



## **Summary of Agency Chief FOIA Officer Reports for 2017 and Assessment of Agency Progress in FOIA Administration with OIP Guidance for Further Improvement**

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requires each agency Chief FOIA Officer to “review and report to the Attorney General, through the head of the agency, at such times and in such formats as the Attorney General may direct, on the agency’s performance in implementing [the FOIA].”<sup>1</sup> Implementing this provision, the DOJ FOIA Guidelines direct agency Chief FOIA Officers to review annually all aspects of their FOIA administration and to report to the Department on steps taken to improve their FOIA programs.

Each year, the Department’s Office of Information Policy (OIP) provides guidance to agencies on the content of these reports, which focus on: (1) applying a presumption of openness, (2) having an efficient system in place for responding to requests, (3) increasing proactive disclosures, (4) utilizing technology, and (5) reducing any backlogs and improving timeliness. This year marks the eighth year that agencies have published their Chief FOIA Officer Reports. As agency implementation of the DOJ FOIA Guidelines has matured, OIP has continually refined the questions asked in the Chief FOIA Officer Reports to reflect that progress. As in prior years, while the overall topics addressed in the 2017 reports remained the same, OIP once again [modified and updated the questions](#) within those topic areas.

OIP continued in 2017 to create separate reporting requirements for agencies based on the volume of FOIA requests they receive. In previous years, OIP had distinct reporting requirements for agencies that received less than 1,000 requests and agencies that received more than 1,000. The 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Report Guidelines followed a similar format, but for the first time provided separate questions for three types of agencies instead of two. The 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Report Guidelines distinguish between small (less than 50 requests), medium (50-1,000 requests), and large-volume (greater than 1,000 requests) agencies. By providing agencies with distinct reporting requirements based on the volume of requests received, OIP can more easily address the different circumstances and challenges faced by those agencies with small- and medium-volume FOIA workloads, while continuing to focus in depth on those agencies that receive a higher volume of FOIA requests.

As in prior years, after reviewing all agencies’ [2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#), as well as their [Fiscal Year 2016 Annual FOIA Reports](#), OIP has prepared a brief summary of agency progress over the past year, which immediately follows this introduction. OIP has also conducted a detailed assessment of

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<sup>1</sup> [5 U.S.C. § 552\(j\)\(2\)\(D\)\(2015\), amended by FOIA Improvement Act of 2016, Pub. L. No. 114-185, 130 Stat. 538.](#)

the 26 high-volume and 40 medium-volume agencies subject to the FOIA during Fiscal Year 2016, scoring each one on multiple milestones. Based on our review, OIP has also issued guidance to agencies for continued improvement in the years ahead.

Agency	Training		Agency Conducted Outreach with Requester Community	Outreach to Non-FOIA Staff	
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training			
		Grade	Estimate		
CIA	████████	████████	90%	████████	████████
USDA	████████	████████	92%	████████	████████
DOC	████████	████████	85%	████████	████████
DOD	████████	████████	94%	████████	████████
ED	████████	████████	95%	████████	████████
DOE	████████	████████	85%	███████	████████
HHS	████████	████████	90%	████████	████████
DHS	████████	████████	94%	████████	████████
HUD	████████	███████	80%	████████	████████

Figure 1: 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports - Assessment of Federal Departments and Agencies

**Summary of Agency Progress Based on the 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports**

As noted above, the [2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#) address agency efforts in improving FOIA administrations in five key areas. The summary below focuses on the successes achieved by agencies in each of these five key areas. Agencies and members of the public are encouraged to review the individual [2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#) for even more detail on the successes achieved this past year in these five key areas. The Chief FOIA Officer Reports are accessible from the [Reports](#) page of OIP’s website or from each agency’s FOIA website.

**Section I: Applying a Presumption of Openness**

The first section of agencies’ [2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#) addresses the steps taken by agencies to apply a presumption of openness. Agencies described a wide range of efforts undertaken to ensure that they are administering the FOIA with a presumption of openness, including providing substantive FOIA training to agency FOIA professionals, engaging in outreach with the public, and making all agency personnel aware of their obligations under the FOIA.

*FOIA Training*

A proper understanding of the FOIA, including the correct application of both FOIA law and policy, is a key element of applying a presumption of openness, and many agencies made significant efforts this past year to provide substantive FOIA training to their personnel. For example:

- The [Department of Defense](#) (DoD) continued its virtual training environment efforts through the live Defense Collaboration Services (DCS) and the static Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) tools, which are available worldwide to DoD personnel. DCS permits the trainer to simultaneously present PowerPoint slides to attendees seated at their own desks and to have interactive discussions with personnel around the world. The JKO tool allows for uploading previously recorded material and is the current platform upon which the OIP FOIA training videos are hosted.
- The [Department of Labor](#) (DOL) hosted a three-day training event themed “Ensuring an Informed Citizenry – FOIA at 50.” This event was designed to train Department of Labor access

professionals on a variety of FOIA topics, including overviews of the FOIA's procedural requirements and exemptions, and the roles and responsibilities of DOL FOIA Coordinators. Training materials from the FOIA conference are posted on DOL's intranet site so that they are available as needed by DOL staff.

- The [National Labor Relations Board's](#) (NLRB) FOIA Branch hosted a three-day FOIA Summit, which included lectures on FOIA procedures, recent court decisions, fee waivers, and procedures for responding to appeals. Presentations by the NLRB Librarian, the Lead Technology Counsel, the Associate Chief Information Officer and Operations Division Assistant General Counsel provided the FOIA Branch with helpful information on how to conduct proper searches. Additionally, meetings with the General Counsel, Deputy General Counsel, Chief FOIA Officer, and the FOIA Officer furnished the opportunity for lively FOIA policy discussions.
- On December 14, 2016, the [Department of the Treasury](#) hosted its third Annual FOIA Summit, which was attended by more than 60 FOIA professionals. OIP, OGIS, and Treasury staff provided training in the areas of fees, dispute resolution, Exemption 4, the interface between FOIA, the Privacy Act, and the Federal Records Act, teachable FOIA moments, and the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016.
- The [Department of Agriculture](#) (USDA) published in AgLearn all six lessons of its first extended online FOIA training module, "FOIA for FOIA Professionals." These six lessons, which were updated after passage of the 2016 FOIA amendments, provide a detailed introduction to the FOIA, USDA's FOIA team, and procedural items related to request intake. This first publication was followed-up by a second in mid-October, which focused on the review of records and exemption applicability. Like the previous module, the second publication gives participants the opportunity to test their knowledge upon completion with a ten-question quiz. Since publication, USDA has had more than 470 professionals use the modules. The remaining lessons in module two are scheduled for publication in May 2017.

Notably, nearly all medium and high-volume agencies attended or conducted substantive FOIA training for their staff during the reporting period. Both medium and high-volume agencies were required to report on the percentage of their FOIA professionals who attended FOIA training during the year. Overall, 22 out of 26 high-volume agencies scored dark green for reporting that greater than 80% of their FOIA professionals attended substantive FOIA training. While this metric was not scored for medium-volume agencies, 31 out of 40 medium volume agencies reported that greater than 80% of their FOIA professionals attended substantive FOIA training.

### *Outreach*

Agencies also described the different ways they are engaging with requesters and civil society organizations to improve customer service and facilitate greater access to records. Twenty-one high volume agencies conducted outreach that went beyond communication within the request and appeal process. For example:

- The [Department of Commerce](#) (DOC) held its fourth annual Sunshine Week event on March 15, 2016. The theme of the event was "Celebrating Openness." Guest speakers gave presentations about FOIA, transparency, open data, and records management to a cross-section of individuals from DOC FOIA Offices, other agencies, and the requester community. DOC's Census Bureau also held two days of public workshops on March 16-17, during which they described their Open Government Plan.
- [DoD/National Reconnaissance Office](#) conducted an online survey with its frequent requester community in order to better assess and understand satisfaction with FOIA processes and response letters. This instrument included a section for requesters to provide input on the types of information most desired under the Office's "proactive release program."

- The [Department of Health and Human Services](#) (HHS)/Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has a major role in the healthcare industry and collects a large volume of data that is the subject of numerous FOIA requests by researchers and media outlets. As this data contains beneficiaries' personally identifiable information, the process of reviewing and producing it is often extremely complex and costly. The CMS FOIA Office and agency leadership together held several conference calls with media requesters regarding various types of CMS data, both to explain the complexities and the types of data that could be released and to clarify how best to submit future FOIA requests for complex data.
- The [U.S. Trade and Development Agency](#) engaged in "Live Hangouts" in which members of the public can participate in online Q&A sessions with agency officials and other participants in the agency's activities.

#### *Efforts to Inform Non-FOIA Professionals of FOIA Obligations*

The DOJ FOIA Guidelines declare that "FOIA is everyone's responsibility" and "it is not merely a task assigned to an agency's FOIA staff." Support from agency leadership and all agency employees is indispensable to ensuring that FOIA professionals can efficiently process and respond to requests. Accordingly, OIP asked high- and medium-volume agencies to include in their 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports their efforts to inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under the FOIA. A wide range of activities were reported. For example:

- Many agencies provided an overview of FOIA responsibilities during new employee training. Some agencies, such as the Departments of [Transportation](#) (DOT) and [Interior](#) (DOI), the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#) (EEOC), and the [Small Business Administration](#) (SBA), have made OIP's eLearning materials, including the Senior Executive briefing and training modules for non-FOIA professionals available to agency employees.
- Agencies also provided detailed instructions, and outlined employees' FOIA obligations, in individual search memos when processing requests. For example, the [Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation](#) (PBGC) FOIA Division ensures that every search solicitation sent out to program offices includes a description of what is required from the employee gathering the records in order for the agency to meet its responsibility under the law. This includes: 1) a deadline to produce records so that they can be processed for disclosure; 2) a note regarding the importance of tracking time spent searching for responsive records; 3) a statement regarding what constitutes a 'reasonable search'; and 4) a suggestion to the searching party to contact the FOIA analyst with any questions regarding the search and production of responsive records.
- The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reported that it is planning a region-wide Virtual Training Center training for all staff, titled "FOIA and Your Responsibilities as a Federal Employee" during Fiscal Year 2017.
- In January 2017, the president of the [Legal Services Corporation's](#) (LSC) issued a comprehensive memorandum to all LSC staff regarding FOIA compliance. This memorandum provides background on FOIA and LSC's disclosure obligation.

