

Frequently Asked Questions

OASIS – Non-Government Organisations

Q. What is the purpose of OASIS?

- A. The purpose of OASIS is to simplify the interactions between the department and funded organisations. Participating non-government organisations will be able to easily and effectively maintain contact information, electronically submit periodic financial and periodic performance reports, and upload financial information directly from MYOB and QuickBooks (where the Standard Chart of Accounts is in use). A generic upload capability based on the Standard Chart of Accounts is also being developed.

OASIS will be available to all organisations who receive grants from Communities and who have minimum standards of computer hardware and internet connectivity.

Q. What are the benefits for the community sector?

- A. It will make it easier, simpler and faster to manage any financial and performance reporting required as part of service agreements with Communities. Updating the department with information about your organisation will be easy and effectively managed online. Electronic lodgement of periodic financial and performance reports and reminders and updates will enable timely reporting and cut down on paper-based processes and uploading financial information will reduce duplication.

Q. What are the specifications of the program so that I can ensure my organisation has the correct operating systems and updated or upgraded equipment in order to run the program? Is it necessary to upgrade hardware/software or internet access?

- A. It will not be necessary to upgrade your existing equipment. As OASIS is browser-based, only minimum standards of hardware and internet access are required. The actual computer itself should not matter; as long as the user has internet access OASIS will be accessible. As with any application though, the newer the computer the faster the internet application will run and therefore OASIS will run. We have trialled with an organisation on Broadband Internet and it takes about 3-5 seconds to move between screens. Dial-up would therefore be upwards of 5 seconds when moving between screens. If your organisation does not have minimum access paper-based options will remain available. As you upgrade your computer equipment in the future you may like to consider moving to electronic lodgement.

Q. Is OASIS compatible with other systems?

A. At present the interaction between OASIS and other systems is only concerned with the importing of financial acquittal information, for example from MYOB or QuickBooks.

Q. Will organisation-wide training will be available to ensure greater understanding of the system prior to use?

A. All organisations will be offered a range of training options and asked to select a training method that best suits the organisation.

Q. Are subsidies available to attend training if required?

A. At this stage subsidies are not available. However, training will be provided through a number of mechanisms including a training manual and online training, so there will still be adequate resources available to those organisations unable to attend one of the information sessions.

Q. Will there be a booklet or online tutorial modules and variety of training options?

A. The OASIS project team are developing a user manual for self-paced training. A variety of training options are being reviewed including: self paced online training; interactive group training via computer and phone conferencing; and pre-recorded demonstrations. The project team is also considering remote community strategies.

Q. Will training for Indigenous organisations be tailored to meet their specific needs?

A. Yes. The OASIS project team is developing a separate training rollout strategy for Indigenous organisations. It will take into account specific issues relevant for this group and will be implemented in the first quarter of 2009.

Q. Will we have a local Community Support Officer contact with core responsibility? Will Community Support Officers be available to provide support and ongoing development for use of system?

A. All Community Support Officers will be well trained in the use of OASIS. An online training package has been developed and will be distributed to all funded service providers. The OASIS service desk will be available during standard business hours to all users and organisations can contact Community Support Officers as required.

Q. Is there a service desk available if we require assistance?

- A. Once the system is rolled out to all funded organisations the Department of Communities will provide ongoing system support via the service desk. The OASIS service desk will operate Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. For any questions:

Telephone: 1300 847 4357 (1300 VIP HELP)
Email: OASIShelp@communities.qld.gov.au

Q. Can we have access to the feedback from the pilot program participants?

- A. Feedback from the pilot which included the Sunshine Coast region and a group of funded organisations was very positive. They thought OASIS was a very useful tool, simple to use, and they liked the capability of the system; particularly being able to complete performance reporting as well as view financial information.

Q. Signing – who signs off – is there delegated authority?

- A. Committee members can be set up in OASIS. When a financial acquittal or performance report is completed it must be submitted to the Executive Committee or Management members for approval; this will be done via email.

In the case of an organisation with a Management Committee, it is the Executive Members (President, Secretary and Treasurer) who should be registered. Some larger organisations e.g. Local Government may delegate this responsibility to another officer.

Q. What information is available on OASIS security?

- A. Access to some areas in OASIS are restricted and derived from your user login. You will only have access to relevant areas of OASIS as determined by your role within the organisation. A security question will be allocated when you set up your login.

Q. Do non-government organisations have a choice whether they use OASIS? If they decide not to use OASIS or can't comply will they lose funding?

- A. Demonstrating accountability of public funds is required as usual and Department of Communities funding will remain subject to the usual acquittal requirements. However, at this point in time OASIS is not mandatory and it is not expected that all service providers and organisations will immediately commence using OASIS. It is acknowledged that the infrastructure required to utilise an online reporting system may not exist yet in some rural and remote communities. This said please note that only basic facilities are required (internet access and a computer) as OASIS is fully web enabled.

For any funded organisation that chooses not to use OASIS, a paper-based system will remain in place. However, we encourage all organisations able to use OASIS to take advantage of the benefits it provides.

Q. Whose role is it in the organisation?

- A. Organisations will have a primary user of OASIS who will be able to set up access for staff within their organisation, including board members. Mechanisms are in place to expire and reallocate users.

Q. Will the data I enter into OASIS be compared to other agencies, potentially where a comparison would not be appropriate due to varying factors (demographics etc.)?

- A. Data, whether provided to the department via OASIS or using the paper-based submission method will be entered into a database to allow **relevant** data analysis to be undertaken.

Q. How will the information that is gathered through OASIS be used?

- A. Information gathered in OASIS (and via the paper-based method) will be used:
- by the department to communicate to you by mail, telephone and email
 - to assess your expenditure and provide further grant payments
 - to assess your performance against assigned performance measures
 - to allow the department to monitor and assess services and organisations.

More information

For further information visit www.communities.qld.gov.au/department/funding/oasis email gmsp@communities.qld.gov.au or call (07) 3247 4198.