

APPENDIX D FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) requires each Commonwealth agency to publish information on:

- the way it is organised, its functions, and the powers needed to perform those functions that affect members of the public;
- arrangements for public participation in its work;
- categories of documents that it holds, including:
 - those available to the public on request
 - those available for purchase
- the ways the public may obtain access to the agency's documents and the contact point for inquiries under the FOI Act.

ORGANISATION, FUNCTIONS AND POWERS AFFECTING THE PUBLIC

Organisation

An organisational structure chart appears in Chapter 2 of this report (see p.13).

Functions and Powers

A brief description of the Department's functions can be found in Chapter 2 of this report. More specific details can be found in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 which address the Department's performance against our outcomes.

Decision-making powers for the purpose of the FOI Act can be found on the Department's website (www.finance.gov.au) under the heading 'Legislation'.

FOI PROCEDURES

Procedures and Initial Contact Points

Inquiries may be made by letter, telephone or in person. Formal FOI requests must be made in writing and lodged with the Department's FOI Coordinator (see contact details below). Each request must be accompanied by a \$30 application fee and should include a telephone number, a fax number (if available) and a return Australian address.

If an applicant wishes to have an initial FOI decision reviewed, requests for internal review must be accompanied by a \$40 application fee.

Facilities for Access to Documents

Members of the public may make inquiries on FOI matters at the access point described below. This access point is open for business between 9.00 am and 4.30 pm Monday to Friday (except public holidays). The FOI Coordinator will be available to receive inquiries and supervise inspection of documents to which access has been granted. It is suggested that an appointment be arranged prior to seeking access.

A reading room is available for the examining of documents to which access is granted. Photocopying facilities also are available at the access point. Information on access for people with disabilities can be obtained from the FOI Coordinator.

Freedom of Information Contact and Access Point

FOI Coordinator
Department of Finance and Administration
John Gorton Building
King Edward Terrace
PARKES ACT 2600
(Tel) 02 6215 3751 or 02 6215 3615
(Fax) 02 6215 3386
e-mail: foi@finance.gov.au

Charges

The Department's policy on levying charges under the FOI Regulations (Fees and Charges) is that, where applicable, fees should be collected and charges imposed for processing FOI requests. However, fees may be remitted and charges reduced or not imposed if there is a valid reason to do so. Further advice regarding fees and charges can be obtained from the FOI Coordinator.

Officers Authorised to Make Decisions Under the FOI Act

Departmental SES officers, Executive Level 2 officers and the FOI Coordinator are authorised to make decisions under the FOI Act.

CATEGORIES OF DOCUMENTS

The categories of documents listed below are held in either Finance's central or regional offices and are stored in filing systems, on computers, in registers and in other storage facilities.

The Department maintains a website at www.finance.gov.au. The majority of the documents published by the Department are available on this site, together with other publications and additional information about the Department.

Documents Available Free of Charge

Improved and More Efficient Government Operations:

- Guidance on competitive tendering and contracting including:
 - *Competitive Tendering and Contracting: Guidance for Managers*;
 - *The Performance Improvement Cycle: Guidance for Managers*;
 - *Management Systems to Navigate Change in the Public Sector*;
 - *Panel of CTC Consultants Information Kit*.
- Guidance on purchasing and procurement:
 - the *Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines*, associated circulars and supplementary guidelines;
 - Australian Government purchasing policies, procurement agreements and responses to relevant committee reports;
 - various documents relating to risk management in procurement.
- Documents relating to Endorsed Supplier Arrangements (ESA), including the ESA Application and the Government Information Technology and Communications contracting framework version 3 (GITC3) at www.esa.finance.gov.au.
- Guidance on access to Government information, including *Guidelines for Commonwealth Information Printed in Electronic Formats*.
- *Client Service Charter Principles* and other information on Government Service Charters.
- *PSS/CSS Long Term Cost Report*.

- Portfolio Budget documentation including the Portfolio Budget Statements and Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements.
- Commonwealth Budget papers for the 1996 Budget onwards.
- Other whole-of-government Budget-related documents including:
 - Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook from 1996 onwards;
 - Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook (PEFO) 1998;
 - Final Budget Outcome 1996 onwards;
 - Commonwealth's Consolidated Financial Statements for the years ended 30 June 1996 to June 30 2000.
- *Outcomes and Outputs Framework Guidance Document* and other policy documents on accrual budgeting.
- Comcover Policy Manual.
- Comcover newsletter *Federal Risk Manager*.
- Comcover Information Bulletins.
- *Agency Banking Framework Guidance Manual*.
- Determinations, statements and reports of the Remuneration Tribunal.
- *Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Scheme Handbook*.

