2013 DoD Chief FOIA Officer Report

1. Name of Component

2. Did your Component hold a FOIA conference, or otherwise conduct training during this reporting period?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If yes, please provide details.

3. Did your FOIA professionals attend FOIA training? If so, please indicate the source of the training.

☐ No

☐ DoD-wide FOIA/PA Training Workshop

☐ DFOIPO Defense Connect Online (DCO)

☐ Department of Justice

☐ American Society of Access Professionals (ASAP)

Additional Comments

4. Did your Component make any discretionary releases of otherwise exempt information? If yes, please check the exemptions used. If no, please skip this question.
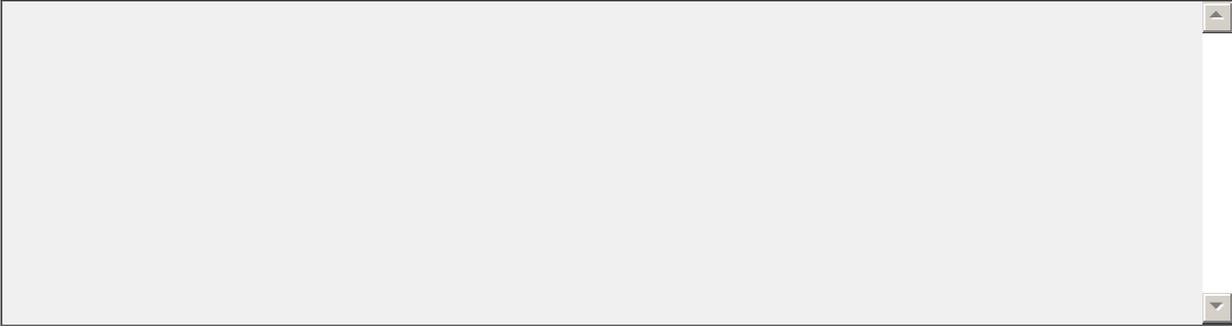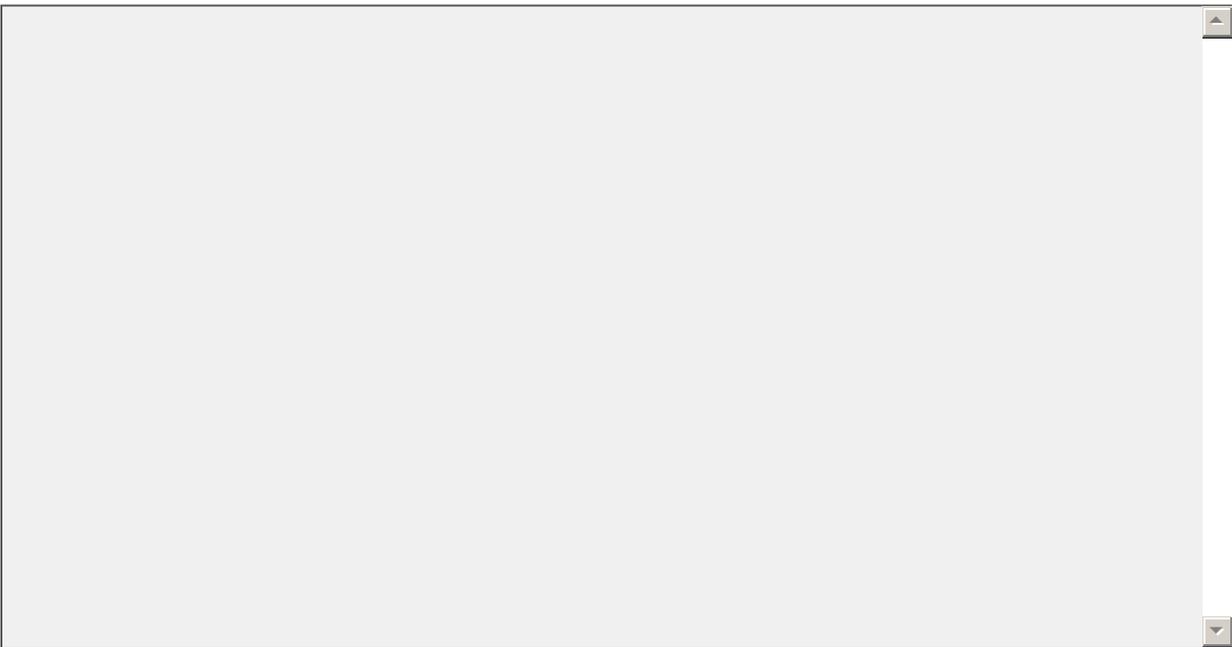
☐ Exemption 2

☐ Exemption 5

☐ Exemption 7

If other exemptions used, please note here.

