Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

LEX 81053

Document created in accordance with section 17 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth)

FOI reference number: LEX 81053

Request details: For the period 11 March 2025 to 16 February 2026...
1. The number of FOI requests finalised by the Department where access was granted in full or in part.
2. Of those, the number where the Department determined that publication on the disclosure log under s 11C of the FOI Act was not required. For these, I request the recorded basis for non-publication in aggregated form (for example, by reason category if such categories are recorded), including reliance on s 11C(1)(a) or any other grounds. If no formal categorisation exists, a summary description of the reasons relied upon.
3. The number of documents published to the Department's disclosure log during this period.

Date of decision: 5 November 2026

Item	Response	Additional information
1	427	In full – 62 In part - 365
2	371	Personal Information request - 355 Other exception - 16
3	1 PDF document has been published on the disclosure log within the requested period.	The total gap in LEX data is 56 – this would include blanks, N/A, withdrawn etc 43 requests have been recorded as published on the disclosure log during this period.

LEX 81053
Document 2

Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

transforming DVA

DVA Freedom of Information Guidelines

January 2024

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Introduction

There are a number of ways the Department of Veterans' Affairs ("DVA") may release information. These are set out in the Department's Information Release Policy. Administrative access is DVA's preferred and primary way to release requested information.

The FOI Guidelines are part of the Department's suite of documents on information release which sit under the Information Release Policy (**the policy**).

The release of information under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (**FOI Act**) is a more formal mechanism of release where the release of information is not appropriate under the Department's administrative access mechanism.

Each person has legally enforceable rights under the FOI Act to obtain access to government documents and to apply for the amendment or annotation of records of personal information held by government, in certain circumstances. The FOI Act also requires agencies to publish specified categories of information, and encourages the proactive release of other government information.

Who are the guidelines for?

The DVA Freedom of Information Guidelines (**Guidelines**) are a resource designed to support Departmental staff understand the legislated requirements of releasing information under the FOI Act. It also helps inform decisions about the types of documents that may be released and the timeframes that must be met.

This resource is intended for use by the Information Access Unit (**IAU**) which is responsible for managing requests for information through administrative access and under the FOI Act.

The Guidelines are supported by content on the Department's website for veterans, families and representatives. The website also provides information to applicants about the best and most expeditious way for them to access information, before making an application, whether that be under FOI or administrative access. These Guidelines are to support decision-makers and provide general information only which is not legally binding. In the event of any conflict or ambiguity in relation to these Guidelines and the FOI Act itself and/or the FOI Guidelines issued by the Office of the Information Commissioner (OAIC), the Act and OAIC Guidelines prevail.

How should this document be used?

Although primarily intended for staff, the document will also be published on the Department's website for external audiences.

The Guidelines are part of the suite of documents and should be read in conjunction with the:

- DVA Information Release Policy
- DVA Administrative Release Guidelines
- DVA Redaction Guidelines
- DVA Privacy Policy
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (FOI Act)
- *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) (Privacy Act)
- Office of Australian Information Commissioner FOI Guidelines (OAIC FOI Guidelines)
- Australian Privacy Principles Guidelines (APP Guidelines)

Background

These Guidelines have been developed as part of the response to 'Recommendation 9: Improve administrative release of information' made by the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide in its Interim Report released in August 2022. While developing the DVA Administrative Release Guidelines, it became apparent that a companion document on FOI Guidelines would assist staff to manage formal requests for information effectively and efficiently. These Guidelines also provide guidance on adherence to FOI request processing timeframes in response to recommendations of the OAIC.

About Freedom of Information release

What is Freedom of Information release?

The FOI Act gives individuals, businesses and organisations the right to request access to documents held by the Department, unless a document is exempt in whole or in part under the FOI Act. It also gives the right to seek a review of a decision made by DVA about an FOI request.

FOI release is the formal release of information held by the Department in response to a written request for Department information that is made in accordance with the FOI Act. The information released under FOI, must be provided formally, in a written reply to the original request.

