

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION — NEW ARRANGEMENTS

In late 2010 the Executive Board decided to move responsibility for the management of FOI processes from the former Policy Coordination and Governance Unit to Ministerial and Communications Division and increase resources for the FOI Unit from three to five. The new unit took responsibility for the function at the end of January 2011.

KEY POINTS

- Significant reforms to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* commenced on 1 November 2011 to promote a pro-disclosure culture.
- The reforms include: review functions by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC); changes to exemptions and a new public interest test; abolition of application fees for applicants seeking personal information; reduced charges; acceptance of applications by email; and an Information Publication Scheme (IPS).
- The Information Publication Scheme requires release, from 1 May 2011, of specified operational information and most responses to FOI requests. It encourages proactive disclosure of optional information.
- In line with the Information Publication Scheme, the FOI and Publishing Units are working to prepare and publish operational information on the Treasury website. Treasury decided to published FOI responses on the Treasury website (upon release to applicants) since 1 January 2011.
- Numbers of FOI requests received by Treasury have increased since the reforms commenced. Currently, two requests are being reviewed by the AAT (RSPT/MRRT and incoming government brief) and one by the Information Commissioner (incoming government brief). The FOI unit sends a state-of-play every Friday. A copy of the latest state-of-play is attached.

ATTACHMENTS

- FOI State of Play as at 25 February (updated weekly).

Contact Officer:

Division: Ministerial and Communications Division

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