



20 January 2017

Our reference: LEX 24847

Mr Ben Fairless
Right to Know

By email: foi+request-2890-2d90c734@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Mr Fairless

Your Freedom of Information request

I refer to your request, dated 29 December 2016 and received by the Department of Human Services (the **department**) on the same date, for access under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the **FOI Act**) to the following documents:

'This is a request for the average time taken for a call into a Departmental call centre to be answered or abandoned for the 2016 year for all of the Department's contact centre queues (including "Shared Services" such as ICT, Finance, and Escalation teams within the Department).

I would like the data averaged per month for the 2016 year, separated by each group - If you use a Contact Centre Solution such as Cisco Call Centre, this data should be easily accessible from within that application and shouldn't take much time to obtain.'

Your request involves too much work for the department

Your request requires the extraction and analysis of a very substantial amount of data, held in various sources. Because of the amount of work involved for the department, we are asking you to narrow the scope of your request.

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 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 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 top of this letter
- via email to FOI.LEGAL.TEAM@humanservices.gov.au

Note: When you contact us please quote the reference number **FOI LEX 24847**.

Your response will be expected by **3 February 2017**. If no response is received, your matter will be taken as withdrawn.

Further assistance

If you have any questions please email FOI.LEGAL.TEAM@humanservices.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Authorised FOI Decision Maker
Freedom of Information Team
FOI and Litigation Branch | Legal Services Division
Department of Human Services
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.

Processing your request would require extraction and analysis of a very substantial amount of data, held in various sources. Multiple datasets consisting of millions of records would be extracted and analysed. This process would take the relevant business area of the department over 39 hours.

Based on my experience with the type and volume of records you want, I estimate it would take more than 44.5 hours in processing time. This includes considering the data to see if redactions should be applied - that is, possibly blanking out some content.

Amount of time to process your request

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

Data search and retrieval	39 hours
Examine data for decision-making purposes, including considering redaction of material.	2 hours
Write statement of reasons for decision	3.5 hours
Total	44.5 hours

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.