

## **QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

### **BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 27-28 May 2013**

#### **IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO**

#### **(BE13/0510) PROGRAM – Internal Product**

Senator Humphries (Written) asked:

Has the department/agency received any updated advice on how to respond to FOI requests? 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:*

Other than guidelines and other agency resources issued and updated by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, the Department has not received any updated advice on how to respond to FOI requests.

As the information on the costs to the Department for processing FOI requests for the current financial year is collated for the FOI Annual Report issued by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner at the end of each financial year, information relating to this financial year will be available after 31 July 2013.

For the 2012-13 financial year to COB 26 May 2013, the Department received 10 956 FOI requests (8 483 Access and 2 473 Amendment).

For the 11 028 FOI requests finalised by the Department for the 2012-13 financial year to COB 26 May 2013 (8 509 Access and 2 519 Amendment), the outcomes have been as follows:

Requests for access to documents:

- 4 568 (53.7 per cent) were granted in full;
- 2 991 (35.2 per cent) were granted in part;
- 627 (7.4 per cent) were refused in full; and
- 323 (3.8 per cent) were withdrawn or transferred to another agency.

Requests for amendment to personal information:

- 1 610 (63.9 per cent) records were altered;
- 223 (8.9 per cent) records were annotated; and
- 686 (27.2 per cent) were refused or withdrawn.

For requests due in the 2012-13 financial year to COB 26 May 2013, the Department finalised 88.2 per cent of requests within 30 days.

The Department had a total of 822 cases on hand as at COB 26 May 2013. Of these, 63 requests were outside of the legislative timeframe (inclusive of extensions of time granted under the FOI Act). This is as a result of the size and/or complexity of these requests.