*"[R]esponsibility for effective FOIA administration belongs to all of us . . . ."*

*-- DOJ FOIA Guidelines*

#### *Other Initiatives*

In addition to the efforts described above, agencies also reported a number of other efforts that embrace a presumption of openness. For example:

- The [Commodity Futures Trading Commission](#) (CFTC) holds open meetings, roundtables, and advisory committee meetings. In addition to providing access in person and via dial-in, the agency posts statements, documents, and transcripts [online](#) to improve transparency.
- At DoD, the National Security Agency published an internal article celebrating the 50th anniversary of FOIA and has added material to its Declassification and Transparency [website](#) as part of its overall organizational openness efforts.
- The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) provides cyber incident updates on the Cybersecurity Resource Center, which is accessible to the public on OPM's [website](#).
- The [Office of Science and Technology Policy](#) (OSTP) co-hosted a series of roundtables with the Center for Open Data Enterprise, bringing together government, non-profit, and academic experts to discuss privacy, data quality, sharing and applying research data, and public-private collaboration over the course of four months in 2016.
- At the [Department of Treasury](#), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued guidance promoting direct responses to requests for tax information where permissible as part of its “Respond Directly” initiative. To support this effort, IRS developed and implemented a variety of online resources. The IRS Deputy Commissioner for Services and Enforcement and the IRS Deputy Commissioner for Operations Support jointly issued a memorandum to all IRS employees affirming IRS’s commitment to transparency and openness, and promoting the “Respond Directly” initiative. Responding directly promotes transparency, provides good customer service, and in many cases eliminates the need for an individual to submit a FOIA or Privacy Act request. IRS has developed routine procedures for access to some commonly requested records. More information is available on IRS’s [website](#).

## ***Section II: Ensuring Agencies Have Effective Systems for Responding To Requests***

As a part of the [2017 Chief FOIA Officer Report Guidelines](#), OIP asked agencies to provide information on the steps “taken to ensure that [the] management of [their] FOIA program is effective and efficient.” In their 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports, agencies provided details on various efforts related to processing procedures and requester services, including conducting self-assessments and having mechanisms for receiving feedback.

### *Processing Procedures*

OIP’s [guidance](#) released in December 2014 stresses the importance of ensuring timely determinations on requests for expedited processing. As detailed in OIP’s [Summary of Annual FOIA Reports](#), overall, agencies adjudicated over 80% of requests for expedited processing during Fiscal Year 2016 within ten calendar days. For their 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports, OIP asked agencies that did not maintain an average of ten days or less to adjudicate requests for expedited processing to provide plans for improvement during Fiscal Year 2017.

### *Self-Assessments*

In the [Guidance for Further Improvement Based on the 2016 Chief FOIA Officer Report Review and Assessment](#), OIP encouraged agencies to regularly conduct self-assessments to help them improve their administration of the FOIA. As a follow-up to that guidance, OIP asked agencies to indicate in their 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports whether they conducted self-assessments of their FOIA programs and to describe the methods used. Nearly all high-volume agencies and many medium-volume agencies reported conducting self-assessments using various methods:

- Many agencies leveraged FOIA processing data to conduct self-assessments. Agencies including [DOC](#), [DOI](#), [DOJ](#), and [DOT](#), as well as the [Federal Trade Commission](#) (FTC) and the [Railroad Retirement Board \(RRB\)](#), reviewed and analyzed data from their Annual FOIA Reports to identify

areas for improvement. Agencies including [DoD](#), [HHS](#), [SBA](#), and the [Securities and Exchange Commission](#) (SEC) generated weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports from their processing systems to conduct self-assessments throughout the year.

- Agencies including the [Department of Education](#), [EEOC](#), [Merit Systems Protection Board](#) (MSPB), [National Archives and Records Administration](#) (NARA), and [Social Security Administration](#) (SSA) reviewed their internal processing procedures to identify areas for greater efficiency.
- The [Department of State](#) (State) launched a number of self-assessment exercises during the reporting period, including a study focused on changing the agency's approach to IT when processing FOIA requests and another separate study on how to better structure its FOIA office. For the latter study, the State Department conducted reviews of existing processes to identify both short- and long-term solutions that would improve consistency and timeliness.
- The [Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA) conducted a self-assessment of its FOIA program using several data sources. EPA reviewed reports, policies and procedures, regional studies of FOIA processes, and previous evaluations. They also conducted internal and external interviews, as well as an online survey. EPA [posted](#) the assessment online.

#### *Commercial Use Requests*

The FOIA establishes three types of requester categories for purposes of determining whether a requester should be assessed various applicable fees for review, search, or duplication. The three requester categories are: (1) commercial use requesters, (2) educational institutions, noncommercial scientific institutions, and representatives of the news media, and (3) all requesters who do not fall within either of the preceding two categories. In light of some academic literature concerning the prevalence of "commercial use" requesters at certain agencies, there was an interest in the greater FOIA community in determining what proportion of FOIA requests are from that fee category. To develop a better understanding of the issue, OIP asked all high and medium-volume agencies to provide an estimate of the number of requests processed during Fiscal Year 2016 that were from commercial use requesters, and also, to identify any components that received a majority of their requests from commercial users.

Responses to this survey question demonstrated that commercial use requesters comprised a majority of requests for eight out of sixty-six medium and high-volume agencies (DOT, EPA, General Services Administration (GSA), HHS, DOL, NLRB, OPM, and SEC). Additionally, four agencies (USDA, DoD, Treasury, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)) reported that one or more of their components receive a majority of their requests from commercial use requesters, although these requests do not comprise a majority of the agencies' overall requests. While for a select group of agencies the majority of their requests may come from commercial use requesters, such requests only comprise an estimated 14% of the FOIA requests processed by the government overall during Fiscal Year 2016.

#### *Requester Services*

For 2017, OIP added a [new question](#) to the Reporting Guidelines asking agencies to describe any mechanism they have in place for requesters to provide feedback about their experience with the FOIA. Many agencies described how they publicize contact information for the FOIA Office and FOIA Public Liaison on their website and in correspondence with requesters to allow them to provide feedback. Some agencies such as [DOC](#), [State](#), certain [DoD](#) and [DOJ](#) components, [DOI](#), Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, [Federal Reserve Board](#) (FRB), [National Aeronautics and Space Administration](#) (NASA), and [SEC](#) have forms on their websites for requesters to provide feedback. The [Nuclear Regulatory Commission](#) provides requesters with a survey form with all final responses.

Agency FOIA Public Liaisons and FOIA Requester Service Centers provide very important services for requesters by informing them about how the FOIA process works and providing specific details on the handling of their individual requests. The FOIA also calls on agency FOIA Public Liaisons

to assist requesters in resolving disputes. In their [2016 Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#), agencies reported on steps taken to strengthen the services provided by their FOIA Public Liaisons and FOIA Requester Service Centers. Subsequently, the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 amended the FOIA to require agencies to notify requesters about services provided by the agency's FOIA Public Liaisons in their response letters.

For 2017, OIP asked agencies to provide estimates of how often requesters sought assistance from their FOIA Public Liaisons. Twenty agencies reported that requesters sought assistance from the FOIA Public Liaison once a week or more. Sixteen agencies reported that requesters sought assistance from the FOIA Public Liaison a few times a month. Thirty agencies reported that their FOIA Public Liaisons were contacted less than once per month and in many cases not at all.

#### *Other Initiatives*

In addition to the above efforts, several agencies detailed other steps they have taken to ensure that their FOIA systems operate efficiently and effectively. For example:

- To ensure that the [FRB](#) can continue to process requests efficiently, they have made significant progress with respect to several initiatives that involve digitizing paper records and finding aids to improve search processes. For example, FRB staff continue to digitize paper records from the Board's legacy central filing system, making searches for older records far more efficient. They also continue to digitize "finding aids" to assist in locating restricted controlled documents, which are stored as paper records. In addition, staff are in the process of digitizing approximately 500,000 microfiche of banking supervision and regulation records, and they recently undertook an effort to digitize the records of former Board Chairs.
- Prior to December 2016, [MSPB](#) directed FOIA requesters to submit requests to the headquarters office or to any of its eight regional and field offices, depending on where the records were likely located. This system was in place for a long time and reflected a time in years past when records were mostly paper and accessible in only one physical location. Given the combined effect of the prevalence and accessibility of electronic records, the statutory requirement to post frequently requested records, and the continuous need to identify records for proactive disclosure, MSPB centralized all FOIA operations to the Office of the Clerk of the Board. This change reduces confusion for requesters when submitting their requests and ensures greater consistency in MSPB's FOIA processes.
- Several [USDA](#) components reported more closely monitoring incoming FOIA requests so that they are assigned using intelligent case management principles. Rather than a round robin-approach for distribution, FOIA officers are assigning requests to analysts based on scope and/or topic. This ensures similar requests are reviewed in a similar fashion. Additionally, because the analyst is familiar with the record type and/or topic, front-end coordination and the review of records is more expeditious.