5. Provide a narrative description, or provide examples of the types of information that your agency released as a matter of discretion.

6. Describe any other initiatives undertaken by your Component to ensure that the presumption of openness is being applied.

7. Did your Component have an increase in the number of responses where records were released in full (from your FY2012 Annual Report input)?

☐ YES

☐ NO

8. Did your Component have an increase in the number of responses where records were released in part?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Section II:

Steps Taken to Ensure that Your Component Has an Effective System in Place for Responding to Requests

1. Do FOIA professionals within your Component have sufficient IT support?

☐ YES

☐ NO

2. Do your FOIA professionals work with your Component's Open Government Team?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Other (please specify)

3. Describe the steps your Component has taken to assess whether adequate staffing is being devoted to FOIA administration.
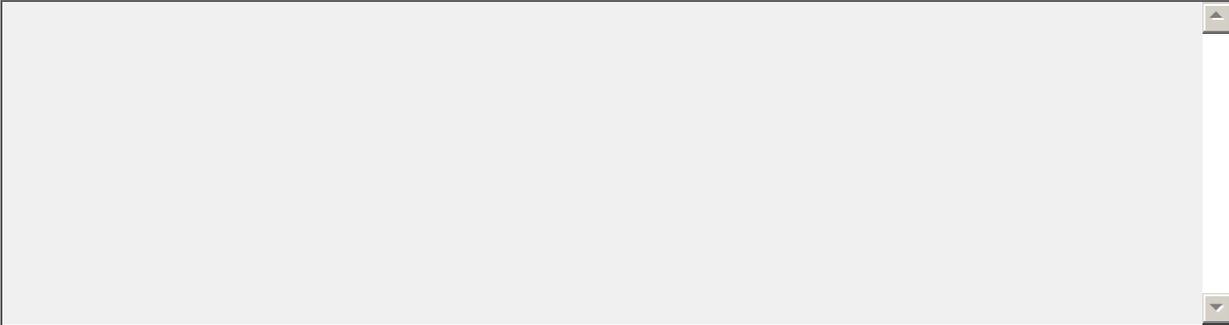
4. Describe any other steps your Component has undertaken to ensure that your FOIA system operates efficiently and effectively, such as conducting self-assessments to find greater efficiencies, improving search processes, streamlining consultations, eliminating redundancy, etc.

Section III:

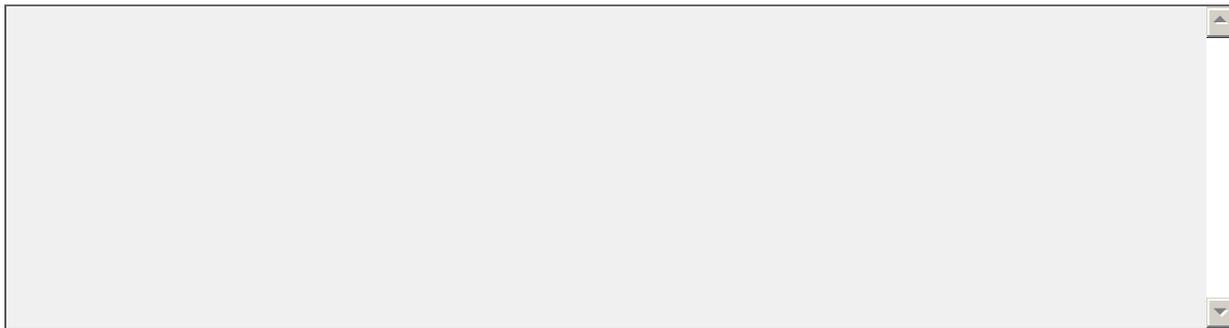Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures

1. Provide examples of the records, datasets, videos, etc., that have been posted this past year. (Don't forget to contact your Public Affairs and Open Government offices for their input.) Additionally, describe how your Component uses social media to proactively disclose information.

2. 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, such as soliciting feedback on the content and presentation of the posted material, improving search capabilities on the site, creating mobile applications, providing explanatory material, etc.? If so, provide examples of such improvements.

☐ Yes (see comments below)

☐ No

Comments

3. Describe any other steps taken to increase proactive disclosures at your Component.

Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology

1. Can FOIA requests be made electronically to your Component?

☐ YES

☐ NO

2. If your Component processes requests on a decentralized basis, do all Components of your Component receive requests electronically?

