



Bob Buckley

[foi+request-12783-4042c0eb@righttoknow.org.au](mailto:foi+request-12783-4042c0eb@righttoknow.org.au)

Dear Mr Buckley

### **Freedom of Information Internal Review LEX 52942**

I refer to your application under *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (FOI Act)* made to the Department of Social Services (**the Department**) on 13 February 2025. The application seeks internal review of the decision made in respect of the FOI request LEX 52785 (**original decision**) which sought access to:

*A file (a .csv or .xlsx (not PDF)) with columns/fields of from, to, cc, subject, date, and a column with the text of the paragraph from the body of the email that mentions “mild autism” and where the date field is in July to December 2023 (inclusive).*

I am authorised to make internal review decisions under subsection 23(1) of the FOI Act and am writing to inform you of that decision.

#### **The original decision**

The original decision refused the request on the basis that the documents requested do not exist.

A copy of the original decision is enclosed at **Attachment A**.

#### **Internal review decision**

I have decided to affirm the original decision, agreeing that the documents requested do not exist.

You are seeking a list that includes extracts of emails that fall within your search parameters. The IT team can conduct electronic searches of databases to assist in identifying documents relevant to a particular FOI request, but it does not have the capacity to automatically create a document with relevant parts of those documents extracted.

As a result, creation of the document sought would require first retrieving the individual emails sought, and then manually extracting relevant parts of them into a separate document. The Department does not hold this document, nor does FOI Act does not require the Department to take these steps.

#### **Material relied upon in making this decision**

I relied on the following material in coming to this decision:

- the terms of the FOI request;
- the application for internal review;
- the FOI Act; and
- the Guidelines issued by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner under section 93A of the FOI Act (**FOI Guidelines**).

## **Review rights and complaints**

Information concerning how you may seek a review of this decision or make a complaint about the handling of this request is at **Attachment B**.

## **Contact**

If you would like to discuss any aspect of my decision, please contact me at [foi@dss.gov.au](mailto:foi@dss.gov.au).

Yours sincerely

Alan Hilvert-Bruce  
Authorised FOI Decision Maker

14 March 2025

## **Attachments**

Attachment A – Original Decision

Attachment B – Review Rights

## REVIEW RIGHTS

### **Review or Complaints to the Information Commissioner**

You may seek review of this decision via the Australian Information Commissioner (**Information Commissioner**) within 60 days of the receipt of this decision letter.

You may also make a complaint to the Information Commissioner concerning actions taken by the Department while exercising its powers or performing its functions under the FOI Act.

Further details on both processes above can be found on the Information Commissioner's website at <https://www.oaic.gov.au/>.