### ***Section III: Increasing Proactive Disclosures***

The [Department of Justice](#) has emphasized the need for agencies to work proactively to post information online without waiting for individual requests to be received. In their 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports, agencies described their processes for identifying proactive disclosures, including the identification of records that are frequently requested under the FOIA. In addition to describing their processes for identifying this material, agencies also provided examples of material they posted during the reporting period.

In March 2015, OIP issued [guidance for proactive disclosures](#) that details various methods for disclosure, including strategies for identifying records for posting and the importance of ensuring the usability of posted information. Many agencies use different strategies for proactive disclosures tailored to serve the community of individuals who visit their websites most frequently.

Some examples of the processes described by agencies to identify records for proactive disclosures include:

- [DOI's](#) FOIA regulations require each bureau to review all responsive records for proactive disclosures, and the Departmental FOIA Policy Staff provide training on such disclosures and when requested review particular documents where proactive disclosures may be appropriate. Additionally, proactive disclosures are an agenda item at each monthly FOIA Officers meeting.
- It is [FCC's](#) policy to post on its website any of its information that is of general interest to the public so long as there are no national security, law enforcement, legal, or privacy issues that prohibit its publication. Pursuant to this policy, agency staff in the individual bureaus and offices, in consultation with information technology staff, review and select material for proactive disclosures on an ongoing basis.
- At [HHS](#), the National Institutes of Health's Associate Director for Communications and the FOIA Public Liaison meet bi-monthly with the Communications Directors of the NIH Institutes and Centers to identify proactive disclosures. In particular, when major research initiatives are announced, the attendees identify for proactive disclosure material or information that will assist public understanding of the initiative.
- The [Office of Government Ethics](#) (OGE) has included a distinct step in its FOIA processing procedures that directs FOIA professionals to determine whether it is likely there will be future interest in a record. If so, OGE's FOIA processing procedures direct FOIA professionals to proactively disclose the record on OGE's website.
- The [Corporation for National and Community Service](#) (CNCS) formalized an Open Data Team responsible for developing protocols to track requests made to CNCS for data so that CNCS can more easily identify data that is of public interest that should be proactively disclosed.

*“Proactive disclosures inform the public about the operations of the government, and they efficiently satisfy demand for records of interest to multiple people.”*

*-- OIP Guidance on Proactive Disclosures*

The FOIA itself requires agencies to proactively disclose records that have been frequently requested and released. The [FOIA Improvement Act of 2016](#) codified OIP's longstanding “rule of three,” requiring agencies to post releasable records that have been requested three or more times. Identifying these frequently requested records is central to an agency's ability to post them online. In their 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports, agencies describe the different processes they have put in place for identifying frequently requested records.

Most agencies routinely monitor their FOIA logs or information in their FOIA tracking system. Some agency FOIA offices report going beyond the requirement of posting frequently requested records and generally posting all the records they have released to a requester under the FOIA. For example, [State](#), some [DOD](#) components, [EPA](#), [GSA](#), the [National Endowment for the Arts](#), and Office of the Director of National Intelligence post nearly all records released in response to requests on their websites. Other agencies, including the [Central Intelligence Agency](#), Department of Homeland Security, and the [Securities and Exchange Commission](#), reported that they are planning to implement a similar policy for posting their FOIA releases online. A benefit found by many of these agencies that have implemented this policy is negating the need and effort of identify records that have been frequently requested.

Once information is posted online, many agencies use their websites and social media platforms to publicize or highlight important proactive disclosures so that the public is aware of their availability. Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, blogs, RSS feeds, and email subscription services are just some of the outlets used by agencies over the past year to highlight new postings.



Using various methods to identify proactive disclosures, agencies also provided a wealth of examples in their reports of new or regularly updated information posted on their websites. For example:

- The [FCC](#) made available a new [webpage](#) providing daily status reports regarding the impact of Hurricane Matthew on communications systems. The site also served as a single point of access for notices related to the hurricane, as well as tips for communicating during an emergency.
- In light of its mission and the anticipated public interest in information about volunteers, the [Peace Corps](#) posted volunteer safety reports, annual volunteer surveys, and early termination data, as well as [statistical information](#) on Peace Corps volunteers.
- The [U.S. Agency for International Development's](#) (USAID) [Dollars to Results](#) website systematically and publicly reports on the impact of USAID's work by linking investment and performance information. Dollars to Results visualizes USAID's impact by linking fiscal year results to fiscal year disbursements (spending). Dollars to Results displays results with reader friendly explanations and users can download data in a machine-readable format.
- [USDA's](#) Food and Nutrition Service [posted](#) data, research reports, and information on benefits pertaining to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in PDF and Excel formats.
- The [Presidio Trust](#) posted Board minutes, resolutions and policies, annual reports, financial documents, its Performance and Accountability Report, strategic plans, land use planning documents for active projects, a database of all National Environmental Policy Act determinations, environmental assessments, and environmental impact reports.

These are just a few examples of the types of proactive disclosures described in agencies' 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports. A wealth of additional examples can be found in the individual agency Chief FOIA Officer Reports available on [OIP's website](#).

#### ***Section IV: Greater Utilization of Technology in FOIA Administration***

Agencies continue to use advanced technology not only to make more information available online and to improve their websites, but also to assist in their overall administration of the FOIA. Each year, OIP asks agencies to describe in their [Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#) the steps they have taken to greater utilize technology in their FOIA administration.

As a part of [the first Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#), submitted in 2010, agencies were surveyed to determine the extent to which they were using technology to receive, track, and process requests, and to prepare their Annual FOIA Reports. As has been done for each section of the Chief FOIA Officer Report, every year OIP has refined the questions for this section as the use of technology in FOIA has matured. For [2017](#), agencies were asked about the steps they taken to ensure the information they make available online is more useful to the public. High-volume agencies were asked whether FOIA professionals interacted with other agency staff (such as technology specialists or public affairs or communications professionals) to identify any new ways to post agency information online. Among other questions, high-volume agencies were also asked to report on the extent to which they are using more advanced technologies to assist with the processing of requests and the impact of using these technologies.

##### *Making Material Posted Online More Useful*

Agencies can leverage technology to make posted material more useful to the public. As illustrated in the [2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#), agencies continued to make posted information more useful in a variety of ways, such as by improving search functionalities, posting material in open formats, making material available through mobile applications, and soliciting feedback on the content and presentation of posted materials. Often, the effort of finding ways to make online material more useful can benefit from collaboration between a range of professionals within an organization, such as technology specialists and public affairs or communications professionals. Many agencies reported that they are taking steps to make posted material more useful. For example:

- At [DOC](#), the Census Bureau made major upgrades to [Census.gov](#) so that the more than 40 million annual visitors to their website can more easily find the information they want. The re-designed website allows customers to use the “smart search” feature to more easily find key statistics such as income, poverty, health, and population for U.S. locations directly on the search page. The re-designed QuickFacts site has fully interactive, customized tables that let users compare statistics for up to six locations side-by-side, and to share those statistics in social media.
- The [Federal Election Commission](#) (FEC) continued work on its website improvement initiative in partnership with 18F, a digital services delivery team in the General Services Administration, with the goal of enhancing the public’s access to, and the delivery of, campaign finance data. FEC introduced its [betaFEC](#) website, which provides members of the public with a first look at a redesign that will bring easier access to the agency’s rich data during the first quarter of FY 2016. The new website went “live” in March 2017.
- The [U.S. International Trade Commission](#) provided free training to the public on how to use the Commission’s web-based petition system. The Commission developed a new procedure for filing requests for duty suspensions or reductions pursuant to the American Manufacturing Competitiveness Act of 2016. The online petition system allows the public to view and access information regarding the petitions (and subsequent comments related to) for duty suspensions or reductions. The Commission also produced and posted a training video and “how to” guides for both filing a petition and for commenting on a petition.

#### *Use of Technology to Facilitate Processing of Requests*

The use of technology to reduce the time and labor needed to process requests – such as tools that can sort and de-duplicate documents, provide shared platforms to facilitate consultations, or improve search capabilities – has great potential for improving agencies’ FOIA administration. For 2017, many agencies once again reported that they are taking steps to utilize more advanced technology to assist with the processing of requests. For example:

- [DOI](#) updated one of its processing tools so that individual emails can be selected from email threads and then each email thread can be saved as individual PDF documents, with most email images now included in the generated PDF documents.
- At [Treasury](#), the Internal Revenue Service updated its process for procuring records from IRS Federal Records Centers to receive records electronically rather than by mail. This has reduced the need to manually scan the records in order for them to be ready for processing by the FOIA office, thereby improving timeliness.
- DHS/Customs and Border Protection’s new Analytical Framework for Intelligence system performs searches for multiple requests in batches, eliminating the need for staff to search each request individually, which in turn allows the staff to focus on other requests. Further, AFI produces records for some request types that require no redactions, which can be immediately finalized and provided to the requester.

Several agencies also reported providing training on the use of processing tools such as for new case management systems, or for search, redaction, or other processing tools.

#### *Posting Quarterly FOIA Reports*

Finally, in Fiscal Year 2016, 77% of medium and high-volume agencies reported posting their Quarterly FOIA Reports successfully with corresponding data appearing on [FOIA.gov](#). An additional 8% of agencies were able to post their quarterly reports successfully to their own website even though they may have had technical difficulties that resulted in their information not appearing on FOIA.gov. Any agency that was unable to successfully post all quarterly reports was required to provide a plan for ensuring that such reporting is successfully done in Fiscal Year 2017. Given the importance of providing

the public these key FOIA statistics during the course of the fiscal year, every agency should ensure that their quarterly FOIA reports are timely and properly posted in accordance with OIP's [guidance](#), so that they can be accessed through [FOIA.gov](#).

