



6 February 2017

Our reference: LEX 24928

Mr Ben Fairless
Right to Know

By email: foi+request-2907-463cee95@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Mr Fairless,

Decision on your Freedom of Information request

I refer to your revised request dated 6 January 2017 and received by the Department of Human Services (the **department**) on 7 January 2017 for access under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the **FOI Act**) to the following documents:

'I understand that Telstra provides Managed Telecommunications Services to the Department, including to it's call centres. I understand that Telstra regularly emails managers in the Department responsible for call centres. I'm seeking a copy of that correspondence over 2016....I'm only interested in the regular reporting of data related to contact centres that are department managed, or managed by an external service provider.'

My decision

I have decided to refuse your request for access under section 24A of the FOI Act on the basis that all reasonable steps have been taken to locate the documents you have requested and I am satisfied that they do not exist. Please see **Attachment A** for the reasons behind my decision.

You can ask for a review of our decision

If you disagree with any part of the decision you can ask for a review. There are two ways you can do this. You can ask for an internal review from within the department, or an external review by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. You do not have to pay for reviews of decisions. See **Attachment B** for more information about how arrange a review.

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

REASONS FOR DECISION

What you requested

'Please provide a copy of all emails and attachments sent from Telstra to managers within DHS contact centres over 2016.'

On 6 January, we wrote to you about your original request. You revised your request and this was confirmed by email on 12 January 2017.

Your revised request was:

'I understand that Telstra provides Managed Telecommunications Services to the Department, including to its call centres. I understand that Telstra regularly emails managers in the Department responsible for call centres. I'm seeking a copy of that correspondence over 2016....I'm only interested in the regular reporting of data related to contact centres that are department managed, or managed by an external service provider.'

What I took into account

In reaching my decision I took into account:

- your original request dated 4 January 2017 and your revised request on 6 January 2017;
- consultations with departmental officers about:
 - the nature of the documents;
 - the department's operating environment and functions;
- guidelines issued by the Australian Information Commissioner under section 93A of the FOI Act (the **Guidelines**);
- the FOI Act.

Reasons for my decisions

I am authorised to make decisions under section 23(1) of the FOI Act.

Section 24A of the FOI Act

Section 24A of the FOI Act provides that:

- (1) An agency or Minister may refuse a request for access to a document if:
 - (a) all reasonable steps have been taken to find the document; and
 - (b) the agency or Minister is satisfied that the document:
 - (i) is in the agency's or Minister's possession but cannot be found; or
 - (ii) does not exist.

The Channel Operations Branch did not identify any documents matching the description in your request and informed me that Telstra do not email managers in the Department, that are responsible for call centres, any form of data or reporting related to contact centres.

I am satisfied that in accordance with section 24A of the FOI Act:

1. all reasonable steps have been taken to find the documents; and
2. the document do not exist.



Attachment B

INFORMATION ON RIGHTS OF REVIEW

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1982

Asking for a full explanation of a Freedom of Information decision

Before you ask for a formal review of an FOI decision, you can contact us to discuss your request. We will explain the decision to you. This gives you a chance to correct misunderstandings.

Asking for a formal review of a Freedom of Information decision

If you still believe a decision is incorrect, the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) gives you the right to apply for a review of the decision. Under sections 54 and 54L of the FOI Act, you can apply for a review of an FOI decision by:

1. an Internal Review Officer in the Department of Human Services (the department); and/or
2. the Australian Information Commissioner.

Note 1: There are no fees for these reviews.

Applying for an internal review by an Internal Review Officer

If you apply for internal review, a different decision maker to the departmental delegate who made the original decision will carry out the review. The Internal Review Officer will consider all aspects of the original decision and decide whether it should change. An application for internal review must be:

- made in writing
- made within 30 days of receiving this letter
- sent to the address at the top of the first page of this letter.

Note 2: You do not need to fill in a form. However, it is a good idea to set out any relevant submissions you would like the Internal Review Officer to further consider, and your reasons for disagreeing with the decision.

Applying for external review by the Australian Information Commissioner

If you do not agree with the original decision or the internal review decision, you can ask the Australian Information Commissioner to review the decision.

If you do not receive a decision from an Internal Review Officer in the department within 30 days of applying, you can ask the Australian Information Commissioner for a review of the original FOI decision.

You will have 60 days to apply in writing for a review by the Australian Information Commissioner.

You can **lodge your application**:

Online: www.oaic.gov.au

Post: Australian Information Commissioner
GPO Box 5218
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Email: enquiries@oaic.gov.au

Note 3: The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner generally prefers FOI applicants to seek internal review before applying for external review by the Australian Information Commissioner.

Important:

- If you are applying online, the application form the 'Merits Review Form' is available at www.oaic.gov.au.
- If you have one, you should include with your application a copy of the Department of Human Services' decision on your FOI request
- Include your contact details
- Set out your reasons for objecting to the department's decision.

Complaints to the Information Commissioner and Commonwealth Ombudsman

Information Commissioner

You may complain to the Information Commissioner concerning action taken by an agency in the exercise of powers or the performance of functions under the FOI Act. There is no fee for making a complaint. A complaint to the Information Commissioner must be made in writing. The Information Commissioner's contact details are:

Telephone: 1300 363 992
Website: www.oaic.gov.au

Commonwealth Ombudsman

You may also complain to the Ombudsman concerning action taken by an agency in the exercise of powers or the performance of functions under the FOI Act. There is no fee for making a complaint. A complaint to the Ombudsman may be made in person, by telephone or in writing. The Ombudsman's contact details are:

Phone: 1300 362 072
Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

The Commonwealth Ombudsman generally prefers applicants to seek review before complaining about a decision.