

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman
Outcome/Program: Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman
Topic: Freedom of Information

Senator: Senator Ryan

Question reference number: 88

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 6 July 2012

Number of pages: 1

Question:

1. Has the Department/agency received any updated advice on how to respond to FOI requests?
2. What is the total cost to the department to process FOI requests for this financial year to date?
3. 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?
4. How many conclusive certificates have been issued in relation to FOI requests for this financial year to date?

Answers:

1. Yes - updated legal advice, advice and guidelines issued by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.
2. The cost to the Ombudsman's office to process FOI requests has not been calculated and reported for this period. Costs are reported on an annual basis.
3. This office received 163 requests for financial year to 30 April 2012. Decisions have been made for all requests for the period. Five requests were denied. The office sought and obtained an extension of processing time from the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner in relation to five requests which were complex and involved a large volume of material. No requests remain outstanding.
4. Nil.