### ***Section V: Improving Timeliness and Reducing Backlogs***

For the [2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#), OIP again asked agencies to provide detailed information on their average processing times for simple requests and their efforts to reduce backlogs and close their ten oldest requests, appeals, and consultations. Those agencies that had a request backlog of over 1,000 were also required to provide a plan for achieving backlog reduction in the year ahead. Likewise, agencies that did not close their ten oldest requests, appeals, or consultations were required to describe their plans for closing those requests, appeals or consultations by the end of Fiscal Year 2017.

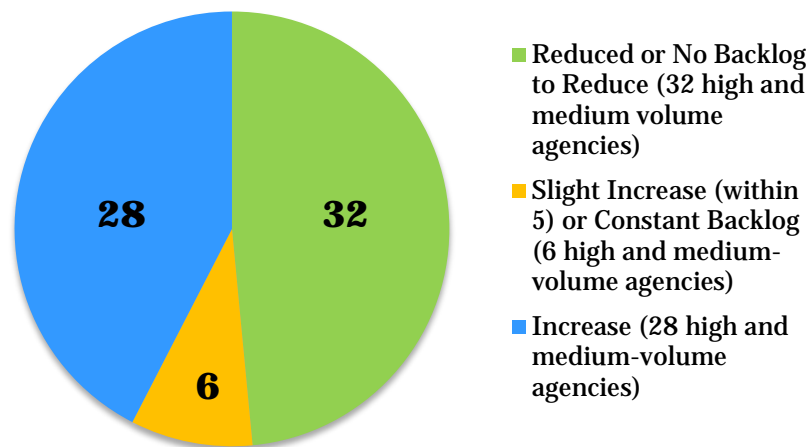
#### *Simple Track Requests*

Because of the strong correlation between the type of request that is made and the ability of the agency to respond to that request more quickly, in 2012, OIP established a milestone that addressed whether the agency overall responded to requests in its simple track within an average of twenty working days or less. Agencies once again reported on this metric in their [2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#). Fifty percent of all medium and high-volume agencies reported that they either processed their simple-track requests in an average of twenty-working days or less, or if they did not use multi-track processing, they processed all of their non-expedited requests within that average timeframe.

#### *Backlogs*

With regard to request backlogs, thirty-two medium and high-volume agencies reported that they either reduced the number of requests in their backlog at the end of Fiscal Year 2016 or they had no backlog to reduce. Additionally, six agencies reported a slight increase of up to five backlogged requests. Twenty-eight agencies experienced a backlog increase of more than five requests.

### **Request Backlog Comparision - End of FY 2015 to End of FY 2016**



For administrative FOIA appeals, forty-five medium and high-volume agencies reported that they either reduced the number of appeals in their backlog at the end of Fiscal Year 2016 or they had no backlog to reduce. Nine agencies reported a slight increase of up to five backlogged appeals. Twelve agencies reported an appeal backlog increase of over five appeals.

As with previous years, agencies that experienced an increase in their request or appeal backlogs explained the causes that contributed to those increases in their [2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#). The

most frequently cited factor was the increased number of incoming requests and appeals. The government overall received 75,601 more requests during Fiscal Year 2016 than in Fiscal Year 2015, a 10.6% increase. Many agencies also reported losing experienced staff and the increased complexity of requests and appeals as contributing to the backlog.

#### *Status of Ten Oldest Requests, Appeals, and Consultations*

A critical element of the government's efforts to reduce backlogs and provide timely disclosures of information is closing the ten oldest pending requests, appeals, and consultations at each agency every year. Thirty-one medium and high-volume agencies out of 66 such agencies, reported that they either closed all ten of their oldest requests from Fiscal Year 2015 by the end of Fiscal Year 2016, or they had no ten oldest to close. In addition, OIP asked agencies to report on whether any of their ten oldest requests were closed because the request was withdrawn by the requester. Overall, twenty-one medium and high-volume agencies reported closing any of their ten oldest requests as a result of a withdrawal. Notably, only 9% of all the medium and high-volume agency ten oldest requests were closed because the request was withdrawn (52 out of 563).

With regard to appeals, forty-four medium and high-volume agencies either closed their ten oldest pending appeals or they had no ten oldest to close. Finally, fifty-four medium and high-volume agencies closed their ten oldest pending consultations or they continued to maintain no pending consultations at the end of the fiscal year.

#### *Interim Responses*

High-volume agencies were also asked to report in their [2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#) on whether they have a system in place for providing requesters substantive interim responses when appropriate. In the spirit of providing more timely disclosures of information, OIP issued [guidance](#) in 2010 to agencies encouraging the use of interim releases whenever a request involves a voluminous amount of material or a search in multiple locations is required. All high-volume agencies reported that they have a process in place for making interim responses. Additionally, these agencies reported an estimate of the number of cases in their backlogs for which an interim response was provided. While the percentage of backlogged cases that had an interim response varied from 1-100%, most agencies reported providing interim responses in at least some, if not a majority, of backlogged cases.

#### **Conclusion**

OIP's 2017 Summary and Assessment demonstrates that even in the face of increasing demands agencies continue to find areas to improve their administration of the FOIA through various initiatives connected to the five key areas addressed in the DOJ FOIA Guidelines. Agencies continue to apply a presumption of openness, make more proactive disclosures, use technology for the benefit of FOIA, and make efforts to improve timeliness and reduce backlogs. While there are many laudable achievements noted in this summary, the successes achieved by individual agencies can vary. OIP's Assessment serves as a visual snapshot of where each agency should focus its efforts in the upcoming year to achieve even greater success. To assist agencies OIP also offers the following guidance.

## **OIP Guidance for Further Improvement Based on 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Report Review and Assessment**

### *Continuing to Focus on Reducing the Age of Pending Requests and Improving Processing Times*

As the government continues to receive more and more requests every year the challenge of reducing the overall number of requests in the backlog becomes greater as well. This past fiscal year, the government overall received a record high of nearly 800,000 requests. Due to the significant increases in incoming requests, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, sixty percent of the medium and high-volume agencies that reported backlog increases did so despite processing more requests than they had in the prior year. While agencies should continue to strive for backlog reduction, the reality is that these efforts will always be impacted by the fluctuations in the number of incoming requests that agencies face from year to year. Accordingly, agencies should continue to manage their backlogs strategically, focusing on improving the number of requests processed, decreasing average processing times, and reducing the age of their backlogs.

By prioritizing the oldest requests, agencies can ensure that the age of pending requests continues to improve. In their 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports, 47% of medium and high-volume agencies reported closing their ten oldest requests from FY 2015 during FY 2016. As has been the case for several years, while many agencies had success with meeting this milestone, others were not able to do so. For any agency that did not meet this milestone, implementing best practices, such as actively tracking the status of the oldest requests and regularly following up on pending consultations, can help ensure that these older, often more complex, requests continue to move forward to completion.

In addition to reducing the age of pending requests, agencies should also continue to focus on reducing simple track processing times to within twenty working days or less. Half of all medium and high-volume agencies reported processing simple requests within twenty days. As we have emphasized in [previous guidance](#), agencies with higher average processing times should examine their processing procedures to identify areas for greater efficiency. In conjunction with prioritizing older requests, by working to respond to simple requests quickly, agencies can strategically manage their backlogs in light of the high volumes of requests they continue to receive and process.

### *Updating FOIA Reference Guides*

The FOIA has long required agencies to make publicly available upon request “reference material or a guide for requesting records or information from the agency.” 5 U.S.C. § 552(g). Many agencies made their FOIA reference guides available online and the [FOIA Improvement Act of 2016](#) amended the FOIA to require agencies to do so. In their 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports, 65/66 medium and high-volume agencies provided a link to their FOIA reference guide.

Reference guides should be easy for the public to understand and can link to any other information that would be helpful to a requester. While the information in a reference guide may also be located elsewhere on an agency website, compiling it into one document allows requesters to gain a complete overview of the FOIA process. For example, the [DOJ's FOIA Reference Guide](#) consolidates information that can be found across the Department's websites into one discrete document to allow for easier access and distribution. We encourage all agencies to continuously review and update their reference guides to ensure they are accurate and easy to locate.

### *Posting Raw Data from Fiscal Year 2016 Annual FOIA Reports*

Yet another new requirement of the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 concerns the raw data that makes up the content of agency Annual FOIA Reports. Previously, agencies were required to make that raw data available upon request, but with the recent amendments to the FOIA agencies are now required to post the raw data electronically so that it is available for public inspection in an electronic format. Many items covered in the 2017 CFO Report Assessment were based on data from the FY 2016 Annual FOIA Reports. Agencies have posted the human and machine-readable versions of their Annual FOIA Reports on their websites. Additionally, all agency Annual Report data is available to view and download

on [FOIA.gov](https://www.foia.gov). In light of the new requirement for agencies to post their raw data proactively, OIP directs agencies to our [Guidance on the New Requirements for Agency Annual FOIA Reports](#). In next year's Chief FOIA Officer Report Guidelines, OIP will ask agencies to provide the link to their raw data posting. Many agencies have already posted their raw data and we encourage all agencies to do so promptly.

## **2017 Assessment of Agency Progress in FOIA Administration**

As noted above, OIP has created three sets of reporting requirements, one for agencies that receive a high volume of FOIA requests (more than 1,000), one for agencies that receive a medium volume of FOIA requests (50-1,000), and one for agencies receiving less than 50 requests. By providing agencies with separate reporting requirements and metrics for assessment, OIP can more easily address the different circumstances and challenges faced by those agencies with smaller-volume FOIA workloads, while continuing to focus in depth on those agencies that receive a higher volume of FOIA requests.

