



20 January 2016

Our reference: LEX 16962

Mr Patrick Conheady

By email: [foi+request-1459-5b6b53e6@righttoknow.org.au](mailto:foi+request-1459-5b6b53e6@righttoknow.org.au)

Dear Mr Conheady

### **Your Freedom of Information request**

I refer to your request for access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act), dated 27 December 2015.

### **Your request involves too much work for the department**

Because of the amount of work involved for the department, we are asking you to revise your request to give us more specific details about the information you are after. If you decide not to make any revisions, I will have to refuse your FOI request as a 'practical refusal reason' exists. For a more detailed explanation of what this means see Attachment A.

### **How to send us a 'revised request'**

Before I make a final decision on your request, you can narrow the size of your original request and submit a revised request.

Within the next 14-days you must do one of the following, in writing:

- withdraw the request
- make a revised request, or
- tell us that you do not want to revise your request.

If you do not do contact us during the 14 day consultation period, we will assume you do not want to continue with your request. See Attachment A for relevant sections of the FOI Act.

If you decide to make a revised request you should be more specific about what documents you actually want. This could help the department find the documents in less time and use fewer resources to process them.

**Note:** You may want to access the department's online services at [www.humanservices.gov.au](http://www.humanservices.gov.au) to immediately find some of the personal information and documents included in your original request.

At Attachment B is a form which you can use to revise your request in writing. We have 30 days to give you a decision about your request, however the time taken to consult with you now is not included in this 30 day time period.

## Contact officer

I am the contact officer for your request. During the 14 day consultation period, you are welcome to ask for my help in revising your request and filling out the form. You can contact me:

- in writing to the address at the end of this letter.
- via email to [FOI.Legal.Team@humanservices.gov.au](mailto:FOI.Legal.Team@humanservices.gov.au)

**Note:** When you contact us please quote the reference number **FOI LEX 16692**.

Your response will be expected by **4 February 2016**. If no response is received, your matter will be taken as withdrawn.

Yours sincerely

FOI Authorised Decision Maker  
Freedom of Information Team  
FOI and Litigation Branch | Legal Services Division  
Department of Human Services  
Email: [FOI.Legal.Team@humanservices.gov.au](mailto:FOI.Legal.Team@humanservices.gov.au)

### What I took into account

Because of the amount of work involved for the department, under sections 24AA(1)(a)(i), 24 and 24AA(2) of the FOI Act I intend to refuse your FOI request as a 'practical refusal reason' exists. Under the Act, the practical refusal reason is that processing your request 'would substantially and unreasonably divert the resources' of this agency.

To process your request the department, extensive work would be involved in extracting data from the department's IT systems across each master program (Centrelink, Medicare and Child Support). This data would then need to be analysed to ensure it is correct and in an appropriate form for publication. Preliminary analysis indicate that the output of producing the requested information would be more than 300 000 pages of documents.

Based on my experience with the type and volume of records you want, and advice provided by the area of the department that has extensive knowledge and experience in relation to producing data from the department's IT systems, I estimate it would take more than 35,500 hours in processing time. This includes looking at all the documents to see if any of the pages might need redactions - that is, possibly blacking out some content, for example, where there is private information about third parties.

### Amount of time to process your request

I have calculated the number of hours it would take to process your request in full.

Search for and retrieve documents (including extraction of data from databases)	3 500 hours
Examine pages for decision making at an average of 3 minutes per page	15 000 hours
Time of three minutes per page for estimated 250 000 pages needing redaction	12 500 hours
Write statement of reasons for decision	500 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>31 500 hours</b>

### Relevant sections of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*

Section 24AA(1)(a)(i) of the FOI Act provides that a practical refusal reason exists in relation to a FOI request if the work involved in processing the request would substantially and unreasonably divert the resources of the department from its other operations.