Other Documents:

Improved and More Efficient Government Operations

Management Advisory Board—Management Improvement Advisory Committee (MAB–MIAC) publications.

Efficiently Functioning Parliament

- Australian Political Exchange Council—annual reports (www.polexchange.org.au).
- *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984*:
 - consultants engaged under section 4 of the Act;
 - annual reports;
 - Certified Agreement 1999–2000.
- Parliamentarians' travel paid by the Department of Finance and Administration (tabling documents).
- Rules, guidelines, practices and procedures used for the purpose of administering Parliamentary and electorate entitlements.

Other

- Portfolio Ministers' speeches and media releases.
- Departmental media releases, instructions, circulars and reference books.
- Personnel and personal documents, employee relations and human resource management papers (Corporate—Human Resources).
- Online Action Plan.
- *Department of Finance and Administration Annual Report 1997 onwards*.
- Finance Diversity Programme 1997–2000.
- Financial and accounting records including requests for tender, contracts and quality assurance documents.
- Committee records and reports.
- Department of Finance and Administration Certified Agreement.
- Departmental security manual.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR OUTSIDE CONSULTATION

Purchasing Advisory and Complaints Service

As part of the Government's December 1997 decision on Commonwealth purchasing arrangements, a telephone hotline was established on 1800 650 531 in Finance to facilitate business and agency queries and access to information about Commonwealth purchasing. The service also aims to improve communication between suppliers and buyers, and to provide impartial advice to help resolve any complaints about Commonwealth purchasing processes.

Australian Procurement and Construction Ministerial Council (APCMC)

The APCMC, comprising Government Ministers representing each jurisdiction on procurement and construction issues, is the peak group for consideration of these matters.

Australian Procurement and Construction Council (APCC)

The Ministerial Council is supported in its work programme by the APCC, a body of State, Territory, Commonwealth and New Zealand officials set up to consider broad strategy issues relating to public sector procurement, supply and construction.

FOI STATISTICS FOR 2000–01

The following tables comprise FOI inquiries that were dealt with by the Department during 2000–01.

Requests on Hand:

carried over from 1999–2000	10
received during year	41

Requests Finalised:

withdrawn (following consultation(s) and imposition of charge)	13
granted in full	9
granted in part	14
denied in full	4
lapsed (following consultation(s) and imposition of charge)	3
outstanding as at 30 June 2001	6

Internal Reviews:

received	4
finalised	4
AAT Appeals	1
AAT Appeals (ongoing)	1

Privacy Act 1988

There were no complaints received or other matters dealt with under this Act.

PARLIAMENTARY RETIRING ALLOWANCES TRUST

Statement required under section 8 of the FOI Act.

Establishment

The Parliamentary Retiring Allowances Trust was established by section 5 of the *Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Act 1948*.

Organisation

The Trust is a body corporate consisting of five trustees. They are the Minister for Finance and Administration, two Senators and two Members of the House of Representatives. Officers of the Department of Finance and Administration provide assistance and advice as required.

Functions

The Trust exercises certain powers under the *Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Act 1948*, the *Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Amendment Act 1978*, and the Parliamentary Retiring Allowances Regulations, which provide a contributory superannuation scheme for Members of Parliament.

Powers

The *Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Act 1948* confers on the Trust certain discretionary powers concerning:

- l the nature of retirement;
- l the deferment of commutation elections;
- l payment of benefits in respect of eligible children of deceased members;
- l the terms of payments to the Commonwealth in respect of periods of previous parliamentary service;
- l the preservation of superannuation rights from previous employment;
- l reduction in the rate of pension where other benefits are payable;
- l reduction of benefits to take account of the superannuation surcharge;
- l recovery of overpayments;
- l payment to other than beneficiaries.

Categories of Documents

The Trust maintains the following categories of documents, which are made available to the public:

- l agendas and minutes of Trust meetings;
- l correspondence between members of the Trust;
- l correspondence concerning the arrangements for meetings of the Trust;
- l papers concerning the appointment of members of the Trust.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR OUTSIDE PARTICIPATION

Persons or bodies may make representations on the Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Scheme by writing to the Minister for Finance and Administration.