

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2013-14 Supplementary Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number:** Cross Outcome - Across Programs

**Question No:** 178

**Topic:** Freedom of Information

**Hansard Page:** 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:**

Ministers are informed of new requests through a weekly report on Freedom of Information (FOI) matters provided to the executive and offices of both Ministers. This report informs the Ministers (and other officers in the Department) of FOI requests received that week, decisions pending and FOI decisions that have been made by the Department that week.

The Department will consult a Minister's office where a request covers documents that are also in the possession of the Minister's office or have been prepared by the Minister or the Minister's office.

The Department may also inform a Minister's office of a request, or a decision to grant access to documents, where the request involved sensitive information.

This occurs by a member of the FOI Team contacting the Departmental Liaison Officer or, where a specific officer is nominated as FOI contact, the FOI contact officer in the Minister's office.