratic constitution in August 2008, separating the executive, legislative and judicial branches of governance for the first time. The first democratic government was elected in November 2008, in which Mohamed Nasheed had a landslide win - only to be ousted through a joint mutiny by the police and the military in February 2012. The opposition came into power in 2013 after a highly questionable election after six attempts at polling, a Supreme Court intervention which annulled the results of the first round and eventually announcing the half brother of the previous autocratic leader as the winner. Years of autocracy and nepotism created a strong culture of corruption within the country, which continues today.

A result of the regression to authoritarianism in 2012 is Maldives not having progressed into a mature democracy. Despite fourteen years to a democratic constitution, the Maldives remain an infant democracy in the eyes of the world. Being an infant democracy, of course, has its perks. International scrutiny of the Maldives during every 'baby steps of democracy' comes with leniency, allowing for 'room for improvement'. This leniency, however, can be dangerous when a 'democratic' government begins to regress on aspects of democracy in order to maintain power. As a principle, the Maldives holds a shining record with multiple sign-ons to international treaties and domestication of those treaties. The trouble begins at the point of implementation of domestic laws - often designed to repress rights rather than regulate it. The journey of the right of access to information in the Maldives demonstrates a systemic rejection of transparency throughout the Maldives.

Access to information in the Maldives

[The Global Right to Information \(RTI\) Rating](#)³ developed by the Centre for Law and Democracy⁴ currently ranks the Right to Information Act of the Maldives as the 22nd strongest RTI law in the world. Owing to the broad scope of the Act, as well as a strong system of appeals, sanctions and protections, the law itself is poised to guarantee the freedom to acquire and impart knowledge, information and learning enshrined in Article 29 of the [Constitution of Maldives](#)⁵. It took an additional six years of advocacy from the adoption of the Constitution for the Right to Information Act (2014) to be ratified.

The Right to Information Act of the Maldives, however, is far from perfect. The mechanisms for exceptions in the law contain several instances of vague grounds that can be used by institutes to maintain the culture of secrecy that exists within the state and refuse to disclose information. Furthermore, the law itself does not explicitly state jurisdiction over state-owned or state-shared companies, while the Right to Information Regulation (Regulation number 5/2016) includes state companies in the definition of ‘State Institutes’ which fall within the purview of the law. The High Court of Maldives [ruled against an appeal made by the Maldives Transport and Contracting Company \(MTCC\)](#)⁶ in 2021 where MTCC contested that the inclusion of state companies in the definition of ‘State Institutes’ in the regulation overreaches the definition of the same in the law, thereby deeming it unconstitutional. The ruling of the High Court is now at the Supreme Court following appeals by the national transport company.

In the same year, the Male’ Water and Sewerage Company (MWSC) also submitted

3 <https://www.rti-rating.org/country-data/>

4 <https://www.law-democracy.org/>

5 <https://presidency.gov.mv/Pages/Index/15>

6 http://www.highcourt.gov.mv/dhi/mediamanager/2020-dm-01_-_mtcc_vs._ag_&icom..pdf

a case to the High Court, in an attempt to appeal the decision of the Information Commissioner as prescribed in Section 64 of the RTI Act. However, the High Court came out with the [surprising ruling](#)⁷ that the court did not have the jurisdiction to pass judgement over the decisions of the Information Commissioner, leaving the process of appealing the decisions of the Information Commissioner in a legal void for over ten months, until the Supreme Court [overturned the verdict](#) in February of 2022⁸.

7 [http://www.highcourt.gov.mv/dhi/mediamanager/mwsc_pvt_ltd_v_office_of_the_information_commissioner_\(2020\)_149.pdf](http://www.highcourt.gov.mv/dhi/mediamanager/mwsc_pvt_ltd_v_office_of_the_information_commissioner_(2020)_149.pdf)

8 <https://supremecourt.mv/storage/mv/sc-ninmunthah/hukum/2021-sc-a-2729-ag-vs-ico-mwsc.pdf>

Project objectives

The overall objectives of the project revolve around the adherence to specific mandatory requirements by state institutions as an indicator to the general understanding of obligations under the Right to Information Act. These objectives are:

- a) Identification of challenges to access information in the Maldives;
- b) Testing the level of compliance of state institutions to Section 37 of the Right to Information Act which prescribes proactive disclosure by the state;
- c) Monitor the level of adherence by state institutions to the Right to Information Act;
- d) Monitor the level of implementation of government pledges in the area of access to information listed in the National Strategic Action Plan.

Access to information is not a greatly explored area of fundamental rights in the Maldives at present.

The hypotheses of the assessment are that after eight years of enforcement of the Right to Information Act, the majority of state institutions and authorities did not comply with Section 37 on proactive disclosure by the state, which would be an

indication of either unwillingness to share information or a lack of awareness of their obligations under the law.

If tested positive, the first indicator of the hypothesis would further suggest an unwillingness to disclose other information that the public is entitled to have under the same law. If the second indicator of this hypothesis tested positive it would then suggest an incapacity of the state to provide information that the public is entitled to.

If either or both indicators tested negative against the hypothesis it would suggest a high rate of compliance to the RTI Act by the state.

Previous studies

[A study done by Transparency Maldives in 2017⁹](#) found that state institutes monitored had an average compliance rate of 39.7% when tested on the legal mandate to proactive disclosure. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICOM) conducted similar assessments in [2017¹⁰](#) and [2018¹¹](#) and found five institutes scoring over 75% compliance in 2017 and eight institutes the following year. However, not a single institute was found to have been fully compliant, with the highest being 92.31% scored by the Anti-Corruption Commission in 2018. ICOM has since discontinued the assessment and the proactive disclosure obligations by state institutes have remained unchecked.

9 <https://transparency.mv/publications/implementing-the-proactive-disclosure-duties-assessment-on-the-compliance-of-proactive-disclosure-obligations-under-the-right-to-information-act/>

10 <https://icom.mv/uploads/Aharee%20Report%202017.pdf>

11 <https://icom.mv/uploads/Aharee%20Report%202018.pdf>

Methodology

Section 37 of the Right to Information Act (law number 1/2014) of the Republic of Maldives states *“for the purpose of public interest, state institutes shall publish the following information at least annually, in an easily accessible manner”*. The Section outlines twelve areas of information mandated to be proactively disclosed, listed under thirteen subsections.

The test used a sample of 73 state institutes to assess the level of compliance to the Section 37 of the Right to Information Act of the Maldives specifically mandating proactive disclosure. In addition to a literature review, quantitative data was collected through submission of right to information requests to all 73 institutions monitored. Qualitative data was collected through individual consultations with Information Officers and arguments presented at ICOM hearings.

