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In reply, please quote:
FOI30/129

20 March 2023

Ben Fairless

By email: foi+request-11151-9a3fb678@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Ben Fairless,

Re: Freedom of Information Request Consultation Process

1. I refer to your email dated 21 February 2024 to the Bureau of Meteorology ('the Bureau'), in which you request access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* ('FOI Act'). You wrote:

Within the official iOS BOM Weather app there is the ability to provide feedback.

Is it possible to get a list of all feedback provided via this method, as well as any correspondence within the bureau about this feedback?

I'm happy to limit my request to the last 12 months, and also agree to redact personally identifiable information of both members of the public and public servants.

Please consider processing this requested administratively outside of the FOI Act. If you are unable to do so, please treat this as a formal FOI Request.

(We refer this access request as 'your request'.)

2. I am authorised under section 23(1) of the FOI Act to issue this notice to you pursuant to s 24AB(2). This is notice of my view that a practical refusal reason exists in relation to your request.

Practical refusal reason

3. In my view, the scope of your request is very broad. In its current form, I consider the work involved in processing your request would substantially and unreasonably divert the resources of the Bureau from its other operations.

Your request:

4. Your request comprises two parts:
 - a. Part A: 'a list of all feedback provided' with regards to the 'iOS BOM Weather app'; and
 - b. Part B: 'any correspondence within the bureau about this feedback'.
5. Your request seeks documents for 'the last 12 months' in relation to each part.

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Time involved in fulfilling your request:

6. I note that feedback received by the Bureau in relation to the iOS BOM Weather app are recorded in an electronic record system and are not strictly available as discrete 'documents' but are recorded and displayed as lines of information. In order to provide access, the Bureau would need to extract the information and produce it in a 'document' form. Our searches have identified approximately one million lines of feedback, equating to approximately 20,000 pages. In forming the view that a practical refusal reason exists, I have taken into account the time required to produce the document.
7. An assessment of 'Part A' of your request was undertaken. In my view, a practical refusal reason exists because the amount of time involved in fulfilling your request would be approximately 500 hours.
8. The majority of this time would involve reviewing the feedback to identify personal information. I note that you have excluded '*personally identifiable information of both members of the public and public servants*'. However, staff will need to review the material in order to identify any such personal information. We have allowed 1.5 minutes to review each page and estimated 5% of pages would contain personal information.
9. These estimates are conservative and relate only to 'Part A' of your request. In relation to Part B, we would require clarification from you before searches can proceed.
10. Having regard to the above considerations, I intend to refuse access to the documents in scope of your request on the grounds that a 'practical refusal reason' exists, as set out in section 24AA of the FOI Act. Before making a decision to refuse access on practical grounds, I must engage with you in a formal request consultation process, as set out below.

Request consultation process

11. You now have an opportunity to revise your request to enable it to proceed. This is called a 'request consultation process' as set out under section 24AB of the FOI Act.
12. **You have 14 days to respond to this notice in one of the ways set out below.** I encourage you to respond.
13. **Before the end of the consultation period, you must do one of the following, in writing:**
 - A. withdraw your request
 - B. make a revised request
 - C. tell us that you do not wish to revise your request.
14. I suggest that a way to reduce the work involved in processing your request sufficiently so that it can proceed would be to:
 - a. exclude emails regarding feedback; and
 - b. limit the time period for feedback provided through iOS BOM Weather app to a one-month period of your choice.
15. Please note that if you do revise or withdraw a part of your request, this does not prevent you from making another request for that material in the future.

Timeframe and next steps:

16. The consultation period runs for **14 days** and starts on the day after you receive this notice.

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17. During this period, you are welcome to seek assistance from the Bureau's FOI Officer to revise your request. If you revise your request in a way that adequately addresses the practical refusal grounds outlined above, we will recommence processing it.
18. Please note that the time taken to consult you regarding the scope of your request is not taken into account for the purposes of the 30-day time limit for processing your request.
19. If we do not hear from you during the consultation period, your request will be taken to have been withdrawn.
20. Please email FOI@bom.gov.au during this period to advise us which of option —A, B or C set out above.

For further information:

21. If you would like to revise your request or you have any questions about this letter, or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact FOI@bom.gov.au.
22. The Bureau aims to provide accessible documents. If you need this document in a different format, please contact FOI@bom.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

(Approved electronically)

Ben Di Lorenzo

General Manager, Digital Channels & Customer Experience Design

Bureau of Meteorology

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