

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES - 20 OCTOBER 2011 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Freedom of Information

Question reference number: HSW 14

Senator: McKenzie

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 9 December 2011

Number of pages: 1

Question:

- a) Has the Department/agency received any advice on how to respond to FOI requests?
- b) How many FOI requests has the Department received for the year 2010-11? How many have been granted or denied?
- c) How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests for the year 2010-11?
- d) How many FOI requests has the Department received for this FYTD? How many have been granted or denied?
- e) How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests for this FYTD?

Answer:

- a) The department received the following advice:
 1. Senator the Hon John Faulkner on 30 April 2009 on Open Government and Freedom of Information;
 2. the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP on 28 October 2010 on Open Government and Freedom of Information;
 3. Mr James Popple, Freedom of Information Commissioner on 18 November 2010;
 4. Professor John McMillan, Australian Information Commissioner on 2 May 2011;
 5. Sixteen guidelines issued under section 93A of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* provided by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner agency website; and
 6. On 24 June 2011, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet provided FOI Guidance Notes to all departments - http://www.dpmc.gov.au/foi/guidance_notes.cfm .
- b) Requests received: 4,350. Of those processed in this time frame, the department granted 3,856 in full or in part, and refused access to 350. As there is a 30 day time frame in which to process applications, not all of these would have been processed in the financial year in which they were received. Some applications would have been withdrawn or transferred to other agencies.
- c) No conclusive certificates have been issued.
- d) July–September 2011 - requests received: 1,036; granted in full or in part: 926; access refused: 94.
- e) No conclusive certificates have been issued.