

Dear Information Commissioner,

**REQUESTING AN EXTERNAL REVIEW OF AN FOI REFUSAL BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS - FOI LEX 48159 (PUBLISHED UNDER RIGHTTOKNOW):**

**FOI REQUEST WAS LODGED ON 24 FEBRUARY 2022:**

Dear Department of Veterans' Affairs,

**BACKGROUND:**

Ms. Cosson at Senate estimates on 16 February 2022 said, "McKinsey completed their diagnostic work and provided us with the report on 17 December (2021)."

As of today, this report has not been released. This is despite the AusTender website noting on 6 December 2021 an extension to the date of completion, now 17 December 2021, and an increase in the total value of the contract, now \$1,65M. It also noted, "Confidentially – Contract: No" then, "Confidentially – Outputs: No."

**INFORMATION I AM SEEKING:**

As the contract stated there was no confidentially required for the report handed to DVA I require the full and unredacted McKinsey Report as presented to DVA on 17 December 2021.

Yours faithfully,

Alan ASHMORE

**WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?**

**: On 25 March 2022 DVA refused to release the document and noted, "Refused access draft report."**

**: I requested an internal review to be completed by COB on 1 April 2022.**

**: As 1 April 2022 deadline was not met, I withdrew by request for an internal review on 7 April 2022.**

**DVA'S REASONS FOR REFUSAL:**

"McKinsey's review of the department's claims process is not yet complete and the department is currently considering the findings and recommendations made in the draft report dated 17 December 2021. The department has not yet reached a final position on those findings and recommendations. Given the content of the draft report dated 17 December 2021 report and the fact that the department is currently considering the findings and recommendations made, (and has not yet reached a conclusion as to whether to adopt those recommendations), I am satisfied that the draft report dated 17 December 2021 is deliberative."

## **THIS RAISES A NUMBER OF ISSUES:**

: The AusTender website states, “the McKinsey report would be completed by 17 December 2021.”

: It also noted “Confidentially – Contract: No” then, “Confidentially – Outputs: No.”

: It is false to claim on 25 March 2022, “McKinsey’s review of the department’s claims process is not yet complete,” when the contract with McKinsey concluded on 17 December 2021.

: It is also false to claim, “Given the content of the draft report dated 17 December 2021 report ....” DVA again use the words “draft report” when, according to another Government website, AusTender, the contract with McKinsey concluded on 17 December 2021.

: DVA also said in part, “I am satisfied that the draft report dated 17 December 2021.....” DVA falsely claim again it is a “draft report.”

: Ms. Cosson at Senate estimates on 16 February 2022 said, “McKinsey completed their diagnostic work and provided us with the report on 17 December (2021).” Note the word, **“completed.”**

## **DVA LIED TO ME:**

In refusing this request DVA stated the same lie on 11 separate occasions. They stated the McKinsey report was a “draft report.” Another reason for rejecting was the report required, “consultation,” by Government before it could be released. The word, “consultation,” was mentioned 17 times.

It was NEVER a draft report and raises the obvious question. Why has DVA been so blatant in REPEATEDLY LYING about the status of the McKinsey Report?

I note the Productivity Commission report was RELEASED in full almost 3 years ago and, as of today, still has almost half the recommendations, “under deliberation,” by the Department, JUST LIKE the McKinsey report.

## **TO CONCLUDE:**

As a veteran who has put his life on the line for his country and is now a Totally and Permanently Incapacitated war veteran, plus one who is very interested in veteran’s issues, I find it insulting and reprehensible that I would be lied to by DVA. Is it any wonder that veterans suffer mental health issues when dealing with this garbage because they certainly know how to trigger veterans.

I now hand this matter over to you and wish you well in your deliberations.

Yours faithfully,

ALAN ASHMORE