

DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET — FOI REQUESTS

1950. Hon Tjorn Sibma to the Leader of the House representing the Premier; Minister for Public Sector Management; Federal–State Relations:

For each of the ten financial years 2008–9 until 2017–18 (inclusive) can the Department of Premier and Cabinet’s Freedom of Information (FOI) unit advise:

- (a) the total number of applications received;
- (b) the proportion of these applications by occupation of the applicant (eg. member of parliament, legal firm on behalf of client, journalist, organisation, member of the public, other);
- (c) the proportion of FOI applications completed within the 45-day legislated timeframe;
- (d) staffing levels within the unit; and
- (e) cost per application processed?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Section 111 of the FOI Act requires the Information Commissioner to provide a report to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and the President of the Legislative Council on the operation of the legislation during the financial year. As part of this report, statistical information is provided to the Information Commissioner by each government agency at the end of each financial year.

- (a) The number of FOI applications received by the Department is reported to the Information Commissioner annually and is available in the Information Commissioner’s relevant annual reports.
- (b)–(c) This statistical information has not been requested by the Information Commissioner and has not been tracked. Answering this question would involve a manual search of every application received by the agency for the specified years and would entail a review of all FOI applications. The Government is not prepared to divert such a substantial and unreasonable portion of agency resources away from core operations to undertake such an intensive search.
- (d) The staffing levels for the FOI Unit were two FTE before January 2012 and five FTE since that date.
- (e) The application fees collected and the charges for access to documents are available in the Information Commissioner’s relevant annual reports.