

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates

17 October – 18 October 2012

Question: SBT 627-635

Topic: Freedom of Information (PC)

Written: Received from Committee – 26 October 2012

Senator BUSHBY asked:

627. Has the department/agency received any updated advice on how to respond to FOI requests?
628. What is the total cost to the department/agency to process FOI requests for 2011-12?
629. How many FOI requests did the department/agency receive in 2011-12?
630. How many requests were denied and how many were granted?
631. Did the department fail to meet the processing times outlined in the FOI Act for any requests?
- a. If so, how many?
- b. Do any of these requests remain outstanding?
632. What is the total cost to the department to process FOI requests for this financial year to date (26 October 2012)?
633. How many FOI requests has the Department received for this financial year to date (26 October 2012)?
634. How many requests have been denied and how many have been granted?
635. Has the department failed to meet the processing times outlined in the FOI Act for any requests?
- a. If so, how many and why?
- b. Do any of these requests remain outstanding? If so, how many and why?

Answer:

627. Yes. For the period from 3 December 2007, the following advice has been received:
- On 30 April 2009, Senator the Hon John Faulkner, the then Cabinet Secretary, wrote to heads of agencies subject to the FOI Act outlining the government's FOI reform objectives and asking that it be made clear to FOI decision-makers that the starting point for considering FOI requests should be a presumption in favour of giving access to documents.
 - On 28 October 2010, the then Minister for Privacy and Freedom of Information, wrote to heads of agencies subject to the FOI Act to update them on progress of the reforms to freedom of information laws and seek their assistance in implementing the reforms.

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- Guidelines issued to all agencies on the operation of the FOI Act by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) prior to 1 November 2010 or issued subsequently by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.
- PM&C 'FOI Guidance Notes – July 2011' issued to all agencies.

628. \$200.

629. Two.

630. Two.

631. No.

632. Nil.

633. Nil.

634. Not applicable.

635. Not applicable.