



Australian Government

Department of Health

FOI reference: FOI- 3798

John Walker

By Email: foi+request-8898-d7dac780@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Mr Walker

Decision on your Freedom of Information Request

I refer to your request of 13 May 2022, to the Department of Health (the department), seeking access under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (FOI Act) to:

1. The Weekly number of COVID-19 injections administered in persons over the age of 65 in ISO week date system format commencing 22 February 2021 through 1 May 2022.
2. If possible the break down of the number of doses administered for injection type (Pfizer, Astrazeneca, Moderna, Novavax)
3. The document you hold in relation to your initial communication to the Prime Minister outlining concerns of excess deaths related to COVID-19 injections or the document you hold in relation to the initial communication from the Prime Minister to the Department of Health outlining concerns of excess deaths related to COVID-19 injections.

I am authorised under subsection 23(1) of the FOI Act to make decisions in relation to Freedom of Information requests. I am writing to notify you of my decision on your request.

FOI decision

The right to request access to a document in accordance with the FOI Act relates to documents in the possession of the department (section 4 (definition of 'document of an agency') refers).

You have requested access to data that is held in computer systems ordinarily available to the department. Pursuant to section 17 of the FOI Act, the department has used its computer systems to produce one document that contains information you are seeking to access. This information incorporates data that specifically addressed in part 1 of your request.

I have decided to give access to information relevant to your request in full.

In relation to part 3 of your request, the relevant business areas within the department have conducted searches of the department's information holdings. No documents matching the description in your request were identified as being in the possession of the department.

As such I am satisfied all reasonable steps have been taken to locate a document relevant to this part of your request, and such the document does not exist in the possession of the department. As such, I am refusing part 3 of your request in accordance with section 24A of the FOI Act.

Additional background information

On 19 May 2022 the department advised you that the vaccination information you sought was found within the public domain at the following places:

1. [COVID-19 vaccination daily jurisdictional breakdown](#)
2. [COVID-19 vaccination daily rollout update](#)
3. [COVID-19 vaccination - vaccination data](#)

Regarding point three of your request, the TGA analyses adverse event report data to identify possible safety issues for investigation. If these investigations confirm a safety signal, the TGA takes appropriate action. The TGA reviews all adverse events after COVID-19 vaccination where a fatal outcome is reported. This review is designed to assess whether the medical conditions that caused death represent an emerging safety concern with the vaccine. For each report we receive, a team of staff, including doctors and nurses, consider the strength of the evidence for a link between vaccination and the condition that caused the death. The team may request more information from health authorities and coroners. The TGA does not undertake autopsies, request coronial investigations or make formal determinations of the cause of death. In Australia, coroners and treating doctors perform this role.

All reports of death are included in our safety monitoring data, even if a coroner or expert panel has concluded it is unrelated to COVID-19 vaccination. Reviewing individual reports of adverse events with fatal outcomes is just one part of the TGA's COVID-19 vaccine monitoring program. We also conduct analyses across all adverse event reports, including those with fatal outcomes, to detect rare or emerging safety signals. Our vaccine surveillance staff monitor the medical literature, media and other potential sources of new safety information. We also collaborate with international regulators to review global safety data.

Any deaths which the TGA concludes are causally linked to any of the COVID-19 vaccines are reported on by the TGA. They are all included in a weekly safety report for COVID-19 vaccines published on the TGA website. All weekly safety reports remain available on the TGA website at this address: <https://www.tga.gov.au/periodic/covid-19-vaccine-weekly-safety-report>.

Legislative provisions

The FOI Act, including the provisions referred to in my decision, are available on the Federal Register of Legislation website: www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A02562

Your review rights

I have set out your review rights at **ATTACHMENT A**.

Publication

Where I have decided to release documents to you, the department may also publish the released material on its Disclosure Log. The department will not publish personal or business affairs information where it would be unreasonable to do so.

For your reference the department's Disclosure Log can be found at:
www.health.gov.au/resources/foi-disclosure-log

Contacts

If you require clarification of any matters discussed in this letter you can contact the FOI Unit on (02) 6289 1666 or at FOI@health.gov.au

Yours sincerely



Perdi Mitchell
Assistant Secretary
Vaccine & Data Branch

4 July 2022

YOUR REVIEW RIGHTS

If you are dissatisfied with my decision, you may apply for a review.

Internal review

You can request internal review within 30 days of you receiving this decision. An internal review will be conducted by a different officer from the original decision-maker.

No particular form is required to apply for review although it will assist your case to set out the grounds on which you believe that the original decision should be changed.

Applications for internal review can be made by:

Email: FOI@health.gov.au
Mail: FOI Unit (MDP 516)
Department of Health
GPO Box 9848
CANBERRA ACT 2601

If you choose to seek an internal review, you will also have a right to apply for Information Commissioner review (IC review) of the internal review decision once it has been provided to you.

Information Commissioner review or complaint

You also have the right to seek Information Commissioner (IC) review of this decision. For FOI applicants, an application for IC review must be made in writing within 60 days of the decision. For third parties who object to disclosure of their information, an application for IC review must be made in writing within 30 days of the decision.

If you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your FOI request, you can lodge a complaint with the OAIC. However, the OAIC suggests that complaints are made to the agency in the first instance.

While there is no particular form required to make a complaint to the OAIC, the complaint should be in writing and set out the reasons for why you are dissatisfied with the way your request was processed. It should also identify the Department of Health as the agency about which you are complaining.

You can make an IC review application or make an FOI complaint in one of the following ways:

- online at www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/reviews-and-complaints/
- via email to foidr@oaic.gov.au
- by mail to GPO Box 5218 Sydney NSW 2001, or
- by fax to 02 9284 9666.

More information about the Information Commissioner reviews and complaints is available on the OAIIC website here: www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/foi-review-process.

Complaint

If you are dissatisfied with action taken by the department, you may also make a complaint directly to the Department.

Complaints to the department are covered by the department's privacy policy. A form for lodging a complaint directly to the department is available on the department's website here: www.health.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/complaints