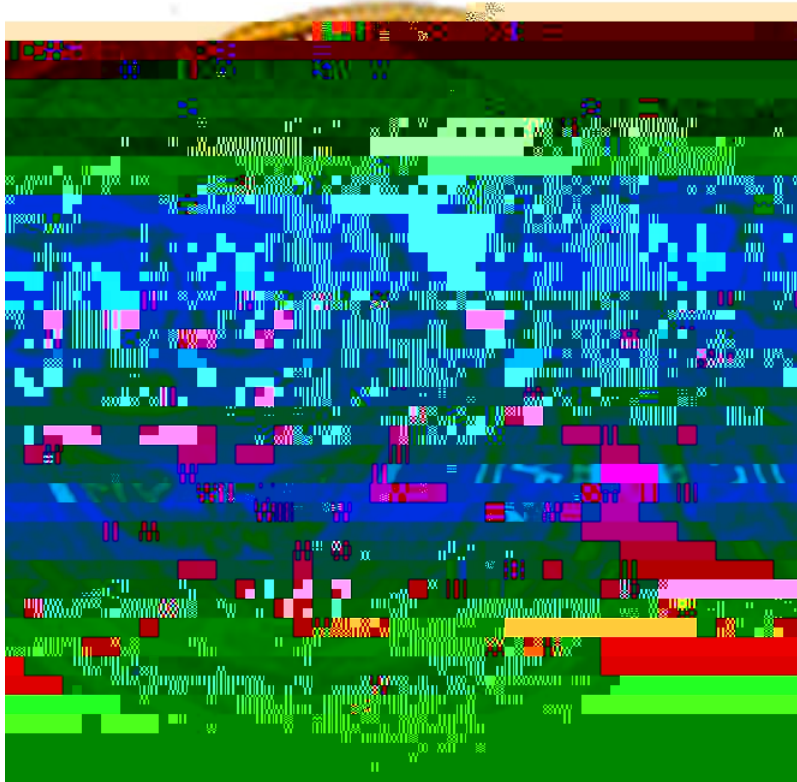


**FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION
REPORT BY SARAH MACKEY
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MARCH 2017

Outreach

Section II: Steps Taken to Ensure that Your Agency Has an Effective System in Place for Responding to Requests

The DOJ's 2009 FOIA Guidelines emphasized that “[a]pplication of the proper disclosure standard is only one part of ensuring transparency. Open government requires not just a presumption of disclosure, but also an effective system for responding to FOIA requests.” It is essential that agencies effectively manage their FOIA program.

Please answer the following questions to describe the steps your agency has taken to ensure that the management of your FOIA program is effective and efficient. You should also include any additional information that that describes your agency’s efforts in this area.

Processing Procedures

1. For Fiscal Year 2016, what was the average number of days your agency reported for adjudicating requests for expedited processing? Please see Section VIII.A. of your agency’s Fiscal Year 2016 Annual FOIA Report.

Answer: 4 days.

2. If your agency’s average number of days to adjudicate requests for expedited processing was above ten calendar days, please describe the steps your agency will take to ensure that requests for expedited processing are adjudicated within ten calendar days or less.

Answer: N/A

3. During the reporting period, did your agency conduct a self-assessment of its FOIA program? If so, please describe the methods used, such as reviewing Annual Report data, using active workflows and track management, reviewing and updating processing procedures, etc.

Answer: Yes. A review of the FY2015 Annual Report raw data provided an opportunity to issue revised data-recording procedures within our tracking system with respect to consultations and referrals, fee waivers and closing requests based on “other reasons”. These procedures were issued through “Best Practices” communications to all full-time FOIA staff.

4. Please provide an estimate of how many requests your agency processed in Fiscal Year 2016 that were from commercial use requesters. If your agency is decentralized, please identify any components within your agency that received a majority of their requests from commercial use requesters.

Answer: Approximately 138 requests.

Requester Services

5. Does your agency provide a mechanism for requesters to provide feedback about their experience with the FOIA process at your agency? If so, please describe the methods used, such as making the FOIA Public Liaison available to receive feedback, using surveys posted on the agency’s website, etc.

Answer: Yes. If a requester has questions or comments about the FOIA process, they may call the FOIA Requester Service Center at (202) 326-2430 either to speak directly to a FOIA representative or leave a voice message. A requester may ask the FOIA representative to speak with the FOIA Public Liaison if there are concerns about the quality of the service received regarding the processing of an initial response or appeal. Moreover, the FOIA Public Liaison's contact information is available here [_____](#)

Section III: Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures

Both the President's and DOJ's FOIA memoranda focused on the need for agencies to work proactively to post information online without waiting for individual requests to be received.

Please answer the following questions to describe the steps your agency has taken to increase the amount of material that is available on your agency websites. In addition to the questions below, you should also describe any additional steps taken by your

Answer: No.

4. If so, briefly explain those challenges and how your agency is working to overcome them.

Answer: N/A

5.

Section IV: Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology

A key component of the President's FOIA Memorandum was the direction to "use modern technology to inform citizens about what is known and done by their Government." In addition to using the internet to make proactive disclosures, agencies should also be exploring ways to utilize technology in responding to requests.

Please answer the following questions to describe how your agency is utilizing technology to improve its FOIA administration and the public's access to information. You should also include any additional information that that describes your agency's efforts in this area.

Making Material Posted Online More Useful

1. Beyond posting new material, is your agency taking steps to make the posted information more useful to the public, especially to the community of individuals who regularly access your agency's website?

Answer: Yes.

2. If yes, please provide examples of such improvements.

Answer: During this reporting period, the FOIA Of

5. Beyond using technology to redact documents, is your agency taking steps to utilize more advanced technology to facilitate overall FOIA efficiency, such as improving record search capabilities, utilizing document sharing platforms for consultations and referrals, or employing software that can sort and de-duplicate documents? If yes please describe:

- The technological improvements being made.
- The impact of using these technologies on your agency's request processing.

Answer: N/A

6. Are there additional tools that could be utilized by your agency to create further efficiencies?

Answer: N/A

Other Initiatives

7. Did your agency successfully post all four quarterly reports for Fiscal Year 2016?

Answer: Yes.

8. If your agency did not successfully post all quarterly reports, with information appearing on FOIA.gov, please explain why and provide your agency's plan for ensuring that such reporting is successful in Fiscal Year 2017.

Answer: N/A

