FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ANNUAL REPORT -- FY 2009

I. AGENCY: Office of the Inspector General

REPORT PREPARED BY: Robin Brooks

TITLE: OIG FOIA Supervisor

ADDRESS: 330 Independence Ave SW, Suite 1062, Washington DC 20201

PHONE NUMBER: 202.619.2541

ELECTRONIC ADDRESS FOR THIS REPORT ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB: http://oig.hhs.gov/foia.html

ADDRESS FOR PAPER COPIES OF THIS REPORT: Same as above

II. HOW TO MAKE A FOIA REQUEST: Please see HHS Guide to Information Resources at: www.hhs.gov/about/infoguid.html#foia

2. Brief description of why some requests are not granted: Documents requested were protected by an exemption and release would have caused harm to the interest protected by the exemption.

III. ACRONYMS, DEFINITIONS, AND EXEMPTIONS:

1. Agency-specific acronyms or other terms:

HHS - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

OPDIVs - Operating Divisions of HHS

OS - Office of the Secretary, HHS

OASPA - Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, HHS

AoA - Administration on Aging

ACF - Administration for Children and Families

AHRQ - Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

ATSDR - Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

CDC - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

FDA - Food and Drug Administration

HRSA - Health Resources and Services Administration

IHS - Indian Health Service

NIH - National Institutes of Health

OIG – Office of the Inspector General

OPHS - Office of Public Health and Science

PHS - Public Health Service

PRO - Professional Review Organization

- 2. Basic terms (from FOIA UPDATE, Summer 1997):
- 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 re[port 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 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.
- 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.
- **FOIA Request** a FOIA request is generally a request to a federal agency g. 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 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.
 - 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 multitrack processing places in a slower track based on the high volume and/or complexity of the records requested.
- 1. **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. Include the following concise descriptions of the nine FOIA exemptions:
 - a. **Exemption 1**: classified national defense and foreign relations information

- 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 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

IV. EXEMPTION 3 STATUTES (See Chart)

- V. FOIA Requests (See Chart)
 - A. Numbers of initial requests (line 1 + line 2 line 3 = line 4): (See chart)
 - 1. Number of requests pending as of start of fiscal year: 15
 - 2. Number of requests received in fiscal year: 419
 - 3. Number of requests processed in fiscal year: 410
 - 4. Number of requests pending as of end of fiscal year: 24
 - B. (1) Disposition of FOIA Requests: (See chart)
 - 1. Number of full grants: 111
 - 2. Number of partial grants: 66
 - 3. Number of full denials based on Exemptions: 35
 - 4. Number of Full Denials Based on Reasons Other than Exemptions (Total):

- a. No records: 85b. Referrals: 27
- c. Request withdrawn: 30d. Fee-related reason: 4
- e. Records not reasonably described: 2
- f. Improper FOIA request for some other reason: 13
- g. Not an agency record: 26
- h. Duplicate request: 6
- i. Other (specify): 5
- B. (2) Disposition of FOIA Requests Other (See chart) Records on OIG website
- B. (3) Disposition of FOIA Requests Number of times exemptions applied (See Chart)

Exemption 1:

Exemption 2: 20

Exemption 3: 3

Exemption 4: 13

Exemption 5: 33

Exemption 6: 58

Exemption 7(A): 29

Exemption 7(B): 0

Exemption 7(C): 32

Exemption 7(D): 1

Exemption 7(E): 15

Exemption 7(F): 0

Exemption 8: 0

Exemption 9: $\underline{0}$

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS OF INITIAL DETERMINATIONS OF FOIA REQUESTS

- A. Received, Processed and Pending Administrative Appeals N/A
 - 1. Number of appeals pending as of start of Fiscal Year
 - 2. Number of appeals received in Fiscal Year:
 - 3. Number of appeals processed in Fiscal Year:
 - 4. Number appeals pending as of end of Fiscal Year
- B. Disposition of Administrative Appeals All Processed Appeals N/A
 - 1. Number affirmed on appeal
 - 2. Number partially affirmed and partially reversed/remanded on appeal
 - 3. Number completely reversed/remanded on appeal
 - 4. Number of appeals closed for other reasons
- C. (1) Reasons for denial on Appeal Number of Times Exemptions applied

- Exemption 1:
 Exemption 2:
 Exemption 3:
 Exemption 4:
 Exemption 5:
 Exemption 6:
 Exemption 7