For the 2017 assessment, OIP has selected nineteen milestones for scoring high volume agencies and fifteen milestones for medium volume agencies, each of which is tied to one of the five key areas addressed in the DOJ's FOIA Guidelines. These milestones were chosen as indicative of progress made in each area, but they are by no means exclusive. Agencies include in their [Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#) a wide range of accomplishments and initiatives that have been undertaken to improve their administration of the FOIA. As these reports themselves provide a more comprehensive picture of each agency's work in implementing [DOJ's FOIA Guidelines](#), this assessment is designed to provide a visual snapshot of several key areas of agency FOIA administration and is meant to be read in conjunction with the [Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#). The assessment readily illustrates many areas where agencies have made real progress in the past year and also serves to highlight areas where further improvements can be made.

The assessment covers the twenty-six high volume agencies and forty medium-volume agencies that were subject to the FOIA during Fiscal Year 2016. As in prior years, agencies are scored on the different milestones based on a stoplight scoring system. Narrative information is also provided from the agency reports. Agencies provide a wealth of information as a part of their [Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#) that do not lend themselves to scoring, but are still very informative as to their efforts to improve their FOIA administration. For 2017, agencies were not given overall scores for each section because most sections had only a couple of scored items that were not conducive to "overall" scoring.

A detailed methodology is provided below describing how each milestone was scored. As in prior years, questions assessed on the three-step scoring system use a score of dark green, yellow, and red. Dark green indicates that the agency met the milestone, yellow indicates partial progress, and red indicates that the milestone was not met. For the five-step scoring system, the colors light green and orange were added to provide more gradation as to the progress the agency has made in the area being scored.

The time period for the assessment is generally March 2016 to March 2017, which is the period covered by the [2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports](#). For the milestones concerning average time to adjudicate requests for expedited processing, processing times for simple track requests, backlogs, and the ten oldest requests, appeals, and consultations, the time period is Fiscal Year 2016. The data for these metrics was compiled from agency Annual FOIA Reports, which are available on both [FOIA.gov](#) and OIP's [Reports](#) page.

# 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Report Assessment Methodology

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## Agencies Receiving More than 1,000 Requests in Fiscal Year 2015

### Section I: Steps Taken to Apply the Presumption of Openness

#### *FOIA Training*

1. Did your FOIA professionals or the personnel at your agency who have FOIA responsibilities attend any FOIA training or conference during the reporting period such as that provided by the Department of Justice?
  - **DG:** Attending training/FOIA conference (one or multiple), or held a staff meeting that included some FOIA training
  - **Y:** Is planning to attend or hold training after reporting period
  - **R:** Did not hold or attend training
2. Provide an estimate of the percentage of your FOIA professionals and staff with FOIA responsibilities who attended substantive FOIA training during this reporting period.
  - **DG:** 100% to 81%
  - **LG:** 80% to 61%
  - **Y:** 60% to 41%
  - **O:** 40% to 21%
  - **R:** 20% and below

#### *Outreach*

3. Did your FOIA professionals engage in any outreach or dialogue with the requester community or open government groups regarding your administration of the FOIA?
  - **DG:** Agency conducted outreach
  - **Y:** Agency conducted outreach with requesters during request/appeal process
  - **R:** Agency did not conduct any outreach

#### *Other Initiatives*

4. Describe any efforts your agency has undertaken to inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under the FOIA.
  - **DG:** Agency undertook efforts to inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under FOIA.
  - **Y:** Agency has planned efforts to inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under FOIA.
  - **R:** Agency did undertake efforts to inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under FOIA.

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

#### *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.

- **DG:** Less than 10 days
  - **LG:** Between 10.1 and 10.5 days
  - **Y:** Between 10.6 and 11.0 days
  - **O:** Between 11 and 12 days
  - **R:** Over 12 days
  - **N/A:** Did not adjudicate such a request during FY
2. 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. **(Not Graded)**

*Requester Services*

3. The FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 requires agencies to make their reference material or guide for requesting records or information from the agency electronically available to the public. Please provide a link to your agency's FOIA reference guide.
- **DG:** Agency provided link to reference guide
  - **R:** Agency did not provide link to reference guide

**Section III: Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures**

*Posting Material*

1. Describe your agency's process for identifying "frequently requested" records that should be posted online. **(Not Graded)**
2. Does your agency have a distinct process or system in place to identify records for proactive disclosure? If so, please describe your agency's process or system.
- **DG:** Agency answered yes
  - **LG:** *If decentralized – Agency answered that most components have distinct systems*
  - **Y:** Agency makes a lot of information available, but no set system
    - Alternatively: Agency answered no but provided examples of information posted (beyond things like Federal Register notice or press releases)
  - **O:** *If decentralized – Agency answered that most components do not have distinct systems*
  - **R:** Agency answered no
3. Has your agency encountered challenges that make it difficult to post records you otherwise would like to post? **(Not Graded)**
4. Did your agency use any means to publicize or highlight important proactive disclosures for public awareness? If yes, please describe these efforts.
- **DG:** Agency answered yes
  - **Y:** Agency noted that they send an email to a set list of recipients or have information on their website for users to see
  - **R:** Agency answered no

### *Other Initiatives*

5. If there are any other steps your agency has taken to increase proactive disclosures, please describe them. **(Not Graded)**

## **Section IV: Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology**

### *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?
  - **DG:** Agency answered yes
    - Alternatively: Agency answered that it is already making information available in its most useful format
  - **Y:** Agency is looking into how they would do so
    - Alternatively: If agency noted that their website is not supported within the agency
  - **R:** Agency answered no
2. Have your agency's FOIA professionals interacted with other agency staff (such as technology specialists or public affairs or communications professionals) in order to identify if there are new ways to post agency information online? **(Not Graded)**

### *Use of Technology to Facilitate Processing of Requests*

3. 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 and the impact of using these technologies on your agency's request processing. **(Not Graded)**

### *Other Initiatives*

4. Did your agency successfully post all four quarterly reports for Fiscal Year 2016?
  - **DG:** Agency did successfully, with data appearing on FOIA.gov
  - **LG:** Agency did, but data did not appear on FOIA.gov due to technical reasons and reached out to OIP to resolve issues
  - **Y:** Agency posted 2 or 3 of the reports, and reached out to OIP to resolve issues
  - **O:** Agency posted at least 1 report, and is working with OIP to resolve issues
  - **R:** Agency did not post any reports

## **Section V: Steps Taken to Improve Timeliness in Responding to Requests and Reducing Backlogs**

### *Simple Track*

1. Does your agency utilize a separate track for simple requests? **(Not Graded)**
2. If so, for your agency overall in Fiscal Year 2016, was the average number of days to process simple requests twenty working days or fewer?
  - **DG:** Average time is 20 days or below

- **LG:** Average time is between 20.01 and 22 days
  - **Y:** Average time is between 22.01 and 23 days
  - **O:** Average time is between 23.01 and 25 days
  - **R:** Average time is above 25.01 days
3. Please provide the percentage of requests processed by your agency in Fiscal Year 2016 that were placed in your simple track. **(Not Graded)**
  4. If your agency does not track simple requests separately, was the average number of days to process all non-expedited requests twenty working days or fewer? (Graded if no simple track grade articulated above in question 2)
    - **DG:** Average time is 20 days or below days
    - **LG:** Average time is between 20.01 and 22 days
    - **Y:** Average time is above 22.01 days

*Backlogs*

5. If your agency had a backlog of requests at the close of Fiscal Year 2016, did that backlog decrease as compared with the backlog reported at the end of Fiscal Year 2015?
  - **DG:** Agency backlog decreased (or backlog was constant at 0)
  - **Y:** Agency backlog was same as previous fiscal year (not 0) or increased within 5 requests
  - **R:** Agency backlog increased more than 5 requests
6. If you had a request backlog please report the percentage of requests that make up the backlog out of the total number of requests received by your agency in Fiscal Year 2016.
  - **DG:** 0% to 10%
  - **LG:** 11% to 20%
  - **Y:** 21% to 30%
  - **O:** 31% to 40%
  - **R:** 41% and above
7. If your agency had a backlog of appeals at the close of Fiscal Year 2016, did that backlog decrease as compared with the backlog reported at the end of Fiscal Year 2015?
  - **DG:** Agency backlog decreased (or backlog was constant at 0)
  - **Y:** Agency backlog was same as previous fiscal year (not 0) or increased within 5 requests
  - **R:** Agency backlog increased more than 5 requests
8. If you had an appeal backlog please report the percentage of appeals that make up the backlog out of the total number of appeals received by your agency in Fiscal Year 2016. If your agency did not receive any appeals in Fiscal Year 2016 and/or has no appeal backlog, please answer with "N/A."
  - **DG:** 0% to 10%
  - **LG:** 11% to 20%
  - **Y:** 21% to 30%
  - **O:** 31% to 40%
  - **R:** 41% and above

*Status of Ten Oldest Requests, Appeals, and Consultations*

9. In Fiscal Year 2016, did your agency close the ten oldest requests that were reported pending in your Fiscal Year 2015 Annual FOIA Report?