Respondents of this study comprise of state institutes which fall under the jurisdiction of the Right to Information Act. Respondents include a selection of institutes across the sectors including the executive, legislative, the judiciary, independent constitutional institutions, independent statutory institutions and local government which include island, atoll and city councils [Annex 1]. As part of the desk research, websites and publications of all 73 respondents were assessed for whether the information prescribed under the thirteen subsections of the Section 37 are made available publicly. Where information is available, an assessment of the level of compliance to the requirements of the law was made. The assessed institutes received a score [Figure 1.1] for the level of compliance for each area of information mandated under Section 37 and this was used to determine the percentage of disclosure.

Level of Compliance	Score
Full compliance	1
Partial compliance	0.5
No compliance	0

Figure 1.1: RTI Section 37 Compliance Review Scoring.

Section 7 of the Right to Information Act states that where a request for information is made under the Act, action on the request must be taken as promptly as possible and that access to information must be provided as soon as may be practicable. The Act specifies that the period for action by the Information Officer at this stage shall not exceed 21 days, while requests that require significant time, resources or extensive research can have the period extended by an additional 14 days. An exception is applicable where, if a request for information is made to save the life and liberty of a person, such information must be provided within 48 hours.

The redress mechanisms outlined in the Right to Information Act specify similar stringent deadlines. Where a decision of the Information Officer is deemed unsatisfactory, the matter can be submitted to the Review Committee [mandated to every state institution by the law] at the institute, which must complete the review within 30 days. The review procedure outlined in Section 41 of the RTI Act permits review committees an additional 15 days in cases where the review is not completed within this period due to exceptional circumstances. Section 59 of the law states that appeals to the Information Commissioner are required to be completed within 30 days, with the Commissioner having the power to add an additional 15 days to the process.

All 73 respondents of the study received three information requests under the Right to Information Act, each integrating the twelve areas of mandatory proactive disclosure

outlined in the law. The study followed redress procedures provided by the law for the review of unsatisfactory disclosure through the individual Review Committees at respondent institutes and the challenge of the lack of or unsatisfactory information provided, at the ICOM. This study did not pursue cases beyond the ICOM to the courts.

Respondents were provided with a checklist of information between the first and the second information requests, containing specific legal responsibilities of state institutes under the Section 37 of the RTI Act and information on how compliance can be achieved. The responses received from respondents were analysed to assess the reasons why some institutes did not comply with the Right to Information Act, thereby testing our hypothesis that state institutes lacked awareness of their duties under the Right to Information Act.

A separate set of information requests were made at six state institutes in connection with the national [Strategic Action Plan \(SAP\)](#) in which political pledges to strengthen access to information through government ministries are included.

Findings

Proactive Disclosure Obligations

The websites and publications of the selected institutes were assessed twice over the course of the project: an initial review at the beginning of the project in November 2021, and a final review at the end in June 2022. The initial review showed that at least four out of the twelve areas of information required to be proactively disclosed had a compliance rate of 10% or lower, with the area regarding details of how documents are managed being completely left out by all institutes. The average compliance rate in November 2021 was found to be 30.9% among the institutes monitored.

In order to guide institutes to comply with their proactive disclosure obligations, ADM sent comprehensive reviews of each institution with details on missing information [from their legal responsibility to disclose] to the Information Officers at every institute. Additionally, the three sets of RTI requests submitted by the project asked for the missing information, thereby providing institutes with another opportunity to disclose the information on their websites or publications. An average increase of 16.2% disclosure rate was observed across the institutions during the final review as a direct result of the project methodology, and the average compliance rate in June 2022 was found to be 47.1%.

By the end of the project, institutes with the highest rates of disclosure all had a page or document on their website dedicated to publishing the information required under Section 37, while most of the institutes that scored the lowest did not have a functional website [Figure 2.1].

Institute	Final Review	Website status
Election Commission	100%	Dedicated Section 37 page on website
Tax Appeal Tribunal	100%	Dedicated Section 37 page on website
Information Commissioner's Office	100%	Dedicated Section 37 page on website
Pension Administration Office	100%	Dedicated Section 37 page on website
Department of Judicial Administration	95.8%	Dedicated Section 37 document on website
Maldives Media Council	91.7%	Dedicated Section 37 page on website
Ministry of Home Affairs	0.00%	Functional website with limited information
Kaafu Atoll Council	0.00%	Does not have a functional website
K. Maafushi Island Council	0.00%	Does not have a functional website
Dh. Kudahuvadhoon Island Council	0.00%	Does not have a functional website
Dhaalu Atoll Council	0.00%	Does not have a functional website

Figure 2.1: RTI Section 37 Compliance Review: Highest and Lowest Scoring Institutes

The information required to be disclosed under Section 37, and the average disclosure rate by all of the assessed institutes are summarised in Figure 2.2 along with compliance rates:

Information Required to be Proactively Disclosed Under Section 37 of the RTI Act	Initial Review - Average Score	Final Review - Average Score	Increase
1. Details of the functions, responsibilities, structure and duties of the State Institute	67.8%	77.4%	9.6%
2. Details of direct services provided or being provided to the public	68.5%	83.6%	15.1%
3. The rules, regulations, policies, principles and norms used by the State Institute for discharging its responsibilities	58.2%	63.0%	4.8%
4. The responsibilities and duties of high ranking officials of the State Institute, their powers and scope of discretion, and procedure followed in decision making within that scope	36.3%	56.2%	19.9%
5. The budget allocated to the State Institute, indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and details of disbursements made	27.4%	45.2%	17.8%
6. The individual remuneration and benefits received by all the employees of the State Institute	24.7%	44.5%	19.9%
7. Information held or maintained by the State Institute, and the nature of its general publications, together with information on the procedure to follow to request for information	39.0%	44.5%	5.5%
8. Easily comprehensible details of how documents are managed	0.0%	15.1%	15.1%
9. Details of the mechanism of lodging a complaint at the State Institute in connection to a matter undertaken by that office, and details of the number of complaints received thus far	10.3%	30.1%	19.9%
10. The manner in which suggestions and criticisms on decision-making can be exercised by the public and influenced in relation to the policies of those functions carried out by the State Institute	2.7%	19.2%	16.4%
11. The stages and procedure followed in the decision making process of the State Institute, and the mechanisms for supervision and accountability	6.2%	26.0%	19.9%
12. Details of decisions taken that would affect the public and the reasons for those decisions, their implications and details of their background	30.1%	60.3%	30.1%

Figure 2.2: Percentage of institutes that proactively published information required under RTI Section 37 during the initial review in November 2021 and final review in June 2022.

