



**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT
ANNUAL REPORT
FOR
FISCAL YEAR 2011**

November 30, 2011

Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency
Freedom of Information Act Annual Report FY 2011

I. Basic Information Regarding Report

- A. Name, title, address, and telephone number of person to be contacted with questions about the report:

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- B. Electronic link for access to the Report on the agency Web site:
<http://www.ignet.gov>
- C. How to obtain a paper copy of this report in paper form:
Contact Mark Jones at the contact information listed above.

II. Making a FOIA Request

- A. The Executive Director is the official to receive FOIA requests sent to the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE)
- B. Brief description of why some requests are not granted and an overview of certain general categories of CIGIE records to which FOIA exemptions apply.

A determination to grant or deny the release of any record (or portion thereof) is made after careful review and evaluation of the request. The FOIA extends protection to certain material under various Exemptions. The types of records that may be protected and not released are categories common to all Federal agency operations, such as:

Exemption 3: Other statute, for example, the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a, Pub. L. 93-579 (12-31-1974)
Exemption 5: Pre-decisional, deliberative process information
Exemption 6: Personal privacy

III. Definitions of Terms and Acronyms Used in the Report:

A. Entity Specific Acronym -- CIGIE – Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency

B. Definitions of terms used in this report:

1. **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.
2. **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, 10, and 14, the average number is 9.
3. **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.
4. **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.
5. **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 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.
6. **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.
7. **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.)

8. **Full Grant** – an agency decision to disclose all records in full in response to a FOIA request.
9. **Full Denial** – an agency decision not to release any records in response to a FOIA request because the records are exempt in their entirety under one or more of the FOIA exemptions, or because of a procedural reason, such as when no records could be located.
10. **Median Number** – the middle, not average, number. For example, of 3, 10, and 14, the median number is 10.
11. **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.
 - a. **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.
 - b. **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.
 - c. **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.
12. **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.
13. **Pending Request or Pending Administrative Appeal** – a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has not taken final action in all respects.
14. **Perfect 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.
15. **Processed Request or Processed Administrative Appeal** – a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has taken final action in all respects.
16. **Range in Number of Days** – the lowest and highest number of days to process requests or administrative appeals.
17. **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).

C. Concise descriptions of the nine FOIA exemptions:

1. **Exemption 1:** classified national defense and foreign relations information
2. **Exemption 2:** internal agency rules and practices
3. **Exemption 3:** information that is prohibited from disclosure by another federal law
4. **Exemption 4:** trade secrets and other confidential business information
5. **Exemption 5:** inter-agency or intra-agency communications that are protected by legal privileges
6. **Exemption 6:** information involving matters of personal privacy
7. **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
8. **Exemption 8:** information relating to the supervision of financial institutions
9. **Exemption 9:** geological information on wells

Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency

IV. EXEMPTION 3 STATUTES

Statute	Type of Information Withheld	Case Citation	Number of Times Relied upon
			0

V. FOIA REQUESTS

A. Received, Processed, and Pending FOIA Requests

Number of Requests Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Received in Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Processed in Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Pending as of End of Fiscal Year
0	23	19	4

B. (1) Disposition of FOIA Requests – All Processed Requests

Number of Full Grants	Number of Partial Grants/ Partial Denials	Number of Full Denials Based on Exemptions	No Records	All Records Referred to Another Component or Agency	Request Withdrawn	Fee-Related Reason	Records not Reasonably Described	Improper FOIA Request for Other Reason	Not Agency Record	Duplicate Request	Other *Explain in chart below
6	1	0	7	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

TOTAL 19

B (2) Disposition of FOIA Requests – “Other” Reasons for Full Denials

Description of “Other” Reasons for Denials from Chart B (1) & Number of Times Those Reasons Were Relied upon	TOTAL
Administratively closed	1

B. (3) Disposition of FOIA Requests – Number of Times Exemptions Applied

Ex. 1	Ex. 2	Ex. 3	Ex. 4	Ex. 5	Ex. 6	Ex. 7(A)	Ex. 7(B)	Ex. 7(C)	Ex. 7(D)	Ex. 7(E)	Ex. 7(F)	Ex. 8	Ex. 9
0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS OF INITIAL DETERMINATIONS OF FOIA REQUESTS

A. Received, Processed, and Pending Administrative Appeals

Appeals Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Received in Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Processed in Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Pending as of End of Fiscal Year
0	0	0	0