- **DG:** Agency answered yes (or no ten oldest to close)
  - **R:** Agency answered no
10. If no, please provide the number of these requests your agency was able to close by the end of the fiscal year, as listed in Section VII.E of your Fiscal Year 2015 Annual FOIA Report. If you had less than ten total oldest requests to close, please indicate that. **(Not Graded)**
11. Of the requests your agency was able to close from your ten oldest, please indicate how many of these were closed because the request was withdrawn by the requester. If any were closed because the request was withdrawn, did you provide any interim responses prior to the withdrawal? **(Not Graded)**
12. In Fiscal Year 2016, did your agency close the ten oldest appeals that were reported pending in your Fiscal Year 2015 Annual FOIA Report?
- **DG:** Agency answered yes (or no ten oldest to close)
  - **R:** Agency answered no
13. If no, please provide the number of these appeals your agency was able to close by the end of the fiscal year, as listed in Section VII.C.(5) of your Fiscal Year 2015 Annual FOIA Report. If you had less than ten total oldest appeals to close, please indicate that. **(Not Graded)**
14. In Fiscal Year 2016, did your agency close the ten oldest consultations that were reported pending in your Fiscal Year 2015 Annual FOIA Report?
- **DG:** Agency answered yes (or no ten oldest to close)
  - **R:** Agency answered no
15. If no, please provide the number of these consultations your agency was able to close by the end of the fiscal year, as listed in Section XII.C of your Fiscal Year 2015 Annual FOIA Report. If you had less than ten total oldest consultations to close, please indicate that. **(Not Graded)**

*Interim Responses*

16. Does your agency have a system in place to provide interim responses to requesters when appropriate? See OIP Guidance, "[The Importance of Good Communication with FOIA Requesters](#)." (Mar. 1, 2010)
- **DG:** Agency answered yes
  - **R:** Agency answered no
  - **N/A:** Does not have the opportunity to provide such responses
17. If your agency had a backlog in Fiscal Year 2016, please provide an estimate of the number or percentage of cases in the backlog where a substantive, interim response was provided during the fiscal year, even though the request was not finally closed. **(Not Graded)**

## 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Report Assessment Methodology

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### Agencies Receiving 50-1,000 Requests in Fiscal Year 2015

#### Section I: Steps Taken to Apply the Presumption of Openness

##### *FOIA Training*

1. Did your FOIA professionals or the personnel at your agency who have FOIA responsibilities attend any FOIA training or conference during the reporting period such as that provided by the Department of Justice?
  - **DG:** Attending training/FOIA conference (one or multiple), or held a staff meeting that included some FOIA training
  - **Y:** Is planning to attend or hold training after reporting period
  - **R:** Did not hold or attend training
2. Provide an estimate of the percentage of your FOIA professionals and staff with FOIA responsibilities who attended substantive FOIA training during this reporting period. **(Not Graded)**

##### *Other Initiatives*

3. Describe any efforts your agency has undertaken to inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under the FOIA.
  - **DG:** Agency undertook efforts to inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under FOIA.
  - **Y:** Agency has planned efforts to inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under FOIA.
  - **R:** Agency did undertake efforts to inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under FOIA.

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

##### *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.
  - **DG:** Less than 10 days
  - **LG:** Between 10.1 and 10.5 days
  - **Y:** Between 10.6 and 11.0 days
  - **O:** Between 11 and 12 days
  - **R:** Over 12 days
  - **N/A:** Did not adjudicate such a request during FY

### *Requester Services*

2. The FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 requires agencies to make their reference material or guide for requesting records or information from the agency electronically available to the public. Please provide a link to your agency's FOIA reference guide.
  - **DG:** Agency provided link to reference guide
  - **R:** Agency did not provide link to reference guide

### **Section III: Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures**

#### *Posting Material*

1. Describe your agency's process for identifying "frequently requested" records that should be posted online. **(Not Graded)**
2. Does your agency have a distinct process or system in place to identify records for proactive disclosure? If so, please describe your agency's process or system.
  - a. **DG:** Agency answered yes
  - b. **LG:** *If decentralized – Agency answered that most components have distinct systems*
  - c. **Y:** Agency makes a lot of information available, but no set system
    - i. **Alternatively:** Agency answered no but provided examples of information posted (beyond things like Federal Register notice or press releases)
  - d. **O:** *If decentralized – Agency answered that most components do not have distinct systems*
  - e. **R:** Agency answered no
3. Has your agency encountered challenges that make it difficult to post records you otherwise would like to post? **(Not Graded)**

#### *Other Initiatives*

4. If there are any other steps your agency has taken to increase proactive disclosures, please describe them. **(Not Graded)**

### **Section IV: Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology**

#### *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?
  - **DG:** Agency answered yes
    - **Alternatively:** Agency answered that it is already making information available in its most useful format
  - **Y:** Agency is looking into how they would do so
    - **Alternatively:** If agency noted that their website is not supported within the agency
  - **R:** Agency answered no
2. If yes, please provide examples of such improvements.

### *Other Initiatives*

3. Did your agency successfully post all four quarterly reports for Fiscal Year 2016?
  - **DG:** Agency did successfully, with data appearing on FOIA.gov
  - **LG:** Agency did, but data did not appear on FOIA.gov due to technical reasons and reached out to OIP to resolve issues
  - **Y:** Agency posted 2 or 3 of the reports, and reached out to OIP to resolve issues
  - **O:** Agency posted at least 1 report, and is working with OIP to resolve issues
  - **R:** Agency did not post any reports

## **Section V: Steps Taken to Improve Timeliness in Responding to Requests and Reducing Backlogs**

### *Simple Track*

1. Does your agency utilize a separate track for simple requests? **(Not Graded)**
2. If so, for your agency overall in Fiscal Year 2016, was the average number of days to process simple requests twenty working days or fewer?
  - **DG:** Average time is 20 days or below
  - **LG:** Average time is between 20.01 and 22 days
  - **Y:** Average time is between 22.01 and 23 days
  - **O:** Average time is between 23.01 and 25 days
  - **R:** Average time is above 25.01 days
3. Please provide the percentage of requests processed by your agency in Fiscal Year 2016 that were placed in your simple track. **(Not Graded)**
4. If your agency does not track simple requests separately, was the average number of days to process all non-expedited requests twenty working days or fewer? (Graded if no simple track grade articulated above in question 2)
  - **DG:** Average time is 20 days or below days
  - **LG:** Average time is between 20.01 and 22 days
  - **Y:** Average time is above 22.01 days

### *Backlogs*

5. If your agency had a backlog of requests at the close of Fiscal Year 2016, did that backlog decrease as compared with the backlog reported at the end of Fiscal Year 2015?
  - **DG:** Agency backlog decreased (or backlog was constant at 0)
  - **Y:** Agency backlog was same as previous fiscal year (not 0) or increased within 5 requests
  - **R:** Agency backlog increased more than 5 requests
6. If you had a request backlog please report the percentage of requests that make up the backlog out of the total number of requests received by your agency in Fiscal Year 2016.
  - **DG:** 0% to 10%
  - **LG:** 11% to 20%
  - **Y:** 21% to 30%
  - **O:** 31% to 40%

- **R:** 41% and above
7. If your agency had a backlog of appeals at the close of Fiscal Year 2016, did that backlog decrease as compared with the backlog reported at the end of Fiscal Year 2015?
- **DG:** Agency backlog decreased (or backlog was constant at 0)
  - **Y:** Agency backlog was same as previous fiscal year (not 0) or increased within 5 requests
  - **R:** Agency backlog increased more than 5 requests
8. If you had an appeal backlog please report the percentage of appeals that make up the backlog out of the total number of appeals received by your agency in Fiscal Year 2016. If your agency did not receive any appeals in Fiscal Year 2016 and/or has no appeal backlog, please answer with "N/A."
- **DG:** 0% to 10%
  - **LG:** 11% to 20%
  - **Y:** 21% to 30%
  - **O:** 31% to 40%
  - **R:** 41% and above

*Status of Ten Oldest Requests, Appeals, and Consultations*

9. In Fiscal Year 2016, did your agency close the ten oldest requests that were reported pending in your Fiscal Year 2015 Annual FOIA Report?
- **DG:** Agency answered yes (or no ten oldest to close)
  - **R:** Agency answered no
10. If no, please provide the number of these requests your agency was able to close by the end of the fiscal year, as listed in Section VII.E of your Fiscal Year 2015 Annual FOIA Report. If you had less than ten total oldest requests to close, please indicate that. **(Not Graded)**
11. Of the requests your agency was able to close from your ten oldest, please indicate how many of these were closed because the request was withdrawn by the requester. If any were closed because the request was withdrawn, did you provide any interim responses prior to the withdrawal? **(Not Graded)**
12. In Fiscal Year 2016, did your agency close the ten oldest appeals that were reported pending in your Fiscal Year 2015 Annual FOIA Report?
- **DG:** Agency answered yes (or no ten oldest to close)
  - **R:** Agency answered no
13. If no, please provide the number of these appeals your agency was able to close by the end of the fiscal year, as listed in Section VII.C.(5) of your Fiscal Year 2015 Annual FOIA Report. If you had less than ten total oldest appeals to close, please indicate that. **(Not Graded)**
14. In Fiscal Year 2016, did your agency close the ten oldest consultations that were reported pending in your Fiscal Year 2015 Annual FOIA Report?
- **DG:** Agency answered yes (or no ten oldest to close)
  - **R:** Agency answered no
15. If no, please provide the number of these consultations your agency was able to close by the end of the fiscal year, as listed in Section XII.C of your Fiscal Year 2015 Annual FOIA Report. If you had less than ten total oldest consultations to close, please indicate that. **(Not Graded)**





## 2017 Chief FOIA Officer Reports - Assessment of Federal Departments and Agencies

U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Information Policy

Agencies Receiving More than 1,000 Requests (FY 2015)