Principles of the FOI Act

The FOI Act is the legislative basis for open government in Australia at the Commonwealth level. In exercising powers under the FOI Act, officers of the Department must consider the objectives set out in section 3 of the Act which include:

1. Giving the Australian community access to information held by government, by requiring agencies to publish that information and by providing for a right of access to documents.
2. Promoting Australia's representative democracy by increasing public participation in government processes, with a view to promoting better-informed decision making.
3. Promoting Australia's representative democracy by increasing scrutiny, discussion, comment and review of government activities.
4. Increasing recognition that information held by government is to be managed for public purposes and is a national resource.
5. Ensuring powers and functions under the FOI Act are to be performed and exercised, as far as possible, to facilitate and promote public access to information, promptly and at the lowest reasonable cost.

Documents released under an FOI request

The Department may release both personal information and non-personal information in response to a request under the FOI Act noting that providing an individual's personal information may also be done through administrative release.

The OAIC FOI Guidelines issued under section 93A of the FOI Act make it clear that it is open to agencies to consider administrative access as an option to release information outside of the FOI Act, the Privacy Act or other legislative avenues.

FOI and Personal information

The FOI Act and the Privacy Act both generally allow individuals to seek access to their personal information and to have that information corrected or annotated.

Personal information has the same definition under the FOI Act and Privacy Act: it means information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:

- whether the information or opinion is true or not; and

- whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.

Examples of personal information include:

- medical or service records
- payments history
- applications or claims made by the applicant and the Department's assessment of those applications or claims
- records of contact with an applicant
- documents provided to or supplied by the applicant
- personnel records of current or former employees of the Department

Section 47F of the FOI Act conditionally exempts documents where disclosure would involve the unreasonable disclosure of personal information of any person (including a deceased person). This exemption is intended to protect the personal privacy of individuals.

This exemption does not apply if the personal information is only about the applicant. Where the information is joint personal information, however, the exemption may apply. The OAIC's FOI Guidelines provide more information about joint personal information.

Proof of identity of the individual and/or consent to disclose the information to a third party are generally required for the release of any personal information a third party, including under an FOI request.

Non-personal information

Examples of non-personal information include:

- statistics or data relating to the Department's key functions and activities,
- non-personal information that isn't made public, such as policy or procedure documents.

Limitations of FOI release

- It requires the applicant to make a formal written request.
- It requires the Department to provide a written statement of reasons, outlining applicable legislative provisions for any redactions or exemptions with the release of documents.
- It must be processed within 30 days of receipt, taking into account any statutory extensions of time due to agreement by the applicant or the OAIC, or due to consultations with third parties or the

applicant. The Department may seek an extension to the 30 day processing time due to the complexity of an FOI request.

- It may invoke a charge from the Department for the costs incurred for the release of information, such as the resources involved, and the photocopying required.
- It involves a more complex process of engagement with, and within the Department.

Advantages of FOI release

- Applicants have a formal right of review of the outcome of the released documents.
- Documents requested involving complex confidentiality or personal information of third parties may be considered through a formal consultation process that can consider and weigh all factors including applying public interest factors in favour and against release.
- Clear legislated timeframes for the Department's response to a request helps to manage applicant expectations.

Where a request is initially submitted under the FOI Act and is more suited to an administrative access, the Department will first contact the applicant and seek their consent to change the request to an administrative release, and confirm withdrawal of the FOI application by the applicant. See more on administrative access in the Administrative Release Guideline.

The Department may be legally obliged to refuse access to or redact some information sought under the FOI Act. This can extend to information that involves the personal information of another person or sensitive or confidential information. The Department is required to consider applicable legislation and the APP guidelines when considering the release of information. We may remove certain types of information, such as staff surnames, signatures and other personal information. We remove information that protects individuals' privacy, is commercially sensitive, or for security and other reasons. For more information on redactions see the DVA Redaction Guidelines.

The OAIC and APP 12 provide guidance on the considerations for refusing access. Further information is available under Redactions and Exemptions below.