Section 24AA(2) of the FOI Act sets out certain factors which the department must consider when determining whether providing access in relation to a request would substantially and unreasonably divert the department's resources. The department must specifically have regard to the resources that would have to be used for:

- identifying, locating or collating the documents within the department's filing system;

- deciding whether to grant, refuse or defer access to a document to which the request relates, or to grant access to an edited copy of such a document, including resources that would have to be used for examining the document or consulting in relation to the request;
- making a copy, or an edited copy, of the document, and
- notifying any interim or final decision on the request.

Section 24AB(7) of the FOI Act provides that the request is taken to have been withdrawn under at the end of the consultation period if:

- the applicant does not consult the contact person during the consultation period in accordance with the notice, or
- the applicant does not do one of the things mentioned in subsection (6) before the end of the consultation period.

Section 24AB(6) says that the applicant must, before the end of the consultation period, do one of the following, by written notice to the agency or Minister:

- withdraw the request,
- make a revised request, or
- indicate that the applicant does not wish to revise the request.

**Attachment B**
**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REVISED REQUEST FORM**  
**(Section 24AB of the FOI Act)**

**NOTE: You do not have to fill out every part of this form. However, providing as much detail as possible could help to reduce the amount of work involved for the department to process your request.**

Name	Mr Patrick Conheady
Date of Birth	Unknown
FOI LEX number	LEX 16962
Initial request details	<p>Please provide the data dictionary (or equivalent) for the Department's data warehouse(s) (or equivalent).</p> <p>The requested documents should list tables, columns, the plain English meaning of each column and the relationships between tables (foreign keys, etc), and include all non-sensitive reference data such as the meanings of codes used in tables.</p>

**I, Patrick Conheady would like to revise my current FOI request.**

1. I would like to limit the time period of documents to:

- ☐ A specific date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ ;  
[day] [month] [year]
- ☐ A specific year: \_\_\_\_\_ ; or  
[year]
- ☐ The date range from: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
[day] [month] [year] [day] [month] [year]

2. My request relates to documents for (tick boxes and insert numbers that apply to you):

- ☐ **A** Centrelink CRN: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **B** Medicare Card no: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **C** Child Support CSID: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **D** CRS Australia Ref no: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Select which of the following documents you are requesting:

**Debt related documents**

- ☐ My debt calculation documents for debt reference: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ A summary of my debt repayments for debt reference: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Debt explanation documents for debt reference: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other debt related documents (*provide a description of these documents*): \_\_\_\_\_

**Medical related documents**

- ☐ Copies of medical documents about me, including medical assessment reports (for example, Job Capacity Assessment reports)
- ☐ Medical documents related to my claim for \_\_\_\_\_

**Medicare**

- ☐ My personal Medical Benefit Scheme (MBS) History
- ☐ My personal Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme (PBS) History  
(**Note:** Your PBS and MBS history are available through your online account. They can also be requested without a formal FOI request. See Question 5 below.)
- ☐ Other Medicare documents (*provide a description of these documents*): \_\_\_\_\_

**Child support related documents**

- ☐ My letters of assessment
- ☐ My call recordings (*provide a description of the calls you want*): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other (*provide a description of these documents*): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Other/general documents**

- ☐ Documents about my contact with the department
- ☐ My Online Document Recording (**Note:** These are electronic documents on a customer's record where department staff record customer contact, conversations and actions)
- ☐ Other (*provide a comprehensive description of the documents you need*)  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Please provide any extra information to assist us to identify the documents.

Name of the document (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Reference/file number (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Extra information :

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If you need more space, attach a separate page with details.

**We can provide some documents to you without an FOI request.**

5. If your request can be completed without a formal FOI request, do you want us to send the documents this way?

☐ Yes

☐ No

## HOW TO SEND THIS FORM

### ***By post to:***

Attention: FOI Legal Team  
Department of Human Services  
PO Box 7820  
CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

Make sure you add the reference number FOI LEX 16962.

**OR**

### ***Email to:***

**FOI.Legal.Team@humanservices.gov.au**

Make sure you add the reference number FOI LEX 16962. You do not have to include your signature in your email.