Independent institutions such as the Anti-Corruption Commission, Capital Market Development Authority and the Maldives Inland Revenue Authority were found to have the highest average rate of disclosure during the initial review, while a significant improvement was noticed in the proactive disclosure of the required information by the People’s Majlis as well. The average disclosure rate by the different types of institutes are summarised in Figure 2.3:

Institute Type	Initial Review - Average Score	Final Review - Average Score	Increase
Legislative	45.8%	83.3%	37.5%
Executive	21.9%	40.4%	18.4%
Judiciary	26.0%	39.8%	13.8%
Independent Institutions	46.8%	68.0%	21.2%
Atoll Councils	25.0%	29.2%	4.2%
City Councils	30.2%	44.8%	14.6%
Island Councils	15.8%	20.0%	4.2%

Figure 2.3: Percentage of the types of institutes that proactively published information required under RTI Section 37 during the initial review in November 2021 and final review in June 2022

Right to Information Requests

From the three batches of information requests that were submitted to each of the 73 institutions, significant improvements in responses were observed with each subsequent request. This included improvements in the provision of timely receipts, improvements in the provision of responses prior to the deadline, as well as reductions in the redress mechanisms required. Figure 2.4 provides a summarised analysis of each batch of RTI requests submitted.

	RTI Batch 1 - Nov 2021	RTI Batch 2 - Feb 2022	RTI Batch 3 - Apr 2022	OVERALL
Requests acknowledged with written receipt	32 (43.8%)	59 (80.2%)	58 (79.5%)	149 (68.0%)
Requests extended	2 (2.74%)	10 (13.7%)	17 (23.3%)	29 (13.24%)
Average no. of days for receipt	15	8	4	8
Cases submitted to ICOM due to no response	29 (39.7%)	7 (9.59%)	4 (5.48%)	40 (18.26%)
Responses received prior to deadline	35 (48.0%)	43 (58.9%)	51 (69.9%)	129 (58.9%)
Average no. of days for response	30	24	28	27
Review Committee submissions required	7 (9.60%)	6 (8.20%)	4 (5.50%)	17 (7.76%)
Review decisions received prior to deadline	3 (42.9%)	4 (66.7%)	3 (75.0%)	10 (58.8%)
Average no. of days for review	29	35	31	32
ICOM submissions required	33 (45.2%)	8 (11.0%)	6 (8.2%)	47 (21.5%)
ICOM cases concluded prior to deadline	32 (97.0%)	8 (100%)	6 (100%)	46 (97.9%)
Average no. of days for ICOM decision	16	20	25	18
Average no. of days to receive information	35	29	31	32

Figure 2.4: Details of how institutes responded to formal requests for information

The average duration required for an initial response from institutes (27 days) was found to be longer than the 21 days duration allowed in Section 7 of the RTI Act. Similarly, the average duration required for completion of reviews by the review committees (32 days) was also longer than the 30 days allowed in Section 41. As a result, the duration required to receive the requested information extended over a month on average (32 days).

Notably, only one of the 47 cases that were submitted to ICOM was not concluded in time, which was due to multiple postponements by the institute against which the appeal was submitted. As a result, the average duration that was required for ICOM decisions (18 days) was well below the 30 day deadline specified in Section 59 of the RTI Act.

Government Strategic Action Plan – Access to Information

[The Government’s Strategic Action Plan¹²](https://presidency.gov.mv/SAP/) (SAP) 2019 - 2023 provides a detailed development agenda across five priority areas for the administration headed by President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih. Each priority area includes several targets, strategies, and actions, in addition to a timeline and a list of implementing agencies.

Priority area 5: Good Governance lists a host of pledges directly related to increased transparency and access to information. The first of these actions monitored under the project were listed in **Subsection 5.4: Accountable State** which outlined policies to improve parliamentary oversight and law-making. Details of the action monitored under this subsection are shown in Figure 2.5.

12 <https://presidency.gov.mv/SAP/>

Action	Timeline	Lead Implementing Agency	Other Implementing Agencies
1.2a: Adopt Open Data policy for all parliamentary information in order to increase transparency of parliamentary processes and procedure (including plenary deliberations and committee meetings) to enable greater access and participation by the public and media.	2020 - 2022	People’s Majlis	AGO, PO, NDC,ICOM

Figure 2.5: Details of the first action monitored under the project listed in the government SAP

A RTI request was submitted to the People’s Majlis, requesting for details on the progress made in the implementation of this action. In response, the People’s Majlis listed four key actions that have been completed to fulfil the obligations of this strategic action:

1. Live feed of parliamentary sittings broadcast across TV channels and live-streamed through the Majlis youtube channel;
2. Audio of open committee meetings are live-streamed through the Majlis youtube channel;
3. Hansards of parliamentary sittings and committee meetings are available from the Majlis website;
4. Members of the public and media are free to attend all public committee meetings.

Subsection 5.5: Independent Institutions and Public Service Reform seeks to implement an effective accountability framework for independent institutions. Actions in this subsection pertain to legislative changes, obligatory submissions as well as civil service reform, through increased human resource capacity building, application of technology and management tools. Several actions under the policy to create a modern public administration system were monitored under this subsection and are shown in Figure 2.6.

Action	Timeline	Lead Implementing Agency	Other Implementing Agencies
2.2d: Develop centralised and integrated information management systems to make information readily available	2020 - 2023	National Data Centre	ICOM, PO, CSC, DJA, MoCST, CTO, Independent Institutions
2.2e: Establish effective knowledge management systems and mechanism in state institutions including integrated document and records management systems	2020 - 2023	National Data Centre	ICOM, PO, CSC, DJA, NA, CTO, Independent Institutions

Figure 2.6: Details of the second and third actions monitored under the project listed in the government SAP

The National Data Center - the lead implementing agency for these actions has not yet been established. Therefore RTI requests for progress in the implementation of these actions were submitted to several institutions listed as “other” implementing agencies. The Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology (MoECCT), which was formed in May 2021 after the [Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology \(MoCST\) was dissolved and their functions transferred](#)¹³, was identified by several institutes as the de-facto lead implementing agency for the actions. In their response to the RTI request, the ministry identified itself as the party responsible for delivering the Digital Development Action Plan (DDAP) constituting priorities in the National Resilience and Recovery Plan (NRR) which superseded the SAP. While the DDAP has not been made available to the public, the ministry sent information about several ongoing projects under the SAP policy to create a modern public administration system [Figure 2.7]:

13 <https://presidency.gov.mv/Press/Article/24625>

Project	Details	Progress
GOV.MV	Develop an easily navigable Service Catalogue repository that encompasses all services offered by government institutions.	Recruitment of engineers required for the project is in progress.
GEMS	Develop an enhanced version of the Government E-letter Management System (GEMS) by incorporating the current Civil Service workflow and the lessons learnt since the rollout of the original GEMS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A team has been recruited for the project. • Project plan and deliverables have been finalised. • A prototype of the system has been developed and is being discussed with stakeholders for feedback. • A detailed system requirement document is being prepared.
Gov Tech Stack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a technology stack of common building blocks that can facilitate to expedite the provision of new digital services. • Implement a convenient mechanism to allow access to authorised datasets in government institutes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project staff has been recruited who is working on designing the Stack and harmonising the authoritative datasets. • Recruitment of Software Engineers required for the project is in progress.