Self-service

Information already published by the Department

The FOI Act encourages agencies to proactively publish information they hold.

The Department proactively releases non-personal information on its website under its Information Publication Scheme, FOI disclosure log and media releases. Examples of information which is publicly available on the Department's website include:

- Details of the Department's structure, functions and responsibilities
- Operational information
- Annual reports
- Responses to Parliament
- Reviews
- Statutory appointments
- Consultation arrangements
- Routinely requested information, including on the Department's FOI disclosure log.

The Department's corporate reports are also available on the Australian Government Transparency Portal. Applicants should be referred to the publicly available information if such a request is received.

The FOI Disclosure Log lists documents that have been released under the FOI process (Part 14 of the OAIC's FOI Guidelines) unless they are exempt from disclosure log requirements, including:

- personal information about any person, if it would be 'unreasonable' to publish the information (s 11C(1)(a))
- information about the business, commercial, financial or professional affairs of any person, if publication of that information would be 'unreasonable' (s 11C(1)(b))
- other information of a kind determined by the Information Commissioner if publication of that information would be 'unreasonable' (s 11C(1)(c) and 11C(2))
- any information if it is not reasonably practicable to publish the information because of the extent of modifications that would need to be made to delete information listed in one of the above (s 11C (1)(d)).

MyService

MyService is an avenue provided by the Department to enhance easy access to personal documents for veterans and their nominated representatives. If a veteran is not registered with MyService, they may seek their documents via administrative access directly with the Department, by phone or email.

The personal records may also be accessed under an FOI application or formal application under Australian Privacy Principle (APP) 12. The Department will guide an applicant seeking their own documents towards administrative access before making an FOI application, unless the request is voluminous in nature or requires extensive third party consultations and extensive redactions.

Supporting applicants

How applicants can make an application under the FOI Act:

Applicants are able to submit a request for the release of information under the FOI Act by:

- Completing the *D8601 Information Access Application Form* or sending a written request
- Posting their request or the D8601 Information Access Application Form to:

  Information Access Unit

  Department of Veterans' Affairs

  GPO Box 9998

  Brisbane QLD 4001
- Emailing the request to: Information.Access@dva.gov.au

An FOI request must meet certain criteria under section 15(2) of the FOI Act. The request must:

1. Be in writing.
2. State it is an application for the purposes of the FOI Act
3. Provide enough information as is reasonably necessary to enable a Departmental officer to identify the document/s that the applicant is seeking to access

Additional information on how to request information is contained in the OAIC Guidelines on how to request information.

Section 15 of the FOI Act further provides that 'a person' may request access to a document of an agency or official document of a Minister. However, the meaning of 'person' is very broad and an FOI request may be made by one person on behalf of another person, by an organisation on behalf of a client, or by a person as

the agent or representative of a group of individuals. The term 'person' includes a body politic or body corporate, such as a company.

The Department has an obligation to assist an applicant to make a request so it complies with the technical requirements of the FOI Act. The Information Access Officer must take reasonable steps to assist so the request does meet the above requirements. Early contact with the applicant about a request provides an opportunity to assist the applicant to address any formal requirements that have not been met. It also allows the IAU to ensure they understand the nature of the applicant's request by discussing any necessary revisions or clarifications. Any changes, revisions or clarifications as to the scope of a request, need to be confirmed in writing.

The Department may receive a request that is more closely connected with another agency or Department. Section 16 of the FOI Act provides for the transfer of FOI requests between agencies and Ministers. An agency has a duty to take reasonable steps to assist a person to direct their request to the appropriate agency or Minister, and this enables an agency to discuss with an applicant where a request could be directed (s 15(4)). The Department may partially or wholly transfer a request (s 16(3A)).

The Department may transfer all, or part of a request, to another agency or Minister with the agreement of that agency or Minister if:

- the document is not in the Department's possession but is to their knowledge in the possession of another agency or Minister, or
- the subject matter of the document is more closely connected with the functions of another agency or Minister (ss 16(1) and 16(6)).