 Exemption 7(A):
 Exemption 7(B):
 Exemption 7(C):
 Exemption 7(D):
 Exemption 7(E):
 Exemption 7(F):
 Exemption 9:
- C. (2) Reasons for denial on Appeal Reasons other than exemptions
 - a. No records:
 - b. Referrals:
 - c. Request withdrawn:
 - d. Fee-related reason:
 - e. Records not reasonably described:
 - f. Improper request for other reason:
 - g. Not an agency record:
 - h. Duplicate request:
 - i. Request in litigation:
 - j. Appeal based solely on denial of request for expedited processing:
- C. (3) Reasons for denial on Appeal Other

Administrative closures, records previously released to appellant

- C. (4) Response time for administrative appeals
 - a. Median number of days:
 - b. Average number of days:
 - c. Lowest Number of days:
 - d. Highest number of days:
- C. (5) Ten Oldest Pending Appeals (See Chart)

VII. FOIA REQUESTS: RESPONSE TIME FOR PROCESSED AND PENDING REQUESTS

A. Processed Requests – Response Time for All Processed Perfected Requests

- B. Processed Requests Response Time for Perfected Requests in Which Information Was Granted
- C. Processed Requests Response Time in Day Increments
- D. Pending Requests All Pending Perfected Requests
- E. Pending Requests Ten Oldest Pending Perfected Requests

VIII. REQUESTS FOE EXPEDITED PROCESSING AND REQUESTS FOR FEE WAIVER (See Chart)

- A. Requests foe Expedited Processing
- B. Requests for Fee Waiver

IX. FOIA PERSONNEL AND COSTS (See Chart)

- A. Personnel
- B. Costs
- X. FEES COLLECTED FOR PROCESSING REQUESTS (See Chart)
- XI. FOIA REGULATIONS http://www.hhs.gov/foia/45cfr5.html.

XII. BACKLOGS, CONSULTATIONS, AND COMPARISONS

- A. Backlogs of FOIA Requests and Administrative Appeals (See Chart)
- B. Consultations on FOIA Requests Received, Processed, and Pending Consultations (See Chart)
- C. Consultations on FOIA Requests Ten Oldest Consultations Received from Other Agencies and Pending at Your Agency (See Chart)
- D. Comparison of Numbers of Requests from Previous and Current Annual Report Requests Received, Processed, and Backlogged (See Chart)
- E. Comparison of Numbers of Administrative Appeals from Previous and Current Annual Report Appeals Received, Processed, and Backlogged (See Chart)

IV. Exemption 3 Statutes

Statute	Type of Information Withheld	Case Citation	Number of Times Relied upon per Component	Total Number of Times Relied upon by Agency
42 USCA § 262 '''	''Ugrgev'Ci gpv	11111	''''2	2
18USC 2510-20	Pen Register		1	1

Part V A Received, Processed and Pending FOIA Requests

	Number of Requests Pending	Number of Requests	Number of Requests	Number of Requests Pending
	as of Start of	Received in Fiscal		as of End of
	Fiscal Year	Year	Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year
OIG	15	419	410	24

V B 1 Disposition of all FOIA Requests – All Processed Requests

	Number of Full Grants	Number of Partial Grants/ Partial Denials	Number of Full Denials Based on Exemptions		Number of	Full Denials B	sased on R	easons Other t	than Exemp	tions			
				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"	TOTAL
OIG	111	66	35	85	27	30	4	2	13	26	6	5	410

V B. (2) Disposition of FOIA Requests – "Other" Reasons for "Full Denials Based on Reasons Other than Exemptions" from Section V, B (1) Chart

Component	Description of "Other" Reasons for Denials from Chart B (1) & Number of Times Those Reasons Were Relied upon	TOTAL
OIG	Records on OIG Webpage	1
	No Response from Rqstr	4

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

	Ex.	Ex.	Ex. 3	Ex.	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
OIG	0	20	3	13	33	58	29	0	32	1	15	0	0	0

VII. A FOIA REQUESTS: RESPONSE TIME FOR PROCESSED AND PENDING REQUESTS

	SIMPLI	Ξ		COMPLEX				EXPEDITED PROCESSING			
Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
1	4	1	21	41	51	1	190	1	1	1	1
	Number of Days	Median Number of Days Average Number of Days	Number of Days of Days Number of Days	Median Number of Days Average Number of Days Of Days Of Days Of Days Of Days	Median Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Median Number of Days