Figure 2.7: Details of ongoing projects to create a modern public administration system provided by the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology

ICOM was listed as the lead implementing agency for one action in the SAP, and a request was submitted to the office for progress on the implementation of this action [Figure 2.8]:

Action	Timeline	Lead Implementing Agency	Other Implementing Agencies
2.2f: Develop information classification and handling standards	2020 - 2023	Information Commissioner's Office	PO, NDC, CSC, DJA, NA, CTO, Independent Institutions

Figure 2.8: Details of the fourth action monitored under the project listed in the government SAP

ICOM stated that a first draft of the information classification and handling standards had been formulated, and was in the process of gathering feedback from other implementing agencies and stakeholders. The office further stated that they were on track to complete the action by 2023 as planned.

The final action monitored in the SAP was directly related to the Right to Information regime in the Maldives [Figure 2.9].

Action	Timeline	Lead Implementing Agency	Other Implementing Agencies
2.2g: Review the Right to Information Act to close the gaps that institutions use for non-disclosure or delay in sharing of information	2019 - 2021	Attorney General's Office	PO, NDC, CSC, DJA, NA, CTO, Independent Institutions

Figure 2.9: Details of the fifth action monitored under the project listed in the government SAP

Unlike all the other actions that were monitored under the SAP, this action was listed to have been concluded by the time the project monitoring activities were carried out. The People's Majlis, in their response, had noted that a new draft of the RTI Act had not been submitted to parliament and the Attorney General's Office (AGO) confirmed that the action had not been completed, stating that they planned to complete the review by the end of 2022.

It is observed that no action included in the SAP under transparency and access to information has been completed within the first four years of the current administration's term, but rather these actions are planned for the election year itself, according to the schedule of implementation seen on the action plan.

Observation of key trends

Awareness of RTI Obligations and Provisions

Section 6 of the RTI Act requires state institutes to provide a receipt acknowledging that a request has been submitted. ADM noted that several institutes among the sample tested in this assessment did not acknowledge the request in written form, but rather used a more informal approach of a verbal acknowledgement over the phone. Some institutes needed a reminder to acknowledge the request at all.

In response to the first set of [out of three] information requests to the 73 institutes in November 2021, 32 institutes sent in written receipts as prescribed by the Act. Following provision of guidance material outlining state obligations in relation to RTI requests after the first batch of requests were made, improvements are noted in responses to subsequent requests.

RTI Request	No. of Institutes	Receipts Received	Average no. of Days For Receipt
Batch 1 - November 2021	73	32	15
Guidance material provided to institutes - February 2022			
Batch 2 - February 2022	73	59	8
Batch 3 - April 2022	73	58	4

Figure 3.1: Change in number of acknowledgements after guidance materials were provided

The RTI Act also provides state institutes with the opportunity to extend the duration of RTI requests by 14 days to comply with requests for information. These extensions allow state institutes to communicate that they are working on complying with the request, which can lead to a decrease in the redress mechanisms required, and subsequently a decrease in the amount of time required to provide the requested information.

RTI Request	No. of Institutes	Requests Extended	Review Committee Submissions Required	ICOM Submissions Required	Average no. of Days For Information
Batch 1 - November 2021	73	2	7	33	35
Guidance material provided to institutes - February 2022					
Batch 2 - February 2022	73	10	6	8	29
Batch 3 - April 2022	73	17	4	6	31

Figure 3.2: Change in RTI provisions utilised and redress mechanisms required after guidance materials were provided

Overwhelmed Information Officers at state institutes

Section 36 of the RTI Act requires the highest ranking official of every state institute to appoint an Information Officer as a focal point for RTI requests. ADM observed that most institutes, instead of appointing a dedicated Information Officer, assigned the duties of the Information Officer to an existing employee, thereby adding a significant amount of work to their tasks. **It must be taken into consideration that in a state that**

does not even comply with mandatory proactive disclosure obligations, institutes will receive a high number of requests for information following the enforcement of an enabling law.

In consultations with ADM, and in the open hearings held by ICOM, Information Officers have raised the issue of overwhelming workload which gets in the way of timely response and compilation of comprehensive information.

Hostility and judicial harassment against the information seeker

Some institutes responded with strong hostility to the requests for information. Reluctance to share information about financial matters, especially those that asked for the remuneration of public officials and employees is noted. Institutes appeared not to understand that civil society organisations and individuals are entitled to seek information under the RTI Act [this is irrelevant of the fact that all information requested under the project fall under the Proactive Disclosure clause of the law], and showed resistance to share the information. This observation was made following some responses directly addressing this issue and also through the hearings at the ICOM.

One respondent made verbal threats against the individual seeking information, merely for submitting the request. Another respondent demanded for the organisation submitting the request to provide the same information to them.

Requests for information specified in Section 37 and required to be proactively disclosed were also submitted to a number of state-owned enterprises as part of an indirect activity of the project. One of the respondents of this activity, following an ICOM decision to provide the requested information, has appealed the decision

of the ICOM at the High Court, however targeted against a consultant of this project, under whose name the request was originally submitted, as the defendant.

Institutes that do not believe that they fall under the jurisdiction of the RTI Act

Section 72 of the RTI Act states that any legal entity that takes on state responsibilities or receives funds allocated from the state budget or assistance from the state budget will fall under the jurisdiction of the RTI Act.

When requested for the information under Section 37, some state-owned and state-shared companies, in addition to the national bank, have refused to provide information under the pretext that those entities do not fall under the jurisdiction of the RTI Act [Figure 3.3]. ADM took these cases up with the ICOM, resulting in orders to provide the requested information. However, a number of these institutes refuse to abide by the decision of the Information Commissioner, despite Section 61 of the RTI Act outlining that decisions reached by the Information Commissioner are legally binding unless overturned by a court of law.

No.	State Company	Action Taken by Company
01	Bank of Maldives Plc Ltd (BML)	Appealed at the High Court against ICOM
02	Island Aviation Services Ltd (IASL)	Refused to abide by ICOM's decision - no appeal
03	Maldives Airports Company Ltd (MACL)	Refused to abide by ICOM's decision - no appeal
04	Fenaka Corporation Ltd	Refused to abide by ICOM's decision - no appeal
05	State Electric Company Ltd (STELCO)	Appealed at the High Court against information seeker
06	Maldives Industrial Fisheries Company Ltd (MIFCO)	Appealed at the High Court against ICOM
07	Maldives Ports Ltd (MPL)	Registration of appeal against the information seeker rejected by court
08	Waste Management Corporation Ltd (WAMCO)	Appealed at High Court against ICOM
09	State Trading Organization Plc (STO)	Registration of appeal against information seeker rejected by court Appealed at High Court against ICOM
10	Regional Airports Company Ltd	Refused to abide by ICOM's decision - no appeal
11	Male' Water & Sewerage Company Pvt. Ltd. (MWSC)	Appeal refusing to provide information overturned by the Supreme Court
12	Maldives Transport and Contracting Company Plc (MTCC)	Appealed at the Supreme Court

Figure 3.3: Actions taken by state companies that do not believe they fall within the purview of the RTI Act

Inadequate awareness of state obligations

It is observed that inadequate familiarity of the law by its duty bearers pose a serious obstruction to access to information in the Maldives. As Information Officers at state institutions are the first point of contact for anyone seeking information that is not publicly available, it is imperative that they understand every detail of the state obligation to provide timely, complete and comprehensible information. The

assessment found that none of these essential criteria were fulfilled from the initial responses.

