

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 19 October 2011

Question: E11-039

OUTCOME 0: Whole of Portfolio

Topic: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Written Question on Notice

Senator Boyce asked:

- 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 2010-2011? How many have been granted or denied?
- c) How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests for the year 2010-2011?
- 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 Australian Information Commissioner has issued guidelines for the purposes of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act). The Department of Health and Ageing must have regard to the guidelines in the performance of functions and exercise of powers under the FOI Act. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet provided Guidance Notes to all Departments on 28 July 2011. Moreover, legal advice is obtained from internal and external lawyers on particular FOI requests from time to time.
- b) New requests received 2010-2011: 265

Request outcomes notified to applicant in writing in 2010/2011:

Documents accessed in full	18
Documents accessed in part	73
Refused access to documents	44
Request transferred to another agency	4
Request withdrawn by applicant	102

c) Nil. Conclusive certificates were abolished by amendments to the FOI Act which commenced on 7 October 2009.

d) New requests received 1 Jul 2011 - 30 Sept 2011:

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Request outcomes notified to applicant in writing 1 Jul 2011 - 30 Sep 2011:

Documents accessed in full	21
Documents accessed in part	23
Refused access to documents	21
Request transferred to another agency	4
Request withdrawn by applicant	37

e) Conclusive Certificates were abolished in October 2009.