However, the transfer must be accepted by the agency in order for the transfer to occur (s 16). An agency may refuse to accept a request where they do not believe the request can be fulfilled or there is insufficient time left to process the request. In this situation, the original agency must continue to process the request.

The Department often receives requests for information which may be more effectively fulfilled by the Department of Defence (Defence). If this occurs, the Department will liaise directly with Defence to request a transfer of the request as early as possible. If accepted, the applicant will be notified of the transfer and Defence will take over the processing of the request.

Formats of release of information

FOI requests require the Department to provide a formal written response to the applicant.

Requested information may be provided to applicants as paper-based documents, electronic records or released on electronic storage devices such as a Universal Serial Bus (USB). Information may also be provided through a third party, such as a medical practitioner, or by producing a summary of the information to the individual. The Department generally releases the information in electronic format. In limited circumstances the Department may discuss other release options with the applicant where applicant is unable to access electronic documents.

Release of information of deceased persons

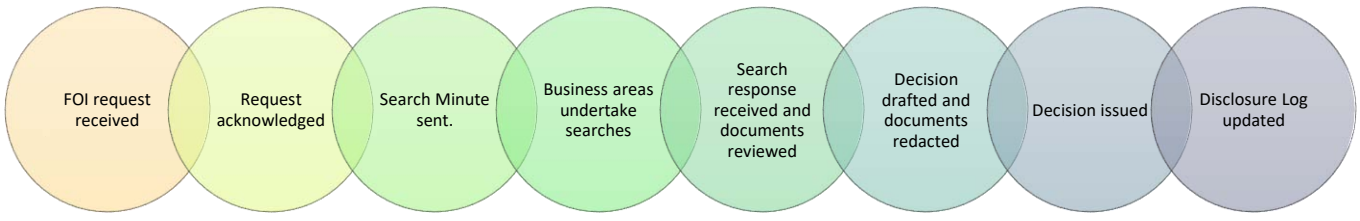
A request for access to the personal information of a deceased client may be sought under the FOI Act and administrative access. A Will, Grant of Probate, Letter of Administration and/or other forms of proof of relationship will be required to enable release the personal information of a deceased client. This is important as in some cases an applicant's relationship status with the deceased veteran may be unclear, for example, where the Department does not have a recorded authority from the client's next-of-kin.

Additionally, the Department will work with advocates, nominated representatives and executors of wills to confirm existing consents on file to establish what can be released and the most appropriate means of release, being administrative access or FOI. Where the Department is not able to release information, clear guidance as to the reasons will be provided with options for consideration.

The IAU is the Department's central coordination point for releases of information associated with deceased persons and will work closely with DVA business areas, applying a trauma informed approach, to obtain the records being sought and facilitate a formal Departmental release.

Timeframes

Under the FOI Act there are legislated timeframes the Department must meet when a FOI application is received.



30 day clock

Information Access Officers have 14 days to acknowledge a request and 30 days to notify the applicant of the Department's decision. The Department must, as soon as practicable, and no later than 30 days after receiving a request, take all reasonable steps to enable the applicant to be notified of a decision on the request (s 15(5)(b)). Section 15(5)(b) provides that the 30-day processing period commences on the day after the day the agency is taken to have received a request that meets the formal requirements of s s15(2) and s15(2A).

The FOI Act allows for the timeframe for processing a request to be extended in certain limited situations, shown below:

Table 1: Extension of Time Provisions

Reason	Period	Determination	Notification
Third party consultation: consultation with a state, or a person or business concerning personal or business information (s 15(6))	30 days	By default if Department determines ss 26A, 27 or 27A apply	Must inform applicant of extension as soon as practicable (s 15(6)(b))
Consultation with foreign entity regarding 33(a)(iii) or 33(b) exemptions (s 15(7),(8))	30 days	By default if Department determines consultation is needed	Must inform applicant of extension as soon as practicable (s 15(8)(b))
By agreement between applicant and agency or Minister (s 15AA)	up to 30 days	Department but only with written agreement of applicant	Must give written notice of the extension to the Information Commissioner as soon as practicable (s 15AA(b)) **Note**: May be in addition to an extension for third party consultation
Complex or voluminous request (s 15AB)	30 days or other period	Information Commissioner, upon request from Department using the OAIC extension request web form	Commissioner must inform Department and applicant of extension (s 15AB(3))

