

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2012-2013**

Cross Portfolio

DEEWR Question No. EW0449_13

Senator Back provided in writing.

Question

Freedom of Information

"Has the department/agency received any updated advice on how to respond to FOI requests? What is the total cost to the department/agency to process FOI requests for 2011-12? How many FOI requests did the department/agency receive in 2011-12? How many requests were denied and how many were granted? Did the department fail to meet the processing times outlined in the FOI Act for any requests? If so, how many? Do any of these requests remain outstanding? What is the total cost to the department to process FOI requests for this financial year to date? How many FOI requests has the Department received for this financial year to date? How many requests have been denied and how many have been granted? Has the department failed to meet the processing times outlined in the FOI Act for any requests? If so, how many and why? Do any of these requests remain outstanding? If so, how many and why?"

Answer

The department has received updated advice on how to respond to FOI requests through updated guidelines issued by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

Details regarding FOI requests processed in 2011-12 are provided at Table 1. Details regarding FOI requests processed for the current financial year to date are provided at Table 2.

Table 1 - FOI Requests Financial Year 2011-12

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Financial Year 2011-12	Number
Requests on hand as at 1 July 2011 ¹	49
Total requests received	369
Decisions on Access Made	
Full release	165
Partial release	55
Refused	31
Alternative Outcomes	
Withdrawn	112
Transferred	30
Requests on hand as at 30 June 2012	25
Processing Time	
Requests processed within statutory timeframes	251
Requests in which department failed to meet statutory timeframes	0
Financials	
Cost to DEEWR (Non staff costs directly attributable to FOI – i.e. paper, postage, travel, external legal fees).	\$51,919.00 ²

Table 2 - FOI Requests Financial Year to date (01/07/12 - 30/09/12)

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

01/07/12 to 30/09/12	Number
Requests on hand as at 1 July 2012	25
Total requests received	91
Decisions on Access Made	
Full release	28
Partial release	11
Refused	4
Alternative Outcomes	
Withdrawn	21
Transferred	14
Requests on hand at 30 September 2012	38
Processing Time	
Requests processed within statutory timeframes	43
Requests in which department failed to meet statutory timeframes	0
Financials	
Cost to DEEWR (Non staff costs directly attributable to FOI – i.e. paper, postage, travel, external legal fees).	\$4,815.65 ³

¹ The requests on hand figure is the number of valid primary FOI requests which were received in the previous financial year but no primary access decision had been made as at the start of the financial year.

² Amount is an estimate only.

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