



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT
BARTON

FOI/2016/057

Mr Jackson Gothe-Snape
Right to Know

By email: foi+request-1753-3bfad3f6@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Mr Gothe-Snape

On 20 March 2016 you made a request to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (Department) under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) for the following documents:

any emails, documents and minutes between 14 September 2015 and 17 November 2015 relating to Grand Challenges "Increasing Public Integrity", "Creating Safer Communities" and "Increasing Corporate Accountability" as part of the Open Government Partnership.

On 29 March 2016 we wrote to you acknowledging your request. I apologise for the delay in responding further.

The terms of your request are very broad. The phrases "*Increasing Public Integrity*", "*Creating Safer Communities*" and "*Increasing Corporate Accountability*" appear in very many documents held by this Department that were created between the dates mentioned and relate to the Open Government Partnership. Because of this, identifying documents within the scope of your request would involve examining hundreds of pages of documents to determine whether or not those phrases appear in the text. Preliminary assessment of the task has satisfied me that to process such a request in accordance with the FOI Act would substantially and unreasonably divert the resources of the Department from its other operations.

In addition, the terms of your request do not clearly identify the documents you are seeking as the phrase 'relates to' is vague and ambiguous. For example, it is not clear whether your request is intended to capture all documents that mention or refer to the so called 'Grand Challenges', or whether your request is intended to capture all documents that relate to the principles of 'public integrity', 'corporate accountability' or 'safer communities'.

Although the processing of requests for access to documents is a legitimate part of the functions of all agencies, which may require reallocation of resources, I consider that it would not be reasonable to divert the necessary resources to process your request in its current terms. This assessment takes account of the ability of this Department to fairly allocate its resources to other FOI requests.

Unfortunately, a decision on your request was not provided within the statutory time allowed by the FOI Act and, by operation of section 15AC, a decision to refuse access was deemed to have been made on 19 April 2016.

This Department takes seriously the obligations imposed by the FOI Act and would be happy to process a request in revised terms. A request that identified more clearly the documents you are seeking could be processed without substantial and unreasonable diversion of departmental resources. For example: you could consider including only emails that refer to "*Increasing Public Integrity*", "*Creating Safer Communities*" or "*Increasing Corporate Accountability*" in the subject line; or documents that are about the principles of 'public integrity', 'corporate accountability' or 'safer communities'.

If you would like to revise the terms of your request along the lines suggested above or would like assistance in making a revised request in more specific terms, I would be grateful if you would contact the Department by email at FOI@pmc.gov.au or by phone on (02) 6271 5849.

Yours sincerely



Helen Owens
Assistant Secretary
Public Data Branch

6 June 2016