The misconception among state institutes that individual members of the public are not entitled to information under the law continues to disrupt flow of information. It is possible that after almost eight years of enforcement of the RTI Act, adequate effort has not been put into building the capacity of Information Officers.

Administrative difficulties

At the open hearings held by ICOM, often the first question directed at state institutes pertain to the reason for non-response or the reason for delay in responding to the RTI request in question. In almost half of all ICOM submissions (44.7%), the issues were administrative in nature. These included a host of different kinds of issues, such as administrative staff failing to enter the RTI request into the institute's system, delays in gathering the required information from different departments, missing the request during handover of responsibilities from one staff to another, and failing to meet the quorum required for review committee meetings

Technical difficulties

The first three quarters of this project was implemented during the COVID-19 related State of Public Health Emergency. Similar to the rest of the world, a large part of administration shifted to virtual spaces, resulting in all information requests having been made via Email.

Some institutes could not respond to requests within the legally stipulated time frame simply because the requests ended up in the spam folders of the recipient email accounts. Some faced more complicated issues, such as the requests not

showing in their email servers at all despite the sender's system showing a delivered notice. Others complained of insufficient capacity to receive large numbers of requests - despite the requests from this assessment being a total of three requests, each sent within a three-month interval. Technical difficulties were cited as the reason for delay or non-response in 23% of ICOM hearings, which is also the second most common reason provided at the hearings by recipient institutes.

Corruption and Lack of Transparency

A general observation of an attitude of private ownership of information by institutes is made due to repeated refusal to provide information, notwithstanding precedents set by the ICOM and the courts. This approach of protecting privately owned information from the public, is likely residue of former systems of governance such as the monarchy followed by decades of authoritarian rule.. The idea that everyone is entitled to know detailed information about government structures, expenditure and level of implementation of their projects appears to still be relatively incomprehensible to state authorities. This may indicate a lower level of understanding or acceptance of democratic principles by state institutes which are key in upholding transparency, accountability and rule of law a democratic society.

A second possibility for unwillingness to disclose information is the desire to conceal it. The Maldives has remained consistently below 45/100 on the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index since it began monitoring the Maldives in 2016, [the lowest being 29/100 in 2019](#)¹⁴. The members of the [Anti Corruption Commission resigned](#) in December 2021 following a motion of no confidence against the members raised by the Parliament Standing Committee on Independent Institutions¹⁵. [Grand corruption allegations](#) against a former President and Vice

14 <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2018/index/mdv>

15 <https://psmnews.mv/en/96705>

President remain in the process of investigation for over four years¹⁶. Following an investigation by the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Minister for Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment was charged for corruption in November 2021, however, except for a brief suspension, the minister remains as a member of Solih’s cabinet while the High Court has ruled that charges are valid and the [case](#) pursued at the Criminal Court.¹⁷ The Anti-Corruption and Asset Recovery Commission formed by President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih in November 2018 was [dissolved without justification](#) in March 2022¹⁸. The Commission has not sent any cases for prosecution.

16 <https://maldivesindependent.com/politics/mmprc-scandal-list-of-beneficiaries-grows-to-267-148783>

17 <https://avas.mv/en/115897>

18 <https://presidency.gov.mv/Press/Article/26398>

Progress

While certain issues remain, this assessment has seen significant progress in state compliance to Section 37 as well as to the general application of the RTI Act since the monitoring began. A remarkable change occurred after institutes were provided with guidance material on the areas to improve upon regarding both their proactive disclosure obligations and practices regarding RTI responses. Each institute was provided with a personalised guide that showed their proactive disclosure compliance rate, which areas of disclosure they were lacking in, along with notes on how to improve their compliance score. Additionally, the Information Officers and administrative heads of each institute were presented with observations on their RTI response practices, and guidance on the best practices in responding to RTI requests. As a result, response times improved by over 10% across the board, and information provided by institutes were more comprehensive. The attitudes of institutes generally showed professionalism and less resistance to provide requested information.

Institutes publicly displaying information relevant to the Section 37 of the RTI Act improved from 30.9% at the beginning of the assessment to 47.1% nine months later. Likewise, the 30 institutes which were monitored by Transparency Maldives and averaged a score of 39.7% in 2017 have improved their score to 50% today, demonstrating the effectiveness of civil society engagement on monitoring state compliance to the laws.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this assessment that, at the initial review of the project, **none out of a sample of 73 state institutes fully complied with the Section 37 of the RTI Act**, the hypotheses that state institutes did not comply with the Section and that the lack of awareness by public officials of state obligations under the law, in addition to a culture of secrecy, contributes significantly to non-compliance, are proven.

A significant improvement was, however, observed following the first two batches of information requests and customised guidance material to every institute, outlining the areas they needed to improve on and how the law obligated them to do so.

From the institutes that improved on their mandatory proactive disclosure requirements by the end of the project, the Pension Administration Office set an example for all other state institutes by dedicating a section on their website to Section 37 and making the information required to be proactively disclosed available from a single easily accessible location. In doing so, the Pension Administration Office also became the first institute to fully comply with their proactive disclosure obligations, soon followed by the Election's Commission, Information Commissioner's Office and Tax Appeal Tribunal - who all dedicated a section on their respective websites to publishing the information required under Section 37.

We believe that state compliance to the RTI Act can be improved substantially through focused capacity building of all relevant components such as information officers, high court judges, civil society organisations and journalists, as well as through general awareness building on the right to access to information in democratic societies. Capacity building alone, however, cannot make the desired change in this regard.

Stronger mechanisms to prevent corruption and stop impunity must be implemented effectively for the culture of secrecy to end and make room for democratic governance to thrive.

Further research

The resistance to disclose information has contributed to an environment of withholding it rather than regulating it through the RTI Act. More and more state institutes insist on formal requests for information under the RTI Act for simple queries that can be clarified over a phone call, an email, a letter or even a meeting. In a geographically dispersed country like the Maldives without a robust decentralised governance system, going through the RTI process that can possibly last longer than three months and another possibly taking several years for a judicial appeal process, the lack of proactive disclosure among the majority of state institutions, and the resulting requirement to submit RTI requests for every piece of information needed is proving to be a disastrous development. It is especially critical for journalists as the primary link to public awareness. **The diversion of *all* requests for information into the formal RTI process will result in stale news that media sources cannot use by the time it reaches them.**

It is therefore essential that a broader study of the effectiveness of the access to timely information in the Maldives and the circumstances under which a Right to Information process under the RTI Act should be invoked, be conducted.

