

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2014-15

Finance Portfolio

Department/Agency: All
Outcome/Program: General
Topic: Freedom of Information

Senator: Ludwig
Question reference number: F192
Type of question: Written
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 11 July 2014

Number of pages: 4

Question:

The following questions relate to requests made pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (the Act):

1. Consultations with other Departments, Agencies and the Minister

- a) Other than for the purpose of discussing a transfer under section 16 of the Act, does the Department consult or inform other Departments or Agencies when it receives Freedom of Information requests? If so, for each instance provide a table setting out the following information:
 - i) The Department or Agency which was consulted;
 - ii) The document;
 - iii) The purpose of the consultation;
 - iv) Whether an extension of time was sought from the applicant to allow time for the consultation, including whether it was granted and the length of the extension;
 - v) Whether an extension of time was sought from the Information Commissioner to allow time for the consultation, including whether it was granted and the length of the extension.

- b) Other than for the purposes of discussing a transfer under section 16 of the Act, has the Department consulted or informed the Minister's office about Freedom of Information requests it has received? If yes, provide a table setting out the following information:
 - i) The requests with respect to which the Minister or Ministerial office was consulted;
 - ii) The Minister or Ministerial office which was consulted;
 - iii) The purpose of the consultation;
 - iv) Whether an extension of time was sought from the applicant to allow time for the consultation, including whether it was granted and the length of the extension;

- v) Whether an extension of time was sought from the Information Commissioner to allow time for the consultation, including whether it was granted and the length of the extension.
- vi) Whether any briefings (including formal briefs, email briefings and verbal briefings) were provided to the Minister's office.

2. Staffing resources

- a) The following questions relate to the period from 18 September 2013: For the period of time from 18 September 2013, what was the average FTE is allocated to processing FOI requests?

3. FOI Disclosure Log

- a) For the purposes of meeting its obligations under 11C of the Act, does the Department or Agency:
 - i) Maintain a webpage allowing download of documents released under section 11A (direct download)?
 - ii) Require individuals to contact the Department or Agency to ask for the provision of those documents (request for provision)?
 - iii) Facilitate to those documents in a different manner (if so, specify).
- b) If the Department or Agency has moved from a system of meetings its 11C obligations by direct download, to a system of meeting those obligations by request for provision, provide the following information:
 - i) The dates for which documents were made available for direct download, and the dates for which documents were made available through request for provision;
 - ii) The total number of direct downloads of documents released under 11A the Departmental or Agency website;
 - iii) The total number of requests for provision to documents that had been directly received, and how many had been processed by 6 June 2014?
 - iv) What was the average FTE allocated to monitoring incoming email, collating and forwarding documents providing under a request for provision?
 - v) What was the approximate cost for salaries for the FTE staff allocated to this task?
- c) Has the Department or Agency charged any for access to a document under section 11C(4)? If so, please provide the following information in a table:
 - i) On how many occasions charges have been imposed;
 - ii) The amount charged for each document
 - iii) The total amount charged;
 - iv) What is the highest charge that has been imposed.

Answer:

Department/ Agency	Response												
Finance	<p>1.</p> <p>a) Prior to the FOI access decision being made, the department may inform and/or consult with another department or agency by email as required by the Act; and if the other department or agency may be affected by the decision. i) – v) To review departmental records and compile the requested table would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.</p> <p>b) The relevant Minister’s office receives a weekly FOI requests report for the department. The department consults with the relevant Minister’s office as required or permitted by the Act. i) – v) To compile the requested table would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>a) Three (3) FTE on average are dedicated to daily co-ordination and processing of FOI requests. In addition, a decision maker and peer adviser are allocated to each FOI request received, from other staff available. Records of time expended by other staff on FOI processing are not separately kept.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>a) i) Yes. ii) No. iii) N/A.</p> <p>b) i) – v) N/A.</p> <p>c) No. i) – iv) N/A.</p>												
Australian Electoral Commission	<p>For the period 18 September 2013 to 31 May 2014:</p> <p>1. a) – b) No.</p> <p>2. a) EL1 50 per cent, Band 1 SES 5 per cent.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>a) i) Yes. ii) No. iii) No.</p> <p>b) N/A.</p> <p>c) No.</p>												
ComSuper	<p>1.</p> <p>a) – b) ComSuper may consult with other parties depending on the request. There was one instance in the relevant time period, as set out below.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="416 1619 1404 2002"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="416 1619 874 1659">Department/Agency Consulted</th> <th data-bbox="874 1619 1404 1659">Department of Defence</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="416 1659 874 1738">Document</td> <td data-bbox="874 1659 1404 1738">Personnel Information Kit and Superannuation Information Group Report</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="416 1738 874 1816">Purpose of consultation</td> <td data-bbox="874 1738 1404 1816">The requested documents originated from the Department of Defence</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="416 1816 874 1895">Extension of time sought from the application, if grant how long</td> <td data-bbox="874 1816 1404 1895">Extension sought and granted, 30 days</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="416 1895 874 1973">Extension of time sought from Information Commissioner</td> <td data-bbox="874 1895 1404 1973">N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="416 1973 874 2002">Briefing to the Minister’s office</td> <td data-bbox="874 1973 1404 2002">N/A</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Department/Agency Consulted	Department of Defence	Document	Personnel Information Kit and Superannuation Information Group Report	Purpose of consultation	The requested documents originated from the Department of Defence	Extension of time sought from the application, if grant how long	Extension sought and granted, 30 days	Extension of time sought from Information Commissioner	N/A	Briefing to the Minister’s office	N/A
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Department/ Agency	Response
	2. At this time, ComSuper had one full time APS level 5 officer assigned principally to FOI requests. 3. ComSuper maintains a webpage allowing download of documents released under section 11A (direct download). ComSuper will also accept requests in writing for published documents. b) No. c) N/A.
Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation	1. a) i) – v) No. b) i) – v) No. 2. No records are kept. 3. Documents provided on webpage. b) N/A. c) No.
Future Fund Management Agency	1. No. 2 – 3. N/A.