### Section I -- Steps Taken to Apply the Presumption of Openness

Agency	Training			Agency Conducted Outreach with Requester Community	Outreach to Non-FOIA Staff
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training			
		Grade	Estimate		
CIA			90%		
USDA			92%		
DOC			85%		
DOD			94%		
ED			95%		
DOE			85%		
HHS			90%		
DHS			94%		
HUD			80%		
DOJ			93%		
Labor			90%		
State			70%		
DOI			>80%		
Treasury			100%		
DOT			100%		
VA			90%		
EPA			100%		
EEOC			100%		



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### Section I -- Steps Taken to Apply the Presumption of Openness

Agency	Training		Agency Conducted Outreach with Requester Community	Outreach to Non-FOIA Staff	
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training			
		Grade			Estimate
FTC			30%		
NARA			80%		
NLRB			100%		
OPM			100%		
PBGC			100%		
SEC			100%		
SSA			95%		
USPS			97%		



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**Section II -- Steps Taken to Ensure that Agency Has an Effective System in Place for Responding to Requests (Req.)**

Agency	Requests for Expedited Processing		Agency conducted self-assessment of FOIA program	FOIA Reference Guide	
	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide
CIA	[REDACTED]	1.63	We use a number of methods to continually assess and improve our FOIA program. Based on our our annual report data, we established an internal strategic objective of striving to close a greater percentage of "simple track" requests within 20 days. We hold weekly production meetings to identify efficiencies in our processes and opportunities for greater customer outreach. Each supervisor within our FOIA office has access to a workflow tracking tool that updates on a daily basis providing near real-time information on the status of all open FOIA cases.	[REDACTED]	<a href="http://www.foia.cia.gov//foia_request">http://www.foia.cia.gov//foia_request</a>
USDA	[REDACTED]	1	<p>Yes. The FS-WO began revising its internal operating procedures and is gradually making changes to its workflow as issues are identified and resources made available. Additionally, each analyst has been assigned a task outside of processing to ensure the administration of FOIA in the FS-WO continuously improves. For example, one analyst was assigned to monitor the backlog and to make recommendations on a routine basis for reduction. Another analyst was assigned to address compliance of subsection (a)(2) and oversee the posting of records.</p> <p>NRCS also did an assessment of its program. As such, it began reviewing the structure of the FOIA response process, agency policy, and the reporting metrics available in USDA's enterprise wide tracking system to identify trends and processing issues. Lessons learned from this assessment will be compiled this reporting period along with recommendations for improvement.</p> <p>FNCS deployed its Change Initiative aimed at realigning FOIA responsibilities, reducing the backlog, and improving processing times. The first phase of this initiative ensured FOIA team members were aware of their role and responsibilities. The second phase emphasized training on the roles and responsibilities. The final result was the processing of 67 more FOIAs than the prior fiscal year, a 36% reduction in backlog for initial FOIAs, a 17% reduction in the average processing times, and a 47% increase in the number of FOIAs processed within the statutory timeframe.</p> <p>In Fiscal Year 2015, APHIS' requested a Business Process Improvement (BPI) review by APHIS' Office of Planning and Program Development. The BPI resulted in a total of 26 recommendations implemented during this</p>	[REDACTED]	<a href="https://www.dm.usda.gov/foia/requestors.htm">https://www.dm.usda.gov/foia/requestors.htm</a>



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USDA (cont'd)			reporting period. These recommendations included increased communication between APHIS's program offices and the requester community, increased training requirements for APHIS' FOIA professionals, general FOIA awareness training for all APHIS employees, a reorganization of teams within APHIS' FOIA office, and utilization of more technology to streamline processes and reduce FOIA response time. The final result was the expansion of the intake team, creation of an internal standard operating procedure, coordination of 99 FOIAs between APHIS' FOIA and program offices, implementation of a 24 hours training requirement for APHIS' FOIA processors and a 16 hours training for APHIS FOIA liaisons, and finally, circulation of an email from APHIS' Administrator regarding the importance of timely processing FOIAs.		
DOC		5.44	DOC did not conduct a comprehensive self-assessment of its FOIA program during this reporting period. Nonetheless, DOC did use reviews of Annual Report data to identify trends that may point to a need to streamline and improve its processes to increase the timeliness of its responses. In particular, DOC noted that in Fiscal Year 2015, the average for processing requests in the simple track exceeded the statutory processing time limit by 25 days. An analysis of Annual Report data along with discussions with DOC FOIA professionals revealed that in many cases, requests were improperly placed in the simple track. DOC made adjustments to its processes, which resulted in the processing time for simple requests to be reduced on average nine days per request during Fiscal Year 2016. The process adjustments also led to a slight decrease in the average processing time for complex requests from Fiscal Year 2015 to Fiscal Year 2016. The same review of Annual Report data helped DOC make process improvements that resulted in the agency closing all of its ten oldest requests during Fiscal Year 2016, as well as reducing the DOC backlog by 20% from the beginning to the end of the fiscal year. Improvements included conducting periodic meetings and assessments of DOC FOIA programs and identifying areas of concern that may lead to processing delays for requests. Meetings also usually included discussions of individual cases, case load, work flow, and suggestions for process improvements.		<a href="http://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/FOIA/Default.html">http://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/FOIA/Default.html</a>



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DOD		7.9	<p>Most DoD Components report conducting some form of self-assessment of their FOIA programs. The popular methods are case or case tracking software assessments and continuous process improvement (CPI) style initiatives where staff members are encouraged to suggest and implement improvements and streamlining opportunities. For instance:</p> <p>DIA conducted a quality review of all the open cases at the start of the year to ensure that all cases were moved to the right processing step and it also updated its internal standard operating procedures. It also anticipated completing a routine Office of the Inspector General inspection in December. NSA is actively in a formal CPI cycle while TRANSCOM revamped its entire program based on similar activities. TRANSCOM is formalizing and standardizing across their subcomponents, resulting in reductions in average response times. Army modified its case management system, FACTS to improve administrative process across the entire Army and is working to incorporate subcomponent suggestions to aid with milestone and performance measure improvements. Air Force continues to focus on its subcomponents which fail to reach required backlog reductions and also monitors monthly progress. DSS experienced staff turnover this year but still executed assessments of the tracking management system to find better ways of improving data capture for work flow simplification. It is also conducting market analysis in consideration of a full upgrade to improve its FOIA case management across the areas of routine requests, consultations, appeals and litigation. NRO transitioned to a new case management system and reviewed its entire workflow system as part of the shift. It is expecting an update to the software which will facilitate progress monitoring. As a result of the action around obtaining the new system, it reviewed internal directives and instructions and eliminated two. The Navy conducted site visits with some of its subcomponents while SOCOM reviewed workflows and case management efficiencies. DISA also executed</p>		<a href="http://open.defense.gov/Transparency/FOIA/FOIA-Handbook/">http://open.defense.gov/Transparency/FOIA/FOIA-Handbook/</a>



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DOD (cont'd)			a formal review resulting in development of a Strategic Plan for program improvement. The DoD IG runs regular metric comparisons of weekly progress plotted against previous year performance. These reports are fully reported through the chain of command. AFRICOM ran a processing procedure review resulting in a proposal to reorganize the IDA structure and facilitate more uniform and timely responses. DCAA updated its program instruction so that centralization would streamline processing procedures resulting in a consistent product. DFAS used the Management Internal Control Program (MICP) to formulate process maps and enable accurate testing of its key processes, associated risks and control objectives. It is using the MICP testing cycle for the processes executed daily, weekly and monthly.		
ED		12.48	During this reporting period, ED implemented self-assessments through various measures. ED reviewed and updated our FOIA standard operating procedures. A Quality Control (QC) Plan was implemented. The focus of the QC Plan was to identify deficiencies within case processing for Fiscal Year 2015 and adherence to FOIA processing requirements of ED's FOIA program. Through regular metrics and dashboards, the FOIA maintained regular interaction with ED Senior Officials.		<a href="https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/foia/foiatoc.html?src=ft">https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/foia/foiatoc.html?src=ft</a>
DOE		9.37	The DOE continues to look for ways to improve the FOIA process. For example, the FOIA Office analyzed how records are searched and determined the most appropriate keywords and phrases that produce better results. This review of the records search process led to improved efficiency and timeliness. Under new leadership, the SPR FOIA Office has dedicated significant time to analyzing the process. Improvements have included posting documents into Microsoft SharePoint for the review and concurrence by multiple individuals simultaneously on the release of information and, when electronic data is requested, requesters receive the information via email instead of digital media (e.g., compact discs). These changes have reduced the time it takes to get information to requestors.  An internal review by the Office of Scientific and Technical Information's (OSTI) FOIA program demonstrated that their processes and procedures ensure the timely delivery of responsive documents to the FOIA requester		<a href="https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/maprod/documents/Handbook.pdf">https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/maprod/documents/Handbook.pdf</a>



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DOE (cont'd)			within the 20-day requirement. The primary areas that impede OSTI's delay of responsive documents are requests for documents which are classified and unclassified sensitive. These documents require external consultation/coordination with HQ, impacting the delivery of responsive documents.		
HHS		7.74	<p>The OS FOIA Officer continued to conduct meetings during 2016 with Departmental FOIA Directors to solicit opinions, encourage and engage the OpDivs' FOIA directors as a community, and foster discussion of common operational challenges and possible solutions or policy guidance. The major goal of our 2016 meetings was to draft updated departmental FOIA regulations; these efforts resulted in revised and updated HHS FOIA regulations which were published on October 28, 2016 and took effect on November 28, 2016. ACF studied the annual report data for both ACF and other HHS components to determine what additional resources were required to improve the rate of ACF's FOIA responses. ACL performs ongoing self-assessments, primarily to review quarterly and annual report data and to update its processing procedures. CDC used the following self-assessment tools: analyzing the CDC FOIA analysts' workflow and performance metrics; reviewing data on program office response time to requests for documents; and, reviewing annual FOIA report data. CMS has implemented new active workflow management weekly and monthly reports to senior leadership to self-assess the FOIA program on an ongoing basis. CMS also continues to review and update standard processing procedures to make the best use of the agency resources available to process requests. Two specific examples are:</p> <p>1) the development of new guidelines for staff entering FOIA requests into CMS' electronic tracking and processing system to improve consistency, which has greatly enhanced the ability to search for requests and identify similar requests and resulted in more efficient records processing and release; and 2) the development of a guidance manual for use by the ten CMS Regional Offices, which clarifies requirements and supports streamlined operations and collaboration between state survey agencies and the CMS Central FOIA Office necessary to process the high volume of facility survey and certification FOIA requests CMS receives annually.</p>		<a href="https://www.hhs.gov/foia">https://www.hhs.gov/foia</a>



