



Administrative Appeals Tribunal

FOI ref: 2020/0068

3 July 2020

Mr John Smith

Email: foi+request-6409-3431027e@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Mr Smith,

Acknowledgement of Freedom of Information Request no. 2020/0068

I refer to your five separate requests for access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) received on 18 June and 24 June 2020.

You have requested access to a copy of:

1. *'...the contract with commonwealth tender ID CN3418470-A5, between the AAT and Launch Recruitment Pty Ltd, publish date 27-Mar-2017 to 30-Jun-2017.'*
2. *'...the contract with commonwealth tender ID CN3531767, between the AAT and Launch Recruitment Pty Ltd, publish date 9-Aug-2018.'*
3. *'... the contract with commonwealth tender ID CN3552941, between ATRAC and Launch Recruitment Pty Ltd, publish date 16-Nov-2018.'* I note that this was subsequently amended to read, *'...between AAT and Launch Recruitment Pty Ltd.'*
4. *'...the contract with commonwealth tender ID CN3552946, between the AAT and Launch Recruitment Pty Ltd, publish date 16-Nov-2018.'*
5. *'... the following contracts between Launch Recruitment Pty Ltd, and the AAT. They are identifiable by the following CN IDs on AusTender;*
 - CN3650297
 - CN3606081
 - CN3591076'

Section 24 of the FOI Act – Multiple requests

Section 24(2) of the FOI Act provides that an agency may treat two or more requests as a single request if the agency is satisfied that:

- (a) the requests relate to the same document or documents; or
- (b) the requests relate to documents, the subject matter of which is substantially the same.

Paragraph 3.123 of the FOI Guidelines issued by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) explains that the most common circumstance in which requests may be combined under s 24(2) is multiple requests from a single applicant. However,

s 24(2) can also apply to two or more requests from *different* applicants. In addition, the Guidelines state that multiple requests can only be combined as a single request under s 24(2) if there is a clear connection between the subject matter of the requested documents.

I have considered the nature of the documents requested on 18 June 2020 and 24 June 2020 in the context of s 24(2). The common thread in your requests relates to contractual documents between Launch Recruitment and the AAT. I consider there to be a clear connection between the subject matter (Launch contracts) in all five FOI requests. I am therefore satisfied that the requests relate to documents, the subject matter of which is substantially the same. In addition, I have also taken into consideration the fact that the five requests were lodged with the Tribunal under the same "John Smith" Right to Know account, indicating some proximity between applicants.

Consequently, I have combined the four FOI requests received on 18 June 2020 with the FOI request received on 24 June 2020 into one single request under s 24(2) of the FOI Act.

As your requests will be treated as a single FOI request, the 30 day statutory period for processing your request commenced from the day after you lodged your FOI request on 18 June 2020. You should therefore expect a decision from us by **20 July 2020**. The 30 day period may be extended if we need to consult other parties or for other reasons permitted under the FOI Act.

As this request does not concern your personal information, there may be a processing charge. If this occurs we will send you an estimate letter before commencing processing.

Please note that information released under the FOI Act may later be published online on our [disclosure log](#), subject to certain exceptions. Personal information, for example, will not be published where this would be unreasonable.

We will contact you using the email address you have provided. Please advise if you would prefer us to use an alternative means of contact.

If you have any questions, please contact me at foi@aat.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

Skye M

Authorised FOI Officer (APS 6)