VII. B Processed Requests - Response Time for Perfected Requests in Which Information Was Granted

		SIMPLI	Ε			COMP	LEX		EXPEDITED PROCESSING			
	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
OIG	1	4	0	20	41	50	1	190	0	0	0	0

VII. C Processes Requests – Response Time in Day Increments

Simple Requests

	1–20 Days	21 – 40 Days	41 – 60 Days	61 – 80 Days	81- 100 Days	101- 120 Days	121- 140 Days	141- 160 Days	161- 180 Days	181- 200 Days	201- 300 Days	301- 400 Days	401+ Days	TOTAL
OIG	329	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	332

$VII.\ C\ Processes\ Requests-Response\ Time$

Complex Requests

	1–20 Days	21 – 40 Days	41 – 60 Days	61 – 80 Days	81- 100 Days	101- 120 Days	121- 140 Days	141- 160 Days	161- 180 Days	181- 200 Days	201- 300 Days	301- 400 Days	401+ Days	TOTAL
OIG	9	28	18	8	6	4	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	77

VII. C Processes Requests – Response Time

Requests Granted Expedited Processing

	1–20 Days		41 – 60 Days		81- 100 Days		121- 140	141- 160	161- 180	181- 200	201- 300	301- 400	401+ Days	TOTAL
		,	-	,		Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	,	
OIG	1													1
OIG														

VII 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
OIG	1	2	2	23	41	100	0	0	0

VII E Pending Requests- Ten Oldest Pending Perfected Requests

	110 th Oldest	9 th	8 th	7^{th}	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	Oldest Request
	Request									And
	And									Number
	Number of Days									of Days Pending
	Pending									Tending
OIG	05/13/09	04/16/09	04/14/09	04/08/09	03/24/09	02/24/09	02/19/09	01/21/09	09/04/08	06/13/08
	100	119	121	125	136	156	159	180	279	338

VIII A Requests for Expedited Processing

	Number	Number	Median	Average	Number
	Granted	Denied	Number of	Number of	Adjudicated
			Days to	Days to	Within Ten
			Adjudicate	Adjudicate	Calendar
					Days
OIG	0	3	1	10	2

VIII. B Requests for Fee Waiver

	Number Granted	Number Granted	Median Number of Days to Adjudicate	Average Number of Days to Adjudicate
OIG	2	8	4	2

]	Personnel				
	Numbe r of "Full- Time FOIA Emplo yees"	Number of "Equivalent Full-Time FOIA Employees"	Total Number of Full-Time FOIA Staff "	Processing Costs	Litigation-Related Costs	Total Costs
OIG	3	1	4	83,000	5,500	88,500

Part X Fees Collected

	Total Amount of Fees Collected	Percentage of Total Costs
OIG	\$ 1385	1.6%
010	Ψ1303	

Part XII A Backlogs

	Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of Fiscal Year	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Fiscal Year
OVC	0.1	NT / 7
OIG	21	N/A

XII B Consultations on FOIA Requests Received, Pr0cessed, and Pending

	NT 1 C	37 1 C	3.7 1 C	NT 1 C
	Number of	Number of	Number of	Number of
	Consultations	Consultations	Consultations	Consultations
	Received from	Received from	Received from	Received from
	Other Agencies	Other Agencies	Other Agencies	Other Agencies
	that Were	During the	that Were	that Were
	Pending at	Fiscal Year	Processed by	Pending at
	Your Agency		Your Agency	Your Agency
	as of Start of		During the	as of End of the
	the Fiscal Year		Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year
OIG				

XII C Consultations on FOIA Requests- Ten Oldest Consultations Received from Other Agencies and Pending at your Agency

MS	Oldest Request And Number of Days Pending	9 th	8 th	7 th	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	Oldest Request And Number of Days Pending
OIG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

XII D 1 Comparison Numbers of Requests from Previous and Current Annual Report - Requests Received, Processed, and Backlogged

Number of Reque	ests 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	
124	419	109	410	
	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report Annual Report Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	

Column 1 Column 2

	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
OIG	3	21

XII E 1 Comparison of Numbers of Administrative Appeals from Previous and Current Annual Report – Appeals Received, Processed, and Backlogged

	Number of Appea	als 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	
OIG	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Total					