Recommendations

Recommendations to the Information Commissioner's Office:

1. Focused training programs for Information Officers, Review Committees and decision makers of state institutes to be conducted across the board on the universal right to information, their roles and responsibilities to address requests, obligations and provisions of the RTI Act, and best practices in arranging administrative procedures to accommodate RTI Requests. Training materials should also be made available and a part of the onboarding process for replacements for those positions.
2. Require state institutes to submit a self assessment against their obligations under Section 37 of the RTI Act to the annual report specified in Section 42 of the RTI Act.
3. Provide guidance to state institutes on best practices in publishing the information required to be proactively disclosed under Section 37 of the RTI Act.

Recommendations to the Government:

1. Configure email systems at state institutes to be able to receive large numbers of information requests, prevent incoming requests from being automatically diverted to spam or other folders, fix technical glitches at institutes that report not receiving requests, test other systems for potentially similar issues and place preventive measures to ensure institutes receive requests for information.

2. Require institutes that receive a significant amount of information requests to assign multiple Information Officers to ensure that all requests for information are processed according to the law and Information Officers are not overwhelmed.
3. Ensure that the websites of all state institutes are functional, and that an adequate number of staff are trained to operate the website and publish the information required under Section 37 of the RTI Act.

Recommendations to the Parliament:

1. Increase the budget allocated to the Information Commissioner's Office to reflect the increasing workload of the ICOM. While the number of total RTI requests submitted to state institutes (2,079 in 2020 compared to 2,624 in 2021) and cases submitted to ICOM (53 in 2020 compared to 104 in 2021) both increased significantly, the budget allocated to ICOM decreased from MVR 4.8 million in 2020¹⁹ to MVR 4.5 million in 2021²⁰.
2. Ensure that the action in the government SAP regarding the review of the Right to Information Act is only conducted with a view to close the gaps that institutions use for non-disclosure or delay in sharing of information and that none of the rights and freedoms currently granted by the Act are restricted.

19 <https://icom.mv/uploads/Annual%20Report%202021.pdf>

20 <https://icom.mv/uploads/ICOM%20Annual%20Report%202020.pdf>

Recommendations to Civil Society Organisations:

1. Introduce trainings to High Court judges on international best practices regarding the Right to Information to prevent further legal voids and to expedite the cases regarding the Right to Information that have been pending at the court.

Acknowledgements

The Association for Democracy in the Maldives (ADM) thanks our project partner Accountability Maldives and the dedicated assistance of Ms. Aishath Shaheen and Ms. Aminath Ula Ahmed for the success of this project. The assessment would not have been possible without the kind cooperation from the Information Officers and Review Committees at the institutes included in the sample, and the Information Commissioner of the Maldives.

Annexes

Annex 1: List of Institutes Monitored

Type of Institute	Name of Institute
Legislative	People's Majlis
Executive	The President's Office
	Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
	Ministry of Health
	Ministry of Home Affairs
	Ministry of Economic Development
	Ministry of Islamic Affairs
	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology
	Ministry of Education
	Ministry of Finance
	Ministry of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Agriculture
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
	Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services
	Ministry of Defence
	Ministry of Tourism
	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment
	Ministry of Higher Education
	Ministry of Arts, Culture and Heritage
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	
Attorney General's Office	

Type of Institute	Name of Institute
Judiciary	Department of Judicial Administration
	Supreme Court
	High Court
	Criminal Court
	Family Court
	Civil Court
	Juvenile Court
	Drug Court
	Judicial Service Commission
	H.Dh Kulhudhuffushi Magistrate Court
	Lh. Naifaru Magistrate Court
	K. Maafushi Magistrate Court
	Dh. Kudahuvadho Magistrate Court
	L. Gan Magistrate Court
	G.Dh Thinadhoo Magistrate Court
S. Hithadhoo Magistrate Court	
Independent Institutions	Prosecutor General's Office
	Maldives International Arbitration Centre
	Human Rights Commission of Maldives
	National Integrity Commission
	Capital Market Development Authority
	Information Commissioner's Office
	Election's Commission
	Anti-Corruption Commission
	Auditor General's Office
	Employment Tribunal
	Maldives Correctional Service

Type of Institute	Name of Institute
	Maldives Customs Service
	Maldives Inland Revenue Authority
	Maldives Monetary Authority
	Maldives Media Council
	Pension Administration Office
	Maldives Broadcasting Commission
	Tax Appeal Tribunal
	Civil Service Commission
	Maldives National University
	Islamic University of Maldives
	Local Government Authority
Atoll Councils	H.Dh Atoll Council
	Lhaviyani Atoll Council
	Kaafu Atoll Council
	Dhaalu Atoll Council
	Laamu Atoll Council
	G.Dh Atoll Council
City Councils	Addu City Council
	Fuvahmulah City Council
	Male' City Council
	Kulhudhuffushi City Council
Island Councils	Lh. Naifaru Island Council
	K. Maafushi Island Council
	Dh. Kudahuvadhoon Island Council
	L. Gan Island Council
	G.Dh Thinadhoo Island Council

Annex 2: Ranking of institutes by their RTI-37 compliance review score

Rank	Name of Institute	Final Review %
01	Elections Commission	100.00%
01	Tax Appeal Tribunal	100.00%
01	Information Commissioner's Office	100.00%
01	Pension Administration Office	100.00%
02	Department of Judicial Administration	95.83%
03	Maldives Media Council	91.67%
04	People's Majlis	83.33%
04	Maldives Inland Revenue Authority	83.33%
04	Anti-Corruption Commission	83.33%
05	High Court	79.17%
06	Maldives Customs Service	75.00%
06	Civil Service Commission	75.00%
06	Employment Tribunal	75.00%
06	Maldives Broadcasting Commission	75.00%
07	Human Rights Commission of Maldives	70.83%
07	Supreme Court	70.83%
07	Lhaviyani Atoll Council	70.83%
07	Judicial Service Commission	70.83%
07	Capital Market Development Authority	70.83%
08	Ministry of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Agriculture	66.67%
08	Attorney General's Office	66.67%
09	Ministry of Tourism	62.50%

Rank	Name of Institute	Final Review %
09	Local Government Authority	62.50%
10	Ministry of Defence	58.33%
10	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology	58.33%
10	Drug Court	58.33%
10	Maldives Monetary Authority	58.33%
10	Male' City Council	58.33%
11	Maldives National University	54.17%
11	National Integrity Commission	54.17%
12	Ministry of Education	50.00%
12	Ministry of Finance	50.00%
12	Addu City Council	50.00%
12	H.Dh Atoll Council	50.00%
13	Kulhudhuffushi City Council	45.83%
13	Lh. Naifaru Island Council	45.83%
13	Auditor General's Office	45.83%
14	Ministry of Arts, Culture and Heritage	41.67%
14	Ministry of Islamic Affairs	41.67%
14	Prosecutor General's Office	41.67%
14	Laamu Atoll Council	41.67%
15	Ministry of Health	37.50%
15	Islamic University of Maldives	37.50%
15	Maldives International Arbitration Center	37.50%
16	Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	33.33%
16	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	33.33%
16	Ministry of Higher Education	33.33%
16	Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services	33.33%
16	Family Court	33.33%

