

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

29 May – 31 May 2012

Question: BET 648-651

Topic: Freedom of Information

Hansard Page: Written (Received from Committee 13 June 2012)

Senator Bushby asked:

648. Has the Department/agency received any updated advice on how to respond to FOI requests?
649. What is the total cost to the department to process FOI requests for this financial year to date?
650. How many FOI requests has the Department received for this financial year to date?
- a) How many requests have been denied and how many have been granted?
 - b) Has the department failed to meet the processing times outlined in the FOI Act for any requests? If so, how many and why?
 - c) Do any of these requests remain outstanding? If so, how many and why?
651. How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests for this financial year to date?

Answer:

648. The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner has issued guidelines under s 93A of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. 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.
649. Costs are prepared at the end of each financial year and reported to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner for inclusion in their Freedom of Information Annual Report. There are currently no figures available for this financial year.
650. Treasury received 142 Freedom of Information requests between 1 July 2011 and 31 May 2012. Note: Figures are for the department only and do not include minister's offices requests.
- Of the 142 requests received:
- 8 granted access in full
 - 31 granted access in part
 - 15 withdrawn by applicant
 - 36 deemed withdrawn (no response from applicant)
 - 36 refused (no documents exist)
 - 4 transferred in full to another agency
 - 12 decision still pending

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Treasury failed to meet the statutory processing times for two requests in the period between 1 July 2011 and 31 May 2012. These requests have now been finalised.

651. Nil, as indicated in answers to previous questions, the power to issue conclusive certificates under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* was abolished on 7 October 2009.