

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2014-2015

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Outcome/Program:

Outcome 1. Fair and accountable administrative action by Australian Government agencies by investigating complaints, reviewing administrative action and inspecting statutory compliance by law enforcement agencies.

Topic: FOI Requests

Senator: Senator Ludwig

Question reference number: 325

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 11 July 2014

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- (1) Since 7 September 2013, how many requests for documents under the FOI Act have been received?
- (2) Of these, how many documents have been determined to be deliberative documents?
- (3) Of those assessed as deliberative documents:
 - a. For how many has access to the document been refused on the basis that it would be contrary to the public interest?
 - b. For how many has a redacted document been provided?

Answer:

- (1) Between 7 September 2013 and 31 May 2014, fifty two (52) valid requests for documents under the FOI Act were received.
- (2) Of the 52 requests processed, 8 requests included requests for documents that were refused in whole or part on the basis of the deliberative material exemption at s47C of the FOI Act. Ombudsman office records contain only the final decision where an exemption has been made and do not distinguish those documents which contained deliberative material, but which were released under the public interest test, from other released documents. Of documents considered in the 8 requests, 41 documents were exempted under s47C.

- (3) (a) Access to the whole document was refused for 23 of the 41 exempt documents.
(b) On 18 occasions a redacted document was provided.