Rank	Name of Institute	Final Review %
17	The President's Office	29.17%
17	Criminal Court	29.17%
17	Maldives Correctional Service	29.17%
17	Civil Court	29.17%
17	Juvenile Court	29.17%
17	Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure	29.17%
17	Ministry of Economic Development	29.17%
17	L. Gan Island Council	29.17%
18	G.Dh Thinadhoo Island Council	25.00%
18	Fuvahmulah City Council	25.00%
19	K. Maafushi Magistrate Court	16.67%
19	Dh. Kudahuvadho Magistrate Court	16.67%
19	H.Dh Kulhudhuffushi Magistrate Court	16.67%
19	Lh. Naifaru Magistrate Court	16.67%
19	L. Gan Magistrate Court	16.67%
19	G.Dh Thinadhoo Magistrate Court	16.67%
19	S. Hithadhoo Magistrate Court	16.67%
20	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment	12.50%
20	G.Dh Atoll Council	12.50%
-	Ministry of Home Affairs	0.00%
-	Kaafu Atoll Council	0.00%
-	K. Maafushi Island Council	0.00%
-	Dh. Kudahuvadho Island Council	0.00%
-	Dhaalu Atoll Council	0.00%

Annex 3: Institutes' responses to RTI requests

No.	Name of Institute	Receipts Provided	Average no. of days for receipt	Deadline Extensions	Average no. of days for response	Reviews requested	Average no. of days for review	ICOM submissions	ICOM Decisions obliged in time	Average no. of days for info
01	Pension Administration Office	3 / 3	8.33	0	1.67	0	-	0	-	1.67
02	Maldives National University	3 / 3	9.67	0	10.33	0	-	0	-	10.33
03	Kuldhuffushi City Council	3 / 3	8.67	0	12.00	0	-	0	-	12.00
04	Capital Market Development Authority	1 / 3	1.00	0	13.67	0	-	0	-	13.67
05	Election's Commission	2 / 3	12.50	1	17.00	0	-	0	-	17.00
06	Dhaalu Atoll Council	1 / 3	1.00	0	17.33	0	-	0	-	17.33
07	Information Commissioner's Office	3 / 3	9.33	0	17.67	0	-	0	-	17.67
08	Maldives Inland Revenue Authority	3 / 3	13.00	0	17.67	0	-	0	-	17.67
09	Drug Court	3 / 3	10.33	0	18.33	0	-	0	-	18.33
10	Attorney General's Office	3 / 3	15.67	0	18.67	0	-	0	-	18.67
11	Judicial Service Commission	2 / 3	12.50	0	18.67	0	-	0	-	18.67
12	Employment Tribunal	3 / 3	0.00	0	18.67	0	-	0	-	18.67
13	Prosecutor General's Office	3 / 3	8.33	0	19.67	1	3	0	-	19.67
14	Department of Judicial Administration	3 / 3	8.33	0	19.67	0	-	0	-	19.67
15	Civil Court	2 / 3	12.50	0	19.67	0	-	0	-	19.67
16	Ministry of Tourism	3 / 3	11.33	1	20.33	0	-	0	-	20.33

No.	Name of Institute	Receipts Provided	Average no. of days for receipt	Deadline Extensions	Average no. of days for response	Reviews requested	Average no. of days for review	ICOM submissions	ICOM Decisions obliged in time	Average no. of days for info
17	Ministry of Arts, Culture and Heritage	3 / 3	2.00	0	20.67	0	-	0	-	20.67
18	Supreme Court	3 / 3	11.00	0	20.67	0	-	0	-	20.67
19	High Court	3 / 3	0.00	0	21.00	0	-	0	-	21.00
20	H.Dh Kulhuhuffushi Magistrate Court	2 / 3	0.00	0	21.33	0	-	1	1	21.33
21	Dh. Kudahuvadhoo Magistrate Court	1 / 3	2.00	0	21.67	0	-	0	-	21.67
22	Maldives Customs Service	3 / 3	0.33	1	21.67	0	-	0	-	21.67
23	Criminal Court	3 / 3	0.00	0	22.33	0	-	0	-	22.33
24	G.Dh Atoll Council	1 / 3	2.00	0	22.67	0	-	1	1	22.67
25	K. Maafushi Magistrate Court	2 / 3	0.00	0	24.33	0	-	1	1	24.33
26	K. Maafushi Island Council	3 / 3	6.67	0	25.67	0	-	0	-	25.67
27	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2 / 3	0.00	0	26.00	0	-	1	1	26.00
28	Maldives International Arbitration Centre	3 / 3	14.33	0	17.00	1	25	0	-	26.33
29	Human Rights Commission of Maldives	2 / 3	0.00	0	26.33	0	-	1	1	26.33
30	Ministry of Health	1 / 3	18.00	1	26.67	0	-	1	1	26.67
31	Juvenile Court	2 / 3	1.50	1	27.33	0	-	1	1	27.33
32	Local Government Authority	2 / 3	0.00	0	27.33	0	-	1	1	27.33

No.	Name of Institute	Receipts Provided	Average no. of days for receipt	Deadline Extensions	Average no. of days for response	Reviews requested	Average no. of days for review	ICOM submissions	ICOM Decisions obliged in time	Average no. of days for info
33	Islamic University of Maldives	2 / 3	7.00	0	28.00	0	-	1	1	28.00
34	Family Court	3 / 3	22.67	2	28.67	0	-	0	-	28.67
35	Tax Appeal Tribunal	2 / 3	0.50	0	28.67	0	-	1	1	28.67
36	Laamu Atoll Council	1 / 3	7.00	0	12.33	1	41	0	-	28.67
37	Dh. Kudahuvadhoo Island Council	2 / 3	0.50	0	16.33	1	4	0	-	28.67
38	Ministry of Defence	3 / 3	5.00	0	20.00	1	30	0	-	30.00
39	Maldives Media Council	2 / 3	29.50	0	20.33	1	28	0	-	30.00
40	Anti-Corruption Commission	3 / 3	10.00	2	30.33	0	-	0	-	30.33
41	Auditor General's Office	2 / 3	7.00	0	30.33	0	-	1	1	30.33
42	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology	2 / 3	1.50	1	31.00	0	-	0	-	31.00
43	Fuvahmulah City Council	2 / 3	10.50	0	31.33	0	-	1	1	31.33
44	Ministry of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Agriculture	2 / 3	27.00	1	30.33	0	-	1	1	31.67
45	Maldives Correctional Service	1 / 3	29.00	0	31.67	0	-	1	1	31.67
46	Lhaviyani Atoll Council	2 / 3	0.00	1	31.67	0	-	1	1	31.67
47	Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure	2 / 3	0.00	1	32.33	0	-	0	-	32.33
48	Ministry of Education	2 / 3	0.50	2	32.33	0	-	1	1	32.33

