



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Immigration and Citizenship**

7 May 2013

Dr Jason Wilson  
[foi+request-82-973e202a@righttoknow.org.au](mailto:foi+request-82-973e202a@righttoknow.org.au)

**In reply please quote:**

Client Name Dr Jason Wilson  
FOI Request FA 13/04/00129  
File Number ADF2013/9811

Dear Dr Wilson

**Freedom of Information request – Decision on access request**

This letter refers to your request received on 26 March 2013 seeking access to documents under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (the FOI Act). Your request was for:

*"...I would like to access any reports on the number of emails received by the department and its predecessor department DIMIA, from the public from 2000 onwards.*

*I am looking for quantitative summaries of emails on an annual basis over that period, although quarterly or monthly would also be welcome.*

*An example of a government agency having done this can be found here, where DPS compiled this information for me:*

*[https://www.righttoknow.org.au/request/volume\\_of\\_email\\_to\\_members\\_and\\_s](https://www.righttoknow.org.au/request/volume_of_email_to_members_and_s)*

*But any form in which you have the information will be welcome.*

*For your information, this will assist with my academic research about public communication."*

**Decision**

I am an officer authorised under section 23 of the FOI Act to make decisions in respect of requests to access documents or to amend or annotate departmental records.

My decision is to release in part the information you have requested, specifically the period covering September 2008 to March 2013. I am refusing access to the remainder of the information prior to September 2008 under section 24A of the FOI Act. My reasons are listed in the attached Decision Record.

**people** our business

## Review Rights

### Internal review

If you disagree with my decision, you have the right to apply for an internal review by the department of a primary decision to refuse access to documents you have requested.

If you wish to make a request for internal review this must be sent within 30 days of being notified of the decision. Where possible please attach reasons why you believe review of the decision is necessary. The internal review will be carried out by an officer other than the original decision-maker and the department must make a review decision within 30 days.

Applications for review should be sent to:

Post                      FOI and Privacy Policy Section  
                               Department of Immigration and Citizenship  
                               PO Box 25  
                               BELCONNEN ACT 2616

Email                    FOI@immi.gov.au

### Review by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

You may apply directly to the Australian Information Commissioner for a review of my decision. The OAIC has advised that ‘...going through the agency’s internal review process gives the agency the opportunity to reconsider its initial decision, and your needs may be met more quickly without undergoing an external review process’. For more information please see FOI fact sheet 12 ‘Freedom of information – Your review rights’, available online at [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au).

If you wish to apply for review directly to the OAIC you must apply in writing within 60 days of this notice. You can lodge your application in one of the following ways:

Post	GPO Box 2999 CANBERRA ACT 2601
or	GPO Box 5218 SYDNEY NSW 2001
Online	<a href="http://www.oaic.gov.au">www.oaic.gov.au</a>
Email	<a href="mailto:enquiries@oaic.gov.au">enquiries@oaic.gov.au</a>
Fax	+61 2 9284 9666
In person	4 National Circuit BARTON ACT
or	Level 3, 175 Pitt Street SYDNEY NSW

An application form is available on the OAIC’s website at [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au). Your application should include a copy of the notice of the decision to which you are seeking review of, and your contact details. You should also set out why you are seeking a review of the decision.



### **How to make a complaint about the handling of your FOI request**

You may complain to the Australian Information Commissioner if you have concerns about how the department has handled your request under the FOI Act.

Your complaint must be in writing and must specify the agency you are complaining about. You can send your complaint to the Australian Information Commissioner using the details above. A complaint form is also available at [www.oaic.gov.au](http://www.oaic.gov.au).

If you are unhappy with the department's decision about giving or refusing access to documents, you should ask for the decision to be reviewed, which is a separate process which has been outlined in the previous section.

### **Contacting the FOI Section**

If you wish to discuss this matter, I can be contacted using the details provided below.

