



Celeste

Via email: foi+request-7006-90582dab@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Ms Celeste

Your Freedom of Information request – Charges

I refer to your request dated 7 January 2021 and received by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (**department**) on 7 January 2021 for access under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (FOI Act)* to the following documents:

‘A pdf copy of the decision brief signed by the secretary or delegate approving the Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry (Prohibition of Export of Sheep by Sea to Middle East—Northern Summer) Order 2020?’

If it was a delegate who signed the brief can I also please have a copy of the document delegating them the power to do so under the Act?’

The department wrote to you on 21 January 2021 noting that one attachment to the decision brief contained a list of meetings with over 25 stakeholders which would require third party consultation and asked if you would agree to this attachment being considered out of scope of your FOI request. You responded on 27 January 2021 confirming that this attachment could be removed from the scope of your FOI request.

Preliminary assessment of the Charge

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 \$248.25 calculated as follows:

Search and retrieval time: 10 hours at \$15.00 per hour	\$150.00
Decision-making time: \$20.00 per hour	
Examining pages, redacting and scheduling documents	\$118.25
Consultation with 0 third parties at 2 hours per party	\$0.00
Writing statement of reasons	\$80.00
Deduction of 5 hours decision-making time*	-\$100.00
TOTAL	\$248.25

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

I am advised that the department has in its possession 11 documents with 165 pages relevant to your request.

Required action

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:

- agree to pay the charge;
- wish to contend that the charge has been wrongly assessed or should be reduced or not imposed or both; or
- withdraw your request.

If you do not provide a written response in accordance with one of the above options within 30 days of receiving this notification, your request will be taken to have been withdrawn under section 29(2) of the FOI Act.

Alternatively, you may wish to revise the scope of your request. If you would like to discuss this, please contact me for assistance.

Option - pay the charge

As the charge exceeds \$25, you are required to pay a deposit of \$62.06. You may, of course, elect to pay the charge in full at this point.

Payment can be made by direct deposit to:

A/C Name:	DAWE Departmental Account
Branch:	London Circuit, Canberra
Bank:	Reserve Bank
BSB:	092 009
A/C No.	111 698
ABN No:	34 190 894 983

Please include the FOI reference number (LEX-21551) in the subject field, and send an email with notification of payment to foi@awe.gov.au as soon it has been made.

If you are not able to pay by direct deposit, please contact the department for assistance.

Option - seek reduction or non-imposition of the charge

You may contend that the charge has been wrongly assessed, or should be reduced or not imposed. Section 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.

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 your organisation 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 – withdraw your request

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

Time limits for processing your request

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:

- (a) the day following payment of the charge (in full or the required deposit); or
- (b) if applicable, the day following the notification to the applicant of a decision not to impose the charge.

Address for correspondence

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

FOI Coordinator
Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
GPO Box 858
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

Or by email to foi@awe.gov.au

Publication of information in the FOI disclosure log

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.

Further assistance

If you have any questions, please email foi@awe.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Kelly Porter
A/g Assistant Secretary
Animal Welfare Branch, Plant & Live Animal Exports Division
29 January 2021