



20 December 2019

Our reference: LEX 50114

Ms Julie Middleton

Only by email: foi+request-6027-9a5764df@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Ms Middleton

Acknowledgement of your Freedom of Information (FOI) request

I refer to your request for access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (**FOI Act**). You requested access to:

'Centrelink uses data-matching programs and when Centrelink changes its records, the client's ATO records are automatically changed. When Centrelink changes past financial year records, it will change the ATO records after a previous years Taxation return has been finalised. The client's myGov records are also adversely impacted.

The data-matching program may also change the records on the Department's Compensation Management System. This would result in lost revenue because incorrect figures are provided to law firms prior to claims being settled.

I am seeking copies of the following:

- 1) a document that states the name of Centrelink's data-matching program and explains the connecting relationship with other government Departments programs;
- 2) a User Guides (or similar instruction manual) that explains how to prevent errors from occurring;
- 3) all audit reports that have identified errors relating to the data-matching programs;
- 4) any documents the explain how to correct errors - when identified by a client. Electronic Accounts Payable files for the past payments would have the same data as shown on a client's bank statement; i.e. the actual payment. Depending on how many programs are adversely impacted, manually checking those Accounts Payable records may be the only option.'

Timeframe for processing your request

Your request was received by the department on 19 December 2019 and the 30 day statutory period for processing your request commenced from the day after that date.

Due to the department's reduced activity period over December and January, we are seeking your permission to extend the processing time by an extra 15 days to allow us to process your request under section 15AA of the FOI Act. This means you can expect to receive a decision by **3 February 2020**.

We would be grateful if you could please advise by email to FOI.LEGAL.TEAM@humanservices.gov.au by **close of business Monday 23 December 2019** whether you agree to proposed extension of time.

Charges

The department will advise you if a charge is payable to process your request and the amount of any such charge as soon as practicable. No charge is payable for providing a person with their own personal information.

Your address

The FOI Act requires that you provide us with an address which we can send notices to. You have advised that your electronic address is foi+request-6027-9a5764df@righttoknow.org.au. We will send all notices and correspondence to this address. Please advise us as soon as possible if you wish for correspondence to be sent to another address or if your address changes. If you do not advise us of changes to your address, correspondence and notices will continue to be sent to the address specified above.

Administrative release of documents

The department has administrative access arrangements (**arrangements**) for the release of certain documents without the need for a formal FOI request. Unless you advise us otherwise, in processing your request we may provide you with documents under these arrangements where appropriate. The arrangements do not extend to information or materials of third parties. You will be notified when documents are released to you under the arrangements.

Disclosure log

Please note that information released under the FOI Act may be published in a disclosure log on the department's website. Section 11C of the FOI Act requires this publication, however it is subject to certain exceptions, including where publication of personal, business, professional or commercial information would be unreasonable.

Exclusion of junior staff details

The department is working towards ensuring that all staff have a choice about whether they provide their full name, personal logon identifiers and direct contact details in response to public enquiries. Where such details are included in the scope of a request, this may add to processing time and applicable charges as it may be necessary to consider whether the details are exempt under the FOI Act. On this basis, unless you tell us otherwise, we will assume that these details are out of scope of your request and they will be redacted under section 22 of the FOI Act.

Further assistance

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

Yours sincerely

FOI Registration Officer
Freedom of Information Team
Employment Law and Freedom of Information Branch | Legal Services Division
Department of Human Services