

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 192

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Corporate

Programme: Policy and Communications Division

Topic: Portfolio Wide – Freedom of Information

Hansard Page: N/A

Question Date: 27 November 2013

Question Type: Written

Senator Ludwig asked:

Does the Department consult or inform the Minister when it receives Freedom of Information requests?

- a) If so, when?
- b) If so, how does this occur?

Answer:

All FOI requests are included in an administrative report that is provided to the Minister's Office each week. The Freedom of Information (FOI) section of this report provides details of all FOI requests received by the Department in the previous week, those due in the coming week and the requests finalised in the previous week.

In accordance with the requirements of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and Guidelines issued by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner:

- a) The Department informs the Minister of an FOI request when it is determined the request may include shared resources or may require transfer of the request to the Minister.
- b) The FOI Coordination Team branch head informs the Minister's Chief of Staff (by email) of a request that may relate to information held by the Minister, whereby it may be necessary to transfer the request to the Minister in part or in full and/or consult the Minister on release of information that relates to official documents of the Minister.

Clean Energy Regulator

No. The Clean Energy Regulator does not consult or inform the Minister when it receives a Freedom of Information request.

Climate Change Authority

In the past, as a courtesy the Authority has informed the Ministers office after a decision has been taken and prior to release of any documents.

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Murray-Darling Basin Authority

The Murray-Darling Basin Authority informs but does not consult the Minister's and Parliamentary Secretary's offices when a Freedom of Information request is received.

- a) The Minister's and the Parliamentary Secretary's offices are informed after the acknowledgement to the applicant of receipt of the request.
- b) The Minister's and the Parliamentary Secretary's offices are informed by e-mail.

Bureau of Meteorology

No

National Water Commission

The Commission has not received any FOI requests in the period 1 May 2013 to 31 October 2013. The Commission would inform or consult the Minister where this was consistent with the procedures listed in response to SQ13-000094

- a) and b) Not applicable

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Yes.

- a) The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority would consult or inform the Minister if there are documents identified that involve the Minister or his office.
- b) Through the Department of the Environment, who liaise with the Minister's office on the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's behalf.

Sydney Harbour Federation Trust

In accordance with the requirements of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and Guidelines issued by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner:

- a) The Trust informs the Minister of an FOI request when it is determined the request may include shared resources or may require transfer of the request to the Minister.
- b) The Executive Director informs the Minister by way of Ministerial Submission of a request that may relate to information held by the Minister, whereby it may be necessary to transfer the request to the Minister in part or in full and/or consult the Minister on release of information that relates to official documents of the Minister.