Reason	Period	Determination	Notification
Following a deemed refusal (s 15AC(4))	OAIC determined	Information Commissioner, upon request from agency or Minister	Commissioner may require Department to notify applicant or third party as a condition of granting the extension (s 15AC(6))

Redactions and exemptions

A decision maker must give the applicant a statement of reasons if they refuse any aspect of the FOI request or defer access to documents (s 26(1)).

The FOI Act provides a range of exemptions for different types of information that would not be suitable for release under the FOI framework. An exempt document is either:

- a document that is exempt from the operation of the FOI Act (see s 5-7 and Schedules 1-2 of the FOI Act).
- a document that would be exempt for the purposes of Part IV of the FOI Act (i.e., it meets the criteria for an exemption provisions under the FOI Act in accordance with s 4(1)).

The exemption provision categories are broadly broken into two types:

- Exemptions – Sections 33 - 47A.
- Conditional Exemptions – Sections 47B - 47J.

Conditional exemptions require the public interest test to be satisfied. This means that access must be given unless in the circumstances giving access would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest (s 11A(5))..

For detailed information on exemptions and how to apply them, Information Access Officers should consider the FOI Act, the OAIC's FOI Guidelines and decisions made by the Information Commissioner (Australian Information Commissioner (AICmr) series).

Refer to the DVA Redaction Guidelines for more information.

Decisions on FOI requests

In response to a request for access to documents under the FOI Act, a decision maker may:

- determine the request does not meet the formal requirements for making a request in s 15
- refuse access under s 24A on the basis that the document sought does not exist, cannot be found or was not received from a contractor
- allow access to all documents as requested, even if some are exempt (s 3A(2)(a))
- withhold all requested documents as exempt, or withhold some documents and allow access to others
- provide access to the personal information of the applicant through a qualified person under s 47F(5)
- delete exempt or irrelevant material from documents and provide access to edited copies under s 22
- defer access to the requested documents until a later date under s 21
- refuse under s 25 to confirm or deny that a document which would be exempt under s 33, 37(1) or 45A exists
- refuse a request if a practical refusal reason exists under s 24AA, following a request consultation process
- impose a charge for processing a request or for access to a document to which a request relates under s 29
- amend or annotate a record of the applicant's personal information as requested under s 48
- decline to amend or annotate a record of the applicant's personal information as requested under s 48.

A 'deemed access refusal' occurs where the statutory time for making a decision on an FOI request for access to a document has expired and the decision has not been made. Where there has been a deemed decision, the OAIC may make inquiries with the agency or Minister.

Where a substantive decision is made following a deemed refusal, and a notice under s 26 has been given, the OAIC will check whether the applicant is satisfied with the agency or Minister's decision. Applicants who are satisfied with the decision and do not wish to proceed with the Information Commissioners (IC) review must advise the OAIC in writing. Applicants who are not satisfied with the agency or Minister's

decision must explain why they disagree with the decision and the basis on which they wish to proceed with the IC review.

An agency or minister may refuse a request if a 'practical refusal reason' exists (s 24) but only after following the 'request consultation process' set out in s 24AB of the FOI Act.

A practical refusal reason means that:

- a request does not sufficiently identify the requested documents (s 24AA(1)(b)); or
- the work involved in processing the request:
    - in the case of an agency—would substantially and unreasonably divert the resources of the agency from its other operations (s 24AA(1)(a)(i)), or
    - in the case of a Minister—would substantially and unreasonably interfere with the performance of the Minister's functions (s 24AA(1)(a)(ii)).