☐ YES

☐ NO

3. Can a FOIA requester track the status of his/her request electronically?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Other (please specify)

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4. If so, describe the information that is provided to the requester through the tracking system. For example, some tracking systems might tell the requester whether the request is "open" or "closed," while others will provide further details to the requester throughout the course of the processing, such as "search commenced" or "documents currently in review." List the specific types of information that are available through your agency's tracking system.

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5. If not, is your Component taking steps to establish this capability?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Please provide comments to explain your answer here

6. Does your Component tracking system provide the requester an estimated date of completion for his or her request?

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. If your Component does not provide online tracking of requests, is your Component taking steps to establish this capability?

☐ Yes

☐ No (see comments below)

If you answered no to this question, please explain why you are not pursuing this capability here.

8. Beyond using technology to redact documents, is your Component 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?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If so, describe the technological improvements being made.

Section V:

Steps Taken to Improve Timeliness in Responding to Requests and Reduce Backlogs (For questions 23 through 27, use the data from your Component's FY 2011 Annual Report input)

1. For Fiscal Year 2012, was the average number of days to process simple requests twenty working days or fewer?

☐ YES

☐ NO

2. For Fiscal Year 2013, was the average number of days to process non-expedited requests twenty working days or fewer?

○ Yes

○ No

Other (please specify)

3. If your Component had a backlog of requests at the close of Fiscal Year 2012, did that backlog decrease as compared with Fiscal Year 2011?

☐ YES

☐ NO

4. If your Component had a backlog of administrative appeals in Fiscal Year 2012, did that backlog decrease as compared to Fiscal Year 2011?

☐ YES

☐ NO

5. In Fiscal Year 2012, did your Component close the ten oldest requests that were pending as of the end of Fiscal Year 2011?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If not, how many remain pending?

[   ]

6. In Fiscal Year 2012, did your Component close the ten oldest administrative appeals that were pending as of the end of Fiscal Year 2011?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If not, how many remain pending?

[   ]

7. FOR INITIAL REQUESTS - If you answered "no" to any of the above questions (1 through 5), describe why that has occurred. In doing so, check the box to indicate what contributed to the lack of reduction:

☐ An increase in the number of incoming initial requests

☐ A loss of staff (individuals processing initial requests)

☐ An increase in the complexity of the initial requests received

☐ An increase in the number of incoming appeals

☐ A loss of staff (individuals processing appeals)

☐ An increase in the complexity of the appeals received

What other causes, if any, contributed to the lack of a decrease in the request/appeal backlog?

[   ]

8. FOR ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS - If you answered "no" to any of the above questions (1 through 5), describe why that has occurred. In doing so, check the box to indicate what contributed to the lack of reduction:

☐ An increase in the number of incoming initial requests

☐ A loss of staff (individuals processing initial requests)

☐ An increase in the complexity of the initial requests received

☐ An increase in the number of incoming appeals

☐ A loss of staff (individuals processing appeals)

☐ An increase in the complexity of the appeals received

What other causes, if any, contributed to the lack of a decrease in the request/appeal backlog?

9. Does your Component routinely set goals and monitor the progress of your FOIA caseload?

☐ YES

☐ NO

10. Has your Component increased or decreased its FOIA staffing in the previous three years?
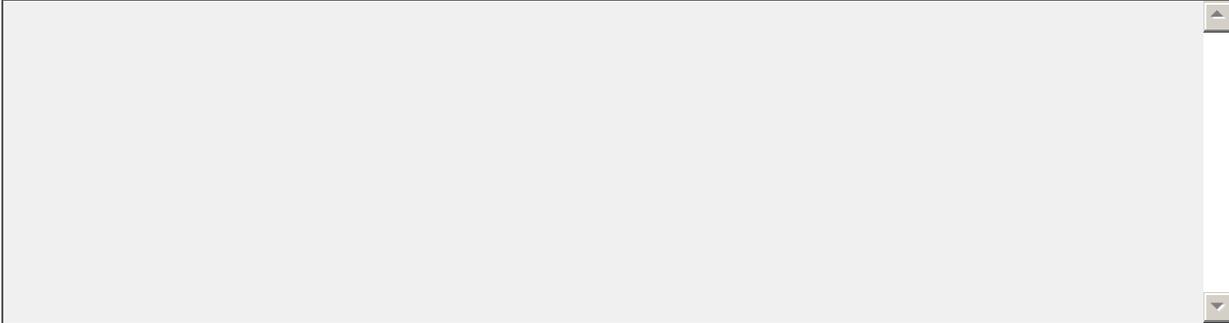
☐ Increased

☐ Decreased

Please provide details

11. Are there future plans to increase or decrease FOIA staffing within your Component?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Please provide details

