



1 July 2014

Our reference: LEX 8298

By email: foi+request-609-68b60dfd@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Anonymouse,

Your Freedom of Information request

1. I refer to your request for documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, received by the Department of Human Services (the department) on 3 May 2014. Following a revision to the scope of your request on 22 May 2014, your request was taken to be for:

In relation to telephone call statistics, I seek the following for the period 2011-today:

Quarterly reports for the NewStart Allowance hotline (132 850) and Youth Allowance/AusStudy hotline (132 490) that provide high level information about:

- *call wait times (for customers who call and are placed on hold); and*
- *how frequently callers are transferred from one area to another.*

...QoS may also be referred to as a Service Level Agreement (SLA). It is a common clause in ICT contracts whereby a supplier will guarantee a certain level of availability of their systems and may pay penalties for failing to meet these targets.

In regard to the software(s) used by Centrelink call centre staff manning the lines of the aforementioned phone numbers, I also seek the following for the period 2011-today:

1. *Contract outlines and QoS/SLA information from contracts of ICT suppliers who have designed and/or work on maintaining this backend system for Centrelink.*
2. *Any documents or reports showing length of time, number of incidents, and causes for such incidents where this backend software was unavailable to Centrelink staff.*
3. *Any performance reports of the software suppliers for Centrelink's backend systems".*

I have been unable to ascertain the makers of these softwares from publicly available information and may be able to further refine my request below if these software vendors are made known to me.

Preliminary Assessment of the Charge

2. In accordance with section 29 of the FOI Act, I have decided that you are liable to pay a charge for the processing of your request. My preliminary assessment of that charge is \$189.50, calculated as follows:

Search and retrieval time: 3.5 hours, at \$39.00 per hour:	\$136.50
0.5 hours, at \$49.00 per hour:	\$24.50
0.5 hours, at \$57.00 per hour:	\$28.50
Decision making time: 2 hours minus the first 5 hours* at \$20.00 per hour:	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$189.50

*The FOI Act provides that the first five hours of decision making time are free of charge and this is reflected in the calculation.

3. The department has created a one page document under section 17 of the FOI Act in order to respond to the part of your request seeking information in quarterly reports for the NewStart Allowance hotline and Youth Allowance/AusStudy hotline. I note that the *Freedom of Information (Charges) Regulations 1982* give an agency the discretion to charge an amount up to the actual cost incurred by the agency in producing a document where information requested is not available in discrete form in the documents of the agency.
4. Based on advice from the department's Service Delivery Performance and Analysis Branch, I estimate that it has taken approximately 3.5 hours for a dedicated officer to extract the relevant information and produce the document, and a further 1 hour for the document to be reviewed by senior staff. Taking into account the approximate hourly pay rates of relevant staff, I have estimated the cost of producing the document (search and retrieval time) to be approximately \$189.50.
5. Based on the content of the document, I have also estimated that a further 2 hours will be required to make a decision on access in relation to the document, including preparing a statement of reasons.
6. Please note that these estimates only relate to the part of your request seeking telephone statistics for the NewStart Allowance hotline and Youth Allowance/AusStudy hotline. The department has been unable to locate documents falling within the scope of the other parts of your request.

Required Action

7. If you would like the department to continue processing your request, you must notify the department in writing within 30 days of receiving this notice that you:
1. agree to pay the charge;
 2. wish to contend that the charge:
 - a. has been wrongly assessed; or
 - b. should be reduced or not imposed; or
 - c. both
 3. withdraw the request for access.

8. If you do not provide a written response in accordance with one of Options A, B or C above within 30 days of receiving this notice, your request will be taken to have been withdrawn under subsection 29(2) of the FOI Act.
9. Alternatively you may wish to refine the scope of your FOI request. If you would like to discuss this please contact me for assistance.
10. Further information on options A, B and C is set out below.

Option A – pay the charge

11. As the charge exceeds \$100, you are required to pay a deposit of \$35.00, which is 25% of the total amount, within 30 days of receiving this notice. You may, of course, elect to pay the charge in full at this point.
12. The amount due should be paid by cheque or money order made out to the Collector of public Monies. Please quote reference number LEX 8298 with your payment.

Option B – seek reduction or non-imposition of the charge

13. You may contend that the charge has been wrongly assessed, or should be reduced or not imposed. Subsection 29(5) of the FOI Act provides that, in deciding whether to reduce or not to impose a charge, the decision maker must take into account any relevant reasons, including whether payment of the charge, or part of it, would cause you financial hardship, and whether the giving of access to the documents is in the general public interest or in the interest of a substantial section of the public.
14. If you wish to contend that the charge has been wrongly assessed or should be reduced or not imposed, please set out your reasons and the evidence in support of your reasons as clearly as possible. If you believe that payment of the charge would cause you financial hardship, please provide sufficient details of your financial circumstances to enable the decision maker to make a well-informed decision in this regard.

Option C – withdraw your request

15. If you wish to withdraw your request you may do so in writing.

Time limits for processing your request

16. Section 31 of the FOI Act provides that where a notice is sent to an applicant regarding the payment of a charge in respect of a request, the time limit for processing the request is suspended from the date the notice is received until either:
 - the day following payment of the charge (in full or the required deposit); or
 - if applicable, the day following the notification to the applicant of a decision not to impose the charge.

Address for correspondence

17. Please send all correspondence regarding your FOI request to me at the following address:

Julian Russell
FOI Legal Team
Strategic Information Management Legal Branch
Department of Human Services
PO Box 7788
CANBERRA ACT 2610

Or by email to FOI.Legal.Team@humanservices.gov.au

Publication of information in the FOI disclosure log

18. 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, subject to certain exceptions, including where publication of personal, business, professional or commercial information would be unreasonable.
19. Should you have any enquiries concerning this matter, please contact me. If you are phoning long-distance, you may reverse the charges.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julian Russell', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Julian Russell
Government Lawyer
FOI and Information Release Branch
Department of Human Services