No.	Name of Institute	Receipts Provided	Average no. of days for receipt	Deadline Extensions	Average no. of days for response	Reviews requested	Average no. of days for review	ICOM submissions	ICOM Decisions obliged in time	Average no. of days for info
49	H.Dh Atoll Council	1 / 3	51.00	0	32.33	0	-	0	-	32.33
50	Kaafu Atoll Council	3 / 3	16.67	0	29.67	0	-	1	1	32.67
51	Maldives Broadcasting Commission	2 / 3	30.00	0	34.00	0	-	0	-	34.00
52	L. Gan Magistrate Court	2 / 3	1.00	0	35.33	0	-	2	2	35.33
53	Lh. Naifaru Island Council	2 / 3	0.00	2	36.33	0	-	1	1	36.33
54	Ministry of Islamic Affairs	3 / 3	12.67	1	26.33	1	29	0	-	37.33
55	People's Majlis	2 / 3	0.00	0	27.33	1	29	1	1	38.67
56	Ministry of Economic Development	3 / 3	0.00	1	39.67	0	-	1	-	39.67
57	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment	3 / 3	1.00	1	39.67	0	-	1	1	39.67
58	Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services	2 / 3	11.00	0	40.00	0	-	1	1	40.00
59	Lh. Naifaru Magistrate Court	0 / 3	-	1	41.67	0	-	2	2	41.67
60	Civil Service Commission	3 / 3	0.00	0	13.67	2	35	0	-	44.33
61	L. Gan Island Council	2 / 3	11.00	0	46.33	0	-	1	1	46.33
62	The President's Office	1 / 3	0.00	3	30.33	1	39	1	1	46.67
63	Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	3 / 3	21.67	0	28.00	1	56	2	2	47.00
64	Addu City Council	1 / 3	9.00	2	34.67	1	35	0	-	47.33

No.	Name of Institute	Receipts Provided	Average no. of days for receipt	Deadline Extensions	Average no. of days for response	Reviews requested	Average no. of days for review	ICOM submissions	ICOM Decisions obliged in time	Average no. of days for info
65	Ministry of Home Affairs	2 / 3	0.50	0	40.67	1	29	2	1	47.67
66	National Integrity Commission	0 / 3	-	0	48.00	0	-	1	1	48.00
67	Maldives Monetary Authority	0 / 3	-	2	33.33	1	50	0	-	50.00
68	Ministry of Finance	1 / 3	1.00	0	27.33	1	N/A	2	2	55.33
69	G.Dh Thinadhoo Magistrate Court	0 / 3	-	0	61.33	0	-	3	2	61.33
70	Ministry of Higher Education	1 / 3	3.00	0	51.67	0	-	2	0	62.33
71	G.Dh Thinadhoo Island Council	0 / 3	-	0	60.33	0	-	3	2	65.33
72	Male' City Council	1 / 3	28.00	0	20.67	1	39	2	0	66.33
73	S. Hithadhoo Magistrate Court	1 / 3	0.00	0	56.3	0	-	2	0	78.00

Annex 4: Appeals and complaints submitted to ICOM

No.	Institute	ICOM Decision	Institute Response	ICOM Case no.
01	Ministry of Education	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-A/2021/66
02	Ministry of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Agriculture	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-A/2021/67
03	Ministry of Health	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-A/2021/65
04	Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-A/2021/69
05	Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/70
06	H.Dh Kulhuffushi Magistrate Court	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/71
07	Human Rights Commission of Maldives	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/74
08	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/68
09	Ministry of Home Affairs	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-C/2021/02

No.	Institute	ICOM Decision	Institute Response	ICOM Case no.
10	Lh. Naifaru Magistrate Court	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/72
11	K. Maafushi Magistrate Court	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/73
12	Fuvahmulah City Council	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/80
13	G.Dh Atoll Council	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/83
14	Maldives Correctional Service	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/86
15	G.Dh Thinadhoo Magistrate Court	Provide requested information within 3 working days	No response by deadline	ICOM-A/2021/77
16	L. Gan Island Council	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/78
17	Lh. Naifaru Island Council	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/79

No.	Institute	ICOM Decision	Institute Response	ICOM Case no.
18	Auditor General's Office	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/85
19	National Integrity Commission	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-A/2021/84
20	People's Majlis	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/64
21	Tax Appeal Tribunal	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/87
22	Islamic University of Maldives	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/88
23	L. Gan Magistrate Court	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/90
24	G.Dh Thinadhoo Island Council	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-A/2021/92
25	Local Government Authority	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/89

No.	Institute	ICOM Decision	Institute Response	ICOM Case no.
26	Kaafu Atoll Council	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-A/2021/82
27	Lhaviyani Atoll Council	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2021/81
28	S. Hithadhoo Magistrate Court	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided after deadline	ICOM-A/2021/91
29	Male' City Council	Provide requested information within 3 working days	No response by deadline	ICOM-A/2022/09
30	Juvenile Court	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2022/10
31	The President's Office	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-A/2022/06
32	Male' City Council	Provide requested information within 5 working day	Information provided after deadline	ICOM-C/2022/18
33	G.Dh Thinadhoo Magistrate Court	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-C/2022/12
34	L. Gan Magistrate Court	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-C/2022/10

No.	Institute	ICOM Decision	Institute Response	ICOM Case no.
35	Ministry of Finance	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-C/2022/08
36	Lh. Naifaru Magistrate Court	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-C/2022/17
37	G.Dh Thinadhoo Magistrate Court	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-C/2022/11
38	Ministry of Higher Education	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided after deadline	ICOM-C/2022/09
39	G.Dh Thinadhoo Island Council	Improve administrative procedures to ensure RTI requests are processed within time specified in Act	Information provided after appeal was submitted to ICOM, but prior to the commencement of hearing	ICOM-C/2022/13
40	S. Hithadhoo Magistrate Court	Provide requested information within 7 working days	Information provided after deadline	ICOM-C/2022/16
41	Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-A/2022/14
42	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-C/2022/41
43	G.Dh Thinadhoo Island Council	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-C/2022/32

No.	Institute	ICOM Decision	Institute Response	ICOM Case no.
44	Ministry of Higher Education	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided after deadline	ICOM-C/2022/36
45	Ministry of Economic Development	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided after deadline	ICOM-C/2022/40
46	Ministry of Home Affairs	Provide requested information within 3 working days	Information provided after deadline	ICOM-C/2022/38
47	Ministry of Finance	Provide requested information within 7 working days	Information provided in time	ICOM-A/2022/15



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