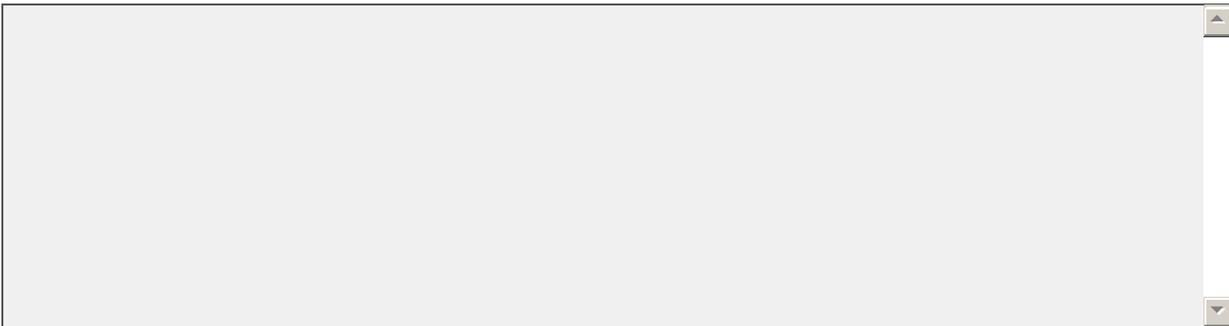**12. Has your Component made IT improvements to increase timeliness?**

☐ YES

☐ NO

Provide any comments here.

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13. If your Component receives consultations from other agencies, has your Component taken steps to improve the efficiency of the handling of such consultations, such as utilizing IT to share the documents, or establishing guidelines or agreements with other agencies on the handling of particular information to speed up or eliminate the need for consultations?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If yes, please describe.
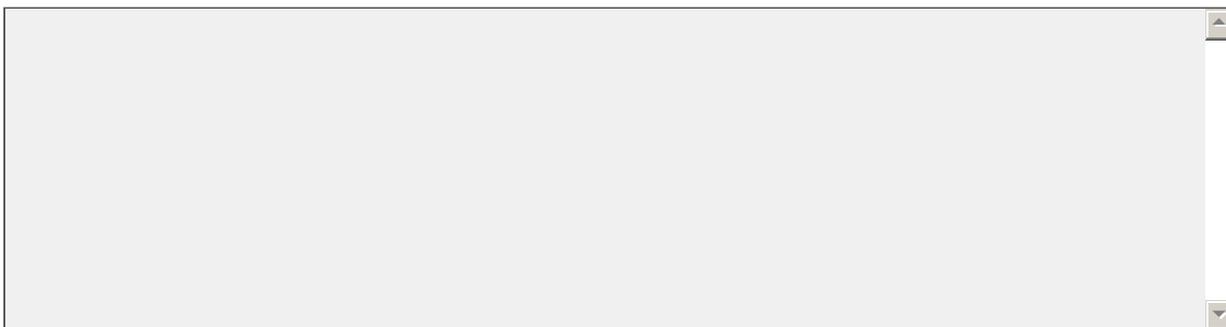
Interim Releases

OIP issued guidance encouraging agencies to make interim releases whenever they are working on requests that involve a voluminous amount of material or require searches of multiple locations. By providing rolling releases to requesters, Components facilitate access to the requested information. With this in mind, please answer the following questions.

1. If your Component had a backlog in Fiscal Year 2012, please estimate the percentage of the backlog cases where a substantive, interim response was provided, even if the request was not finally closed.

○ I have no way of tracking this data.

○ Because I can obtain this information with relative ease, the data is provided below.

Other (please specify)

Use of FOIAs Law Enforcement "Exclusions"

In order to increase transparency regarding the use of the FOIA's statutory law enforcement exclusions, which authorize agencies under certain exceptional circumstances to "treat the records as not subject to the requirements of [the FOIA]," 5 U.S.C. § 552(c)(1), (2), (3), please answer the following questions:

1. Did your Component invoke a statutory exclusion during Fiscal Year 2012?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If so, what is the number of times exclusions were invoked?

Spotlight on Success

1. Since submission of your last Chief FOIA Officer Report, out of all the activities undertaken by your Component to increase transparency and improve FOIA administration, describe success stories you would like to highlight as emblematic of your Component's efforts.

2. Please provide the total cost for compiling this Chief FOIA Officer Report submission, based on the time spent by subcomponents and your component in preparing the report. This would include communications regarding the report, writing emails, verbal, phone, etc, any internal presentations and preparations for presentations, technical support, contractor costs, etc.