



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

FOI Ref: 1306-F594  
File No: 13/10648  
28 June 2013

Ben Garrett  
foi+request-251-70c6f9cc@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Mr Garrett

**Re: Freedom of Information Request**

I refer to your current request for access under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act) to:

*Existing diplomatic cable documents concerning that of the Principality of Hutt River, excluding those that are within the open access period as defined in the Archives Act 1983 and those which have already been released under the FOI Act.*

Preliminary searches for documents relevant to your request have been completed. The next step is to consider the application of section 29 of the FOI Act, which concerns the charge, if any, for processing your request.

I am authorised under section 23 of the FOI Act to make decisions on the charge for processing your request. I have decided that you are liable to pay a charge. Our preliminary assessment of the amount of that charge is \$1014.53. Please note that at this stage in the FOI process, no decision has been made as to whether the information you seek will be released or exempt under the provisions of the FOI Act. My decision relates only to the processing charges.

Now that we have given you written notice of our preliminary assessment of the amount of the charge for processing your request, section 29 provides that you have 30 days within which to:

- agree to pay the charge;
- contend that the charge has been wrongly assessed, or should be reduced or not imposed; or
- withdraw your request.

You may also elect to narrow the scope of your request as a means to reduce the charge which would apply. The narrowed request would be handled as a new FOI request for the purposes of the statutory timelines for access to documents.

Should you agree to pay the charge, the *Freedom of Information (Fees & Charges) Regulations* requires that a deposit of 25% of the total charge be paid where the preliminary assessment of the charge exceeds \$100. I have calculated the required deposit for your request to be \$253.63. Please make your cheque or money order payable to 'The National Cashier – DFAT'. An authorisation form to arrange payment of the application fee by credit card is enclosed if you prefer to pay the fee by Visa or Mastercard.

Should you contend that the charge has been wrongly assessed, or should be reduced or not imposed, you will now need to apply for the Department to waive or reduce the charge. A departmental decision-maker will then make a decision on whether the charge should be imposed, and in what amount. The decision will take account of any contentions you may make. The Department may waive or reduce the charge for any reason, including where:

- the payment of the fee or a part of the fee would cause you financial hardship, or
- the giving of access to documents relevant to your request is in the general public interest or in the interest of a substantial section of the public.

Please note that the onus to demonstrate that charges should be reduced or waived on these or other grounds is on you as the applicant.

Section 31 of the FOI Act provides that the 30 day period within which we should process your request is suspended until we receive your payment of the deposit for the charge for processing your request, or we decide not to impose a charge. Should you withdraw your request at this stage, no charge will be imposed.

If we do not receive your response to this letter within 30 days of its receipt, I will consider that you no longer wish to continue with your request, and I will deem it withdrawn. Should you have any queries, or would like to discuss revising the terms of your request, please contact me on (02) 6261 3470.

Yours sincerely



Ada Cheung  
Director  
Freedom of Information and Privacy Law Section



**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

**Credit Card Payment for  
Freedom of Information (FOI)  
Charges**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Payment of Charges: (Deposit / In Full)**

For a sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as detailed in the FOI Estimate of Charges letter dated  
\_\_\_\_\_ (FOI ref: 1306-F594)

I authorise the National Cashier of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
to debit my

VISA     MASTER CARD

-  -  -     Expiry: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Name appearing on card \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_