



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

Our reference: FOI 24-063

Mr Ben Fairless

By email: foi+request-10584-c136dfe6@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Mr Fairless,

Decision on your Freedom of Information Request

I refer to your request of 18 August 2023, to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (the Department), seeking access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act).

1 Your request

You requested access to:

I would like a copy of the most recent user manuals, or instructions to access NEVDIS data.

2 Authority to make decision

I am authorised by the Secretary to make decisions in relation to Freedom of Information requests under section 23(1) of the FOI Act.


3 Background

On 25 August 2023 the department emailed you advising:

The [Austroads website](#) advises the administration unit works closely with the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department on the [Document Verification Service](#) (DVS) and with the Australian Financial Security Authority (AFSA) on the [Personal Property Security Register](#) (PPSR) to allow the general public to access vehicle information.

As such on Friday 18 August 2023 the department attempted to transfer your request to AFSA on the grounds that the subject matter of your request is more closely related to the functions of their agency.

Unfortunately AFSA declined transfer of your request, however they provided the following information:



The Personal Property Securities Register (PPSR) is a national, online, noticeboard of **security interests**. A person buying second-hand (personal) property can search the PPSR at any time, to ascertain whether another party has an interest over the property.

Searching the PPSR costs \$2 per online search, and \$7 for searching via phone call.

Motor vehicle searches are conducted against a VIN, which is a unique serial number. When you conduct a search on the PPSR against a VIN, you will be provided results as to whether or not a security interest exists against that VIN at the time of your search.

In addition to this information, you *may* receive NEVDIS information. NEVDIS information is not owned by the PPSR. At the time of your search, the PPSR sends an immediate digital request to the NEVDIS database. If the VIN is found on the NEVDIS database, that information is returned and included on your PPSR search certificate. We cannot guarantee the NEVDIS information or that any will return with your search.

If you would like to conduct a search against a VIN you can do so online here: [PPSR - Quick motor vehicle search \(msapproxy.net\)](https://www.ppsr.gov.au/quick-search)

In addition, we have more information about motor vehicle searches on our website:

NEVDIS: [NEVDIS \(National Exchange of Vehicle and Driver Information System\) | Personal Property Securities Register \(ppsr.gov.au\)](https://www.ppsr.gov.au/nevdis)

Searching: [Do a used car or vehicle search | Personal Property Securities Register \(ppsr.gov.au\)](https://www.ppsr.gov.au/used-car)
understanding search results: [Understand your car search result | Personal Property Securities Register \(ppsr.gov.au\)](https://www.ppsr.gov.au/understand)

You can call the AFSA Service Centre Monday – Friday during business hours, and they will be happy to assist you further: 1300 007 777.

Following this correspondence, the department conducted an additional search and located this publicly available guide to loading VIN's to NEVDIS: [Guide to submitting a VIN to NEVDIS | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts](https://www.ppsr.gov.au/guide). The department does not hold guides to accessing NEVDIS data, and if you wish to seek access to these guides you may wish to contact AFSA or Austroads.


4 Decision

The right of access under the FOI Act is limited to a document in the possession of the Department.

A 'document' that may be requested under the FOI Act does not include material maintained for reference purposes that is otherwise publicly available. Also, a 'document of an agency' is limited to a document in the possession of the Department, whether created in the Department or received in the Department (section 4 of the FOI Act refers).

Section 24A of the FOI Act provides that the Department may refuse a request for access to a document if:

- (a) all reasonable steps have been taken to find the document, and
- (b) the agency or Minister is satisfied that the document:
 - (i) is in the agency's or Minister's possession but cannot be found, or
 - (ii) does not exist.



The business area responsible for the subject matter of your request has conducted searches of the Department's information holdings. No documents matching the description in your request were identified as being in the possession of the Department.

I am satisfied that all reasonable steps have been taken to find documents which would be relevant to your request and that the documents cannot be located or do not exist in the possession of the department.

I have decided to refuse your request in accordance with section 24A of the FOI Act, on the basis that the Department does not hold a document in its possession that meets the terms of your request.

5 Material taken into consideration

In making my decision, I had regard to the following:

- the terms of your request
- the provisions of the FOI Act
- the guidelines issued by the Australian Information Commissioner under section 93A of the FOI Act (the FOI Guidelines)
- advice from departmental officers with responsibility for the subject matter captured by your request

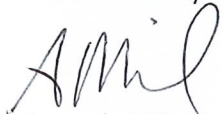
6 Legislative provisions

The FOI Act, including the provisions referred to in my decision, are available on the Federal Register of Legislation website: www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A02562.

7 Your review rights

Your review rights in relation to this decision are set out at **ATTACHMENT A**.

Yours sincerely



Amanda Milczarek
Acting Assistant Secretary
Vehicle Safety Operations Branch
Road and Vehicle Safety Division

Date: 15 September 2023

YOUR REVIEW RIGHTS

If you are dissatisfied with my decision, you may apply for a review of it.

Internal review

You can request an internal review within 30 days of receiving this decision. An internal review will be conducted by a different departmental officer from the original decision-maker.

No particular form is required to apply for review although it will assist the Department if you are able to set out the grounds on which you believe that the original decision should be changed.

Applications for internal review can be sent to FOI@infrastructure.gov.au

If you choose to seek an internal review, you will also have a right to apply for Information Commissioner review (IC review) of the internal review decision once it has been provided to you if you remain dissatisfied with the decision.

Information Commissioner review or complaint

You have the right to seek a review by the Information Commissioner of this decision.

An application for IC review must be made in writing to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) within 60 days of the decision.

If you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your FOI request, you can lodge a complaint with the OAIC. However, the OAIC suggests that complaints are made to the agency in the first instance.

More information about the Information Commissioner reviews and complaints is available on the OAIC website here: www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/foi-review-process.