B. Disposition of Administrative Appeals – All Processed Appeals

Number Affirmed on Appeal	Number Partially Affirmed & Partially Reversed/Remanded on Appeal	Number Completely Reversed/Remanded on Appeal	Number of Appeals Closed for Other Reasons	TOTAL
0	0	0	0	0

C. (1) Reasons for Denial on Appeal – Number of Times Exemptions Applied

Ex. 1	Ex. 2	Ex. 3	Ex. 4	Ex. 5	Ex. 6	Ex. 7(A)	Ex. 7(B)	Ex. 7(C)	Ex. 7(D)	Ex. 7(E)	Ex. 7(F)	Ex. 8	Ex. 9
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

C. (2) Reasons for Denial on Appeal – Reasons Other than Exemptions

No Records	Records Referred at Initial Request Level	Request Withdrawn	Fee-Related Reason	Records not Reasonably Described	Improper Request for Other Reasons	Not Agency Record	Duplicate Request or Appeal	Request in Litigation	Appeal Based Solely on Denial of Request for Expedited Processing	Other *Explain in chart below
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

C. (3) Reasons for denial on Appeal – “Other” Reasons from Section VI, C(2) Chart

Description of “Other” Reasons for Denial on Appeal from Chart C (2) & Number of Times Those Reasons Were Relied upon	TOTAL
N/A	0

D. Pending Requests – All Pending Perfected Requests

SIMPLE			COMPLEX			EXPEDITED PROCESSING		
Number Pending	*Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Number Pending	*Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Number Pending	*Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days
4	9	9	0	0	0	0	0	0

E. Pending requests – Ten Oldest Pending Perfected Requests

	10 th Oldest	9 th	8 th	7 th	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	Oldest
Date	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2011-09-22	2011-09-21	2011-09-19	2011-09-19
Number of Days Pending		0	0	0	0	0	7	8	10	10

VIII. REQUESTS FOR EXPEDITED PROCESSING AND REQUESTS FOR FEE WAIVER

A. Requests for Expedited Processing

Number Granted	Number Denied	*Median Number of Days to Adjudicate	#Average Number of Days to Adjudicate	Number Adjudicated Within Ten Calendar Days
0	0	0	0	0

B. Requests for Fee Waiver

Number Granted	Number Denied	*Median Number of Days to Adjudicate	#Average Number of Days to Adjudicate
0	0	0	0

IX. FOIA PERSONNEL AND COSTS

PERSONNEL			COSTS		
Number of “Full-Time FOIA Employees”	Number of “Equivalent Full-Time FOIA Employees”	Total Number of “Full-Time FOIA Staff” (The sum of Columns 1 & 2)	Processing Costs (At initial request and appeal levels)	Litigation-Related Costs	Total Costs
0	0.037	0.037	\$4,928.13	0	\$4,928.13

X. FEES COLLECTED FOR PROCESSING

Total Amount of Fees Collected	Percentage of Total Costs
0	0

XI. FOIA REGULATIONS

CIGIE uses the USDA FOIA regulations found at <http://www.dm.usda.gov/usdaregs.pdf>

CIGIE uses the USDA FOIA fee schedule found at <http://www.da.usda.gov/foia.htm>

XII. BACKLOGS, CONSULTATIONS, AND COMPARISONS

A. Backlogs of FOIA Requests and Administrative Appeals

Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of Fiscal Year	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Fiscal Year
0	0

B. Consultations on FOIA Requests – Received, Processed, and Pending Consultations

Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that Were <u>Pending</u> at CIGIE as of Start of the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations <u>Received</u> from Other Agencies During the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that Were <u>Processed</u> by CIGIE During the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that Were <u>Pending</u> at CIGIE as of End of the Fiscal Year
0	0	0	0

C. Consultations on FOIA Requests – Ten Oldest Consultations Received from Other Agencies

	10 th Oldest	9th	8th	7 th	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	Oldest
Date										
Number of Days Pending	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D. Comparison of Number of Requests from Previous and Current Annual Report – Requests Received, Processed, and Backlogged

NUMBER OF REQUESTS RECEIVED		NUMBER OF REQUESTS PROCESSED	
Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year’s Annual Report	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year’s Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
2	23	2	19

Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of the Fiscal Year from Previous Annual Report	Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of the Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
0	0

E. Comparison of Numbers of Administrative Appeals from Previous and Current Annual Report – Appeals Received, Processed, and Backlogged

NUMBER OF APPEALS RECEIVED		NUMBER OF APPEALS PROCESSED	
Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
0	0	0	0

Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of the Fiscal Year from Previous Annual Report	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of the Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
0	0