

# Office of National Drug Control Policy Annual Freedom of Information Act Report

## I. BASIC INFORMATION REGARDING REPORT

1. In compliance with 5 U.S.C. §552(e) and section 3(c)(ii) of Executive Order 13392, the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) submits the attached report on its Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) program. This report addresses the time period for fiscal year 2013 (October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013). Questions about this report may be addressed to:

Jeffrey Teitz  
General Counsel  
750 17th Street, N.W. Room 518  
Washington, D.C. 20503  
(202) 395-6622

2. This report is available on our website site at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/freedom-of-information-act-requests>

3. Paper copies may be request by contacting Jeffrey Teitz at the above address.

## II. MAKING A FOIA REQUEST

1. Name, addresses, and telephone numbers of all individual agency components and offices that receive FOIA requests.

Office of Legal Counsel  
Attn: General Counsel  
750 17th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20503  
Phone: (202) 395-6622  
Fax: (202) 395-5432

2. Brief description of why some requests are not granted and an overview of certain general categories of the agency's records to which the FOIA exemptions apply.

Most denials result from a "no records response". In a number of instances, requesters confuse ONDCP with a drug control

law enforcement agency. General categories of ONDCP records to which FOIA exemptions apply include personnel records and interagency communications.

### **III. ACRONYMS, DEFINITIONS, AND EXEMPTIONS**

1. Agency-specific acronyms or terms used in this report.

Office of National Drug Control Policy, Office of Legal Counsel – ONDCP (OLC)

2. Definitions of terms used in this report:

a. Administrative Appeal – a request to a federal agency asking that it review at a higher administrative level a FOIA determination made by the agency at the initial request level.

b. Average Number – the number obtained by dividing the sum of a group of numbers by the quantity of numbers in the group. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the average number is 8.

c. Backlog – the number of requests or administrative appeals that are pending at an agency at the end of the fiscal year that are beyond the statutory time period for a response.

d. Component – for agencies that process requests on a decentralized basis, a “component” is an entity, also sometimes referred to as an Office, Division, Bureau, Center, or Directorate, within the agency that processes FOIA requests. The FOIA now requires that agencies include in their Annual FOIA Report data for both the agency overall and for each principal component of the agency.

e. Consultation – the procedure whereby the agency responding to a FOIA request first forwards a record to another agency for its review because that other agency has an interest in the document. Once the agency in 3 receipt of the consultation finishes its review of the record, it responds back to the agency that forwarded it. That agency, in turn, will then respond to the FOIA requester.

f. Exemption 3 Statute – a federal statute that exempts information from disclosure and which the agency relies on

to withhold information under subsection (b)(3) of the FOIA.

g. FOIA Request – a FOIA request is generally a request to a federal agency for access to records concerning another person (i.e., a “third-party” request), or concerning an organization, or a particular topic of interest. FOIA requests also include requests made by requesters seeking records concerning themselves (i.e., “first-party” requests) when those requesters are not subject to the Privacy Act, such as non-U.S. citizens. Moreover, because all first-party requesters should be afforded the benefit of both the access provisions of the FOIA as well as those of the Privacy Act, FOIA requests also include any first-party requests where an agency determines that it must search beyond its Privacy Act “systems of records” or where a Privacy Act exemption applies, and the agency looks to FOIA to afford the greatest possible access. All requests which require the agency to utilize the FOIA in responding to the requester are included in this Report.

Additionally, a FOIA request includes records referred to the agency for processing and direct response to the requester. It does not, however, include records for which the agency has received a consultation from another agency. (Consultations are reported separately in Section XII of this Report.)

h. Full Grant – an agency decision to disclose all records in full in response to a FOIA request.

i. Full Denial – an agency decision not to release any records in response to a FOIA request because the records are exempt in their entireties under one or more of the FOIA exemptions, or because of a procedural reason, such as when no records could be located.

j. Median Number – the middle, not average, number. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the median number is 7.

k. Multi-Track Processing – a system in which simple requests requiring relatively minimal review are placed in one processing track and more voluminous and complex requests are placed in one or more other tracks. Requests granted expedited processing are placed in yet another track. Requests in each track are processed on a first in/first out basis. 4

i. Expedited Processing – an agency will process a FOIA request on an expedited basis when a requester satisfies the requirements for expedited processing as set forth in the statute and in

agency regulations.

ii. Simple Request – a FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in its fastest (non-expedited) track based on the low volume and/or simplicity of the records requested.

iii. Complex Request – a FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in a slower track based on the high volume and/or complexity of the records requested.

l. Partial Grant/Partial Denial – in response to a FOIA request, an agency decision to disclose portions of the records and to withhold other portions that are exempt under the FOIA, or to otherwise deny a portion of the request for a procedural reason.

m. Pending Request or Pending Administrative Appeal – a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has not taken final action in all respects.

n. Perfected Request – a request for records which reasonably describes such records and is made in accordance with published rules stating the time, place, fees (if any) and procedures to be followed.

o. Processed Request or Processed Administrative Appeal – a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has taken final action in all respects.

p. Range in Number of Days – the lowest and highest number of days to process requests or administrative appeals.

q. Time Limits – the time period in the statute for an agency to respond to a FOIA request (ordinarily twenty working days from receipt of a perfected FOIA request).

### 3. Descriptions of the nine FOIA exemptions:

a. Exemption 1: classified national defense and foreign relations information<sup>5</sup>

- b. Exemption 2: internal agency rules and practices
- c. Exemption 3: information that is prohibited from disclosure by another federal law
- d. Exemption 4: trade secrets and other confidential business information
- e. Exemption 5: inter-agency or intra-agency communications that are protected by legal privileges
- f. Exemption 6: information involving matters of personal privacy
- g. Exemption 7: records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, to the extent that the production of those records (A) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings, (B) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication, (C) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, (D) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, (E) would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or (F) could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual
- h. Exemption 8: information relating to the supervision of financial institutions
- i. Exemption 9: geological information on wells