Charges

Section 29 of the FOI Act provides discretion for the Department to impose a charge for processing a request or providing access to a document.

Requests by applicants for their own personal information or from third parties acting on behalf of another person who is seeking their own personal information are unable to be charged a fee. Similarly, an application for amendment or annotation of a personal record, internal review of an FOI decision and review applications or complaints to the Information Commissioner are to be provided at no cost to the applicant.

FOI requests for non-personal information may attract a fee.

Once searches are completed and all relevant search minutes returned and compiled the Information Access Officer can then charge, if appropriate. Charges should be calculated using the charges calculator template and the charges notice template.

Fees and charges are set by the *Freedom of Information (Charges) Regulations 1982* (the Regulations), these include[1]:

Action	Charge
Search and retrieval: time that the Information Access Officer will spend searching for or retrieving a document	Australian dollar (AUD) $15.00 per hour
Decision making: time spent deciding to grant or refuse a request, including examining documents, consulting with other parties, and making deletions	First five hours: Nil Subsequent hours: AUD $20 per hour
Transcript: preparing a transcript from a sound recording, voice call or other type of document that would require transcription	AUD $4.40 per page of transcript
Photocopy (of the documents provided to the applicant)	AUD $0.10 per page
Inspection: supervision by an agency officer of inspection of documents or hearing or viewing an audio or visual recording at a Department office	AUD $6.25 per half hour (or part thereof)
Delivery: sending or delivering a copy of a document at an applicant's request	Cost of postage or delivery

Other costs are chargeable at amounts 'not exceeding the actual cost incurred by the Department (see the Charges Regulations for more detailed information). Information Access Officers must stop the clock on the day that a charges notice is issued to an applicant. From the day the notice was given, the applicant has 30 days, or a further period if the agency allows, to do one of the following in writing:

- Advise of their agreement to pay the charge
- Contend the charge has been wrongly assessed, or should be reduced or not imposed, or both
- Withdraw the FOI request (s 29(1)(f) of the FOI Act).

Where a charge has been applied, and an applicant contends the charge has been wrongly assessed, or should be reduced or not imposed, or both, the applicant will be asked to set out their reasons in writing. Upon receipt, the Department will appoint a Senior Officer to review the reasons. The Department will make a decision within 30 days as to whether the charge will be imposed, reduced or waived. The applicant will be provided a written decision, including the factors considered in arriving at it together with information on their rights to seek an internal and/or external review via the OAIC.

[1] As set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulations.

Complaints and review of an FOI decision

A person who is not satisfied with a decision on a request for documents, or for amendment or annotation, may request an internal review by the Department of an 'access refusal' decision (in the case of the FOI applicant: s 54(2)) or an 'access grant' decision (in the case of an affected third party: s 54A(2)) (Part 9 of the OAIC's FOI Guidelines).

Internal Review

The FOI Act gives applicants the right to seek an internal review of a decision refusing to grant, or a decision granting partial access to documents under an FOI request.

The internal review will be conducted by an Information Access Officer who will (generally) hold a more senior position than the original decision-maker. An application for internal review must be in writing and made within 30 days of notification of the original decision. The Department can, at its discretion, extend the period in which internal review can be sought by an applicant.

Where a charge has been applied, applicants may seek an internal review of a decision to impose a charge or the amount of a charge (s 53A(e)).

Information Commissioner Review

An application can also be made to the Information Commissioner for a review of the following decisions:

- a decision to refuse access to a document
- a decision made by the Department on internal review to refuse access to a document
- a decision to refuse a further period for making an application for internal review of a decision to refuse access to a document.

Applicants have 60 days following the date of a decision to lodge a review with the Information Commissioner. An applicant does not have to seek internal review before seeking review by the Information Commissioner. Applications for a review by the Information Commissioner must be sent to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner directly by the applicant. Applicants may also make a complaint to the Information Commissioner about the Department's processing of an FOI request, even if

they agree with the decision made. For more information on the procedure, please see the guidance published by OAIC.