### **Client Service Charter**

Our Client Service Charter explains our service commitment to you. We are committed to service delivery that is timely, open and accountable, and responsive to your needs. The Charter explains how you can help us and how you can provide feedback or make a complaint. You can read our Client Service Charter on our website, or in a printed copy available from any of our offices.

### **Service satisfaction**

The department remains committed to ensuring that all clients, both in Australia and overseas, receive not only fair and reasonable treatment, but also an efficient standard of service that is sensitive to each client's needs.

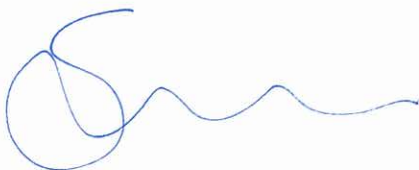
To provide a compliment, complaint or suggestion to the department you can:

- telephone the Global Feedback Unit (toll-free within Australia) on 13 31 77 during business hours
- complete a feedback form online at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)
- write to:  
The Manager  
Global Feedback Unit (DIAC)  
GPO Box 241  
MELBOURNE VIC 3001  
AUSTRALIA
- contact us directly through any of our offices.

**Contacting the department**

You can contact us with a general enquiry in a number of ways including by email, through our website, by telephone through our Service Centres or offices around the world, or in person. In Australia you can call 13 18 81 between 9 am and 4 pm Monday to Friday. Details on contacting our offices outside Australia are available on our website at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



Steven Hocking  
Position No. 60009189  
Assistant Director  
FOI & Privacy Policy Section  
National Office  
Department of Immigration and Citizenship

Telephone (02) 6264 1007  
Email [steven.hocking@immi.gov.au](mailto:steven.hocking@immi.gov.au)  
[foi@immi.gov.au](mailto:foi@immi.gov.au)

**Attachment(s)****Client Service Information****Decision Record****Documents released**

## CLIENT SERVICE INFORMATION

### **Client Service Charter**

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- complete a feedback form online at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)
- write to:  
The Manager  
Global Feedback Unit  
GPO Box 241  
Melbourne VIC 3001  
Australia
- contact us directly through any of our offices.

## DECISION RECORD

### Client Details

FOI Request FA 13/04/00129

File Number ADF2013/9811

### Documents in scope

As per your request, you have sought access to any reports on the number of emails received by the department and its predecessor department, DIMIA, from the public from 2000 onwards. As your request was received on March 26, I have included data up to and including March 2013.

### Information considered

I am an authorised decision maker under Section 23 of the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (the FOI Act). In reaching my decision, I have considered the following:

- the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*;
- advice from the relevant areas of the department; and
- the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner guidelines.

### Reasons for decision

I am releasing, in full, information relevant to part of your request. The information I am releasing is a 2 page document containing data on the number of emails received from the Internet to the department's internal mail network. The period covered is from September 2008 through to, and including, March 2013.

The remainder of your request, specifically emails received by the department for the period January 2000 through to August 2008, is refused under s24A, as the documents do not exist.

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1982

#### - SECT 24A

*Requests may be refused if documents cannot be found or do not exist*

*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.*

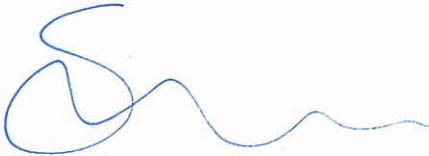
I have undertaken the following searches to identify the document/s you have requested:

- Contacted the following business areas:
  - *IT Security*
  - *Midrange Operations*



I have been advised that the department does not produce reports that contain the information you have requested. As I indicated to you by email on 23 April, DIAC uses an external service provider to manage the email gateway system. The current service provider took over management of the email gateway in September 2008. The previous service provider was not required to provide that level of detail.

I am therefore releasing to you relevant documents that satisfy part of your request and refusing access to the remainder on the grounds that those documents do not exist.



Steven Hocking  
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Assistant Director  
FOI & Privacy Policy Section  
National Office  
Department of Immigration and Citizenship

7 May 2013