



29 June 2022

Our reference: LEX 68161

OpenWelfare

Only by email: [foi+request-8978-ba8edb5a@righttoknow.org.au](mailto:foi+request-8978-ba8edb5a@righttoknow.org.au)

Dear OpenWelfare

**Freedom of Information Request – Charges**

I refer to your revised request received by Services Australia (the agency) on 15 June 2022, for access under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act), made in the following terms:

As of writing 520 out of 5230 (About 10%) of all Operational Blueprint pages feature a warning at the top:

"This procedure is under review. An Operational Message about this content exists."

eg

<https://operational.servicesaustralia.gov.au/public/Pages/job-seekers/001-09040120-01.html>

Normally, outside of Centrelink - reviews are made for reasons. This message is obtuse - as an outsider I don't fully understand what this message means.

Could you please, in an administrative fashion, not under the FOI act - briefly explain these messages and why they exist to me and the rest of the public on right to know? in addition -

I request under the Freedom of Information act 1982, copies of the following documents:

\*Internal documents providing advice on how to use this message should that exist

\*Written records of internal discussion (memo, email, etc) where a blueprint status was changed to "This procedure is under review. An Operational Message about this content exists", for the two most recent operational blueprints where this change has occurred with documentation to support them.

**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 \$311.48 calculated as follows:

Search and retrieval time: 10 hours, at \$15.00 per hour:	\$150.00
Decision-making time (*after deduction of 5 hours): 8.07 hours, at \$20.00 per hour	\$161.48

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**TOTAL** **\$311.48**

\*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 the agency has in its possession 16 documents with 63 pages relevant to your request.

## Required Action

If you would like Services Australia to continue processing your request, you must notify Services Australia in writing within 30 days of receiving this notice that you:

- a) agree to pay the charge,
- b) wish to contend that the charge:
  - i. has been wrongly assessed, or
  - ii. should be reduced or not imposed, or
  - iii. both

Alternatively, you may wish to withdraw your request for access.

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

Further information on options a) and b) are set out below.

### Option a) - pay the charge

As the charge exceeds \$25, you are required to pay a deposit of **\$77.87** within 30 days of receiving this notice. You may, of course, elect to pay the charge in full at this point.

You may select from one of the following payment methods:

1. Online payment via Government EasyPay - follow [this link](#) and enter the relevant details. You will need your FOI LEX reference number, **LEX 68161**, or
2. Cheque made out to the Collector of Public Monies and posted to Freedom of Information, Services Australia, PO BOX 7820, Canberra BC, ACT 2610, or
3. Money order made out to the Collector of Public Monies and posted to Freedom of Information, Services Australia, PO BOX 7820, Canberra BC, ACT 2610.

If you elect to pay the charge, please email [FOI.LEGAL.TEAM@servicesaustralia.gov.au](mailto:FOI.LEGAL.TEAM@servicesaustralia.gov.au) to advise us of your payment. Please quote reference number **LEX 68161** in this correspondence.

### Option b) - 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 or your organisation 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 you or 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.

### **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 by email to [FOI.LEGAL.TEAM@servicesaustralia.gov.au](mailto:FOI.LEGAL.TEAM@servicesaustralia.gov.au).

### **Publication of information in the FOI disclosure log**

Information released under the FOI Act may be published in a disclosure log on Services Australia'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.LEGAL.TEAM@servicesaustralia.gov.au](mailto:FOI.LEGAL.TEAM@servicesaustralia.gov.au).

Yours sincerely

Patricia  
Authorised FOI Decision Maker  
Freedom of Information Team  
Information Access Branch Legal Services Division  
Services Australia