



OFFICE OF THE HON STEPHEN JONES MP
ASSISTANT TREASURER AND MINISTER FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES

FOI ref: 3242

10 January 2023

Dale Webster

By email foi+request-9566-845915fa@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Ms Webster

I refer to your request received on 21 December 2022, under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (FOI Act)*, in the following terms:

any documents/correspondence held by the Assistant Treasurer that mention both the Regional Banking Taskforce and the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (also referred to as APRA) and a draft copy of the taskforce's final report at the change of government.

I am an authorised decision maker under the FOI Act.

I am writing to tell you that I believe that the work involved in processing your request in its current form would substantially and unreasonably interfere with the performance of the Minister's functions due to its broad scope. This is called a 'practical refusal reason' under section 24AA of the FOI Act.

On this basis, I intend to refuse access to the documents you have requested. However, you have an opportunity to revise your request before I make a final decision. This is called a 'request consultation process' in section 24AB of the FOI Act.

You have **14 days** to respond to this notice in one of the ways set out below.

Why I intend to refuse your request

I decided that a practical refusal reason exists due to the large number of documents identified as potentially falling within the broad scope of the first part of your request seeking "*any documents/correspondence held by the Assistant Treasurer that mention both the Regional Banking Taskforce and the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (also referred to as APRA)*". A thorough search of electronic documents and emails was undertaken for the second part of your request seeking "*a draft copy of the taskforce's final report at the change of government*". No documents were located.

A keyword search for emails containing the phrase "Regional Banking Taskforce" and "Australian Prudential Regulation Authority" or "APRA" located over one hundred emails plus attachments. Each email and email attachment will need to be opened and read for relevance. Documents found to be in scope will then need to be scheduled, closely reviewed for sensitives, third party consultation may need to be undertaken, edited versions of documents prepared for release and a decision letter drafted. I am satisfied this would place an unreasonable burden on the small number of Office staff. I am also satisfied that processing the request would substantially and unreasonably interfere with the performance of the Minister's functions.

Request consultation process

You have an opportunity to revise your request. This might mean narrowing the scope of the request to make it more manageable or explaining in more detail the documents you wish to access. This will assist the Office staff to focus on the documents that you are most interested in, saving time and resources.

Examples of possible revisions include:

- Reducing your request to one type of document, such as a ministerial brief or correspondence from a specific organisation.
- Providing specific information about the Regional Banking Taskforce and APRA that a document must contain to be in scope.
- Providing a very narrow date range.

More than one revision type may be needed to sufficiently refine the scope of your request. Even if you follow all of the above suggestions, it is still possible that processing the request will be a substantial and unreasonable interference with the performance of the Minister's functions.

If you revise your request in a way that adequately addresses the practical refusal grounds outlined above, we will recommence processing it. Please note that the time taken to consult you regarding the scope of your request is not taken into account for the purposes of the 30-day time limit for processing your request.

What you need to do

You must contact us within 14 days from day after you receive this notice to:

- withdraw your request
- make a revised request
- tell us that you do not wish to revise your request.

The Treasury FOI team is available to help you during the consultation period by phone on (02) 6263 2800 or by email to FOI@treasury.gov.au. If you do not respond to the FOI team within the 14 days, your request will be taken to be withdrawn.

Yours sincerely



Tom Iggulden
Senior Adviser