

SENATE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL LEGISLATION COMMITTEE  
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

**Question No. 99**

**Senator Ludwig asked the following question at the hearing on 25 May 2006:**

- a) Please explain the rise in rejections of FoI requests (8% in 1996-97 to 36% now).
- b) Have AFP's guidelines on FoI changed at all?

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

(a) The 8% figure for 1996-97 appears to be out of character with subsequent years which show, for example, 17% for 1997-98; 28% for 1998-99; 26% for 1999-00; 30% for 2000-01; 46% for 2001-02; 29% for 2002-03; 35% for 2003-04 and 36% for 2004-05. To explain the low refusal figure for 1996-97 would require retrieval and examination of all FoI requests for that year and this is considered an inappropriate use of human resources. Decisions to refuse access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* are made following careful and serious consideration of the request.

In some instances, a request is refused because the AFP has no documentary record of the applicant. In these cases, the applicant is often directed to another organisation which may be able to assist with their request.

(b) No.