Finally, applicants may seek review of an FOI decision by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) but they must first seek Information Commissioner Review. Appeals to the AAT must be lodged in writing within 28 days of being notified of the Information Commissioner's review decision.

Recording of FOI requests

Section 93 of the FOI Act requires the Department to provide quarterly and annual statistics to the Information Commissioner to enable the Commissioner to prepare the FOI statistical return under s 30 of the *Australian Information Commissioner Act 2010*.

If no FOI requests have been processed, a 'Nil Return' must be submitted.

The Information Access Unit is responsible for ensuring the Department's compliance with section 93 of the FOI Act. The IAU submits statistics through the FOI Statistical Returns Portal (Application Logon (oaic.gov.au)) by the following (required) deadlines:

- Quarter 1 (1 July to 30 September): **By 21 October**
- Quarter 2 (1 October to 31 December): **By 21 January**
- Quarter 3 (1 January to 31 March): **By 21 April**
- Quarter 4 (1 April to 30 June): **By 21 July**
- Annual Statistics (each year): **By 31 July**

Documents held by the Repatriation Commission or Military Rehabilitation and

Any claims records held by the Commissions may be requested under an FOI application pending proof of identity and consent of the individual referred to in the application. Redactions and exemptions will be applied to the release of information as noted above.

Information Access Unit

- The IAU in the Department is responsible for managing all requests under FOI. Any other business area that receives a request under FOI should refer it directly to the IAU at Information.Access@dva.gov.au.
- The IAU also manages the more complex and formal requests for information under administrative release, subpoenas and court orders.
- Less formal requests for access to information may be managed by other business areas under administrative release.

Related information

1. Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Cth)
2. Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
3. DVA Information Release Policy
4. OAIC's FOI Guidelines
5. OAIC 'Administrative access' guidance
6. Open Government Partnership National Action Plan
7. DVA Privacy Policy
8. Productivity Commissioner's Data Availability and Use Inquiry
9. DVA Administrative release Guidelines

Glossary

Administrative access – an informal method whereby applicants request information or documents held by the Department, outside of the FOI Act or other legislative means.

Administrative release – an informal method the Department release information to applicants, outside of the FOI Act or other legislative means.

Applicant – an individual, business or organisation who makes a request for access to information or documents held by the Department.

Australian Privacy Principles – 13 principles within the Privacy Act which govern standards, rights and obligations around:

- the collection, use and disclosure of personal information

- an organisation or agency's governance and accountability
- integrity and correction of personal information
- the rights of individuals to access their personal information

Certified copy – a photocopy certified by a solicitor, barrister, justice of the peace or other approved person to be a true copy of the original.

Document – same meaning as under section 4 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth)

Information – the content of documents.

Information Access Unit (IAU) – a central resource in the Department through which applicants can seek information held by the Department; and responsible for managing Freedom of Information requests.

Information Access Officer (IAO) – an Australian public servant within the Department's Information Access Unit who is delegated to make decisions under the FOI Act.

Personal information – same meaning as in the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). It can include an individual's name, address, telephone number, date of birth, medical records, bank account details, taxation information and their signature.

Third party – a person or entity other than the applicant or their authorised representative that is the person making the FOI application and falls within s26A, s27 or s27A of the FOI Act.

Keywords

Access to information; administrative access; Australian Privacy Principles; APP; disclosure log; FOI; freedom of information; OAIC; Office of the Australian Information Commissioner; information; personal information; privacy; release of information; right to information; third party.

Further information

For further advice or assistance, please contact the Department's Information Access Unit at Information.Access@dva.gov.au.

Further information about freedom of information and other options for accessing information held by the Department, can be found on the Department's website at: https://www.dva.gov.au/about-us/overview/reporting/freedom-information/access-information.

The owner of this FOI Guideline and the Administrative Release and Redaction Guideline is the First Assistant Secretary, Ministerial, International & Stakeholder Branch, responsible for the Departments' Information Access Unit.