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HHS (cont'd)			<p>HRSA's FOIA Office utilizes the quarterly report and some features in the FOIA SWIFT program (its case tracking system) as benchmarks which are helpful for measuring HRSA's current performance against its past performance. The IHS FOIA staff conducted a review of its FOIA processes (tracking, processing times, and procedures) and identified several areas for improvement. As a result of this review, IHS developed an Access database that will assist the FOIA program in streamlining its tracking and reporting. A more detailed description of the improvements implemented by IHS is provided in response to Question 8 of this Section.</p> <p>The NIH FOIA Officer assessed the FOIA program regularly, using a variety of methods, to assess the following: weekly trends in the number of pending and backlogged requests and incoming requests; monthly reviews of backlogged requests to identify FOIA offices with increasing numbers; and post-audits of all closed requests to ensure compliance with the FOIA, and the HHS FOIA Regulations and consistency across the NIH. OIG conducted a full review of all open FOIA requests monthly, to ensure that FOIA professionals are apprised and aware of the current status of open FOIA requests. SAMHSA tracked its processing workflow every week, created spreadsheets to track cases in detail, and compared annual report data from previous years to the current year.</p>		
DHS		11.5	<p>In FY 2015 through FY 2017, OGIS assessed the DHS Privacy Office, USCG, FEMA, USSS, CBP, TSA, and ICE regarding their FOIA policies, procedures, and compliance. These Components have used the reports to conduct self-assessments and have implemented the recommendations in many instances. The DHS Privacy Office conducted multiple self-assessments of its FOIA program and as a result took the following steps to ensure that the FOIA program at the Department operates more efficiently:</p>		<a href="https://www.dhs.gov/freedom-information-act-foia">https://www.dhs.gov/freedom-information-act-foia</a>





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DHS (cont'd)			<p>Detailed an individual to the DHS Privacy Office who reviewed the processes and procedures and provided suggested process improvements, including the implementation of concrete performance metrics and deliverables for FY 2017 Performance Plans for FOIA staff; revising the DHS Privacy Office FOIA Standard Operating Procedure to reflect the updated processing procedures; and updating the template letters.</p> <p>Realigned the DHS Privacy Office into the following five concrete lines of business, to operate as a policy office: FOIA Disclosure, FOIA Policy and Training, FOIA Compliance and Oversight, FOIA Appeals and Litigation, and FOIA Technology.</p> <p>ICE used a series of reporting mechanisms to focus its resources on closing its oldest cases and set higher production standards for its employees in their performance work plans D33to address an increase in cases received and to ensure production requirements are met. D33</p> <p>CBP used daily, weekly, and monthly reports to track efficiency of its program, ensure backlogged cases were addressed, and determine where the delays existed in program offices responsible for providing records.</p> <p>FEMA conducted a self-assessment following the OGIS review and is addressing the recommendations through the assistance of contractor support. FEMA also developed internal standard operating procedures for processing cases in the COTS web application.</p> <p>I&amp;A revised its processes regarding how it conducts and documents searches, triages requests, and allocates its resources for litigation, incoming requests, and the backlog.</p> <p>S&amp;T conducted self-assessments as follows: monitored workflows and used internal tracking sheets; reviewed quarterly data of FOIA requests; revised standard operating procedures and implemented best practices to process FOIA requests.</p>		



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DHS (cont'd)			<p>TSA reviewed its program as part of OGIS's compliance review and reviewed its processes as part of a Lean Six Sigma review, and implemented suggested recommendations as appropriate; produced a variety of weekly and monthly reports, tracking both team and individual metrics and production, as well as backlog and ten-oldest-cases status; established new performance goals in the second quarter focusing on case closings and pages reviewed. USCG OGC audited the FOIA program and determined a need for a semi-annual report to leadership regarding all units that process FOIA requests, and identified ways to streamline the legal review process. OIG conducted a self-assessment of its FOIA program using the number of litigations, number of pending FOIA requests, and number of incoming FOIA requests to support the need to hire additional staff to assist with the increasing and demanding workload.</p> <p>USCIS FOIA used metrics reported daily, weekly, and monthly to track the progress in its major processes to achieve significant mission goals in such areas as backlog of requests, backlog of appeals, average processing times, average number of cases closed per processor, average days to print and mail out final responses on either paper or CD, and total number of FOIA requests pending for more than 365 days. The status of each metric was assessed and analyzed by senior FOIA managers who in turn investigated causes for any downward trends or missed goals. Findings were reported to the USCIS Chief FOIA Officer with actions recommended to improve efficiencies and address identified areas for process improvements. FOIA managers closely reviewed and discussed the FOIA Annual Report, the DHS Monthly FOIA Report, and the monthly USCIS FOIA Management Analysis Report for data points indicating areas to be investigated further for cause and effect analysis, potential targets for continued improvement, and the need for reallocation of resources to address areas of immediate concern.</p>		



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HUD	[REDACTED]	1	No, but The Department continuously self-assesses the FOIA process. For each FOIA request received, FOIA team members work with each other throughout the life of the request to ensure timely processing, a presumption of openness, and adherence with the FOIA and agency regulations. In addition, both the FOIA Branch and Office of General Counsel have a system of redundancy in place so that if a team member is taken away from the assignment, another person can fill in with relative ease.	[REDACTED]	<a href="https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=FOIA_REF_GUIDE.pdf">https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=FOIA_REF_GUIDE.pdf</a>
DOJ	[REDACTED]	7.58	<p>Many components in the Department have engaged in self-assessment efforts to improve their FOIA processing procedures. In 2014, OIP launched a Component Improvement Initiative to conduct an in-depth review of the Department's FOIA processes. As part of this initiative, every year OIP reviews components' FOIA data and provides them with direct feedback. Now entering its fourth year, an outgrowth of the initiative is the current development of a self-assessment toolkit, which was also announced in the Department's Open Government Plan 4.0. The toolkit will be a resource for all agencies to conduct their own comprehensive self-assessments. [...]</p> <p>Many of the Department's components also took advantage of the self-assessment process during the reporting year to improve their FOIA processes. Components that engaged in a self-assessment used Annual and Quarterly FOIA Report data, as well as a review of workflows and current policies and procedures as evaluative tools. For example, ATF had success by regularly reviewing data from the prior month to establish goals for the upcoming month. As a result of this strategy, ATF was able to significantly reduce its backlog by 28%. The Antitrust Division had success focusing on workflow management by grouping requests on topics together and assigning them to designated FOIA professionals. In addition to working on the toolkit mentioned above, OIP, which processes requests for the Department's Senior Leadership Offices, instituted some significant workflow changes based on the results of its own self-assessment. For years OIP processed requests from "cradle to grave," meaning the assigned FOIA professional would handle all aspects of the processing during the entire life of the request. After the self-assessment, OIP determined that the "cradle to grave"</p>	[REDACTED]	<a href="https://www.justice.gov/oip/department-justice-freedom-information-act-reference-guide">https://www.justice.gov/oip/department-justice-freedom-information-act-reference-guide</a>



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DOJ (cont'd)			<p>approach, while certainly having some benefits, was not the most efficient means to handle the continuously increasing volume of requests received. Instead, OIP created three distinct teams that would handle specific aspects of FOIA request processing. The establishment of the three teams paid immediate dividends. Over the course of the first seven months of FY 2016 (October through April), OIP processed 980 requests and reduced its backlog by 107 requests. In the remaining five months of the fiscal year, OIP processed 1,118 requests and reduced its backlog by 141 requests. These successes have continued into the first quarter of FY 2017, with OIP having already processed the most requests ever during the first quarter of a fiscal year.</p>		
Labor		48.2	<p>DOL used the following methods to assess its FOIA programs:</p> <p><b>FOIA Administrative Agency Reviews.</b> The purpose of the FOIA administrative reviews conducted by the Office of Information Services is to (1) determine best practices related to DOL's FOIA administrative process and (2) offer agency components the opportunity to discuss any issues related to their agency's implementation of FOIA. As part of these reviews, OIS staff meets with the specific agency's FOIA coordinators and professional staff to obtain information regarding their FOIA practices. The agency components are provided, in advance, with a list of topics that may be discussed during the review. When applicable, OIS shares any identified best practices or lessons learned during the standing quarterly FOIA Coordinator meetings.</p> <p><b>Internal Agency Self-Assessments.</b> Many components conducted internal agency specific self-assessments in 2016. OFCCP engaged in a Six Sigma Continuous Project Improvement program to map and streamline its work flow. MSHA reviews FOIA requests weekly and updates a variety of spreadsheets which give a snapshot of its FOIA program at that particular moment in time. Most components regularly review its annual report data (quarterly) and update their processing procedures as needed.</p>		<a href="https://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/guide6.htm">https://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/guide6.htm</a>



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State		10.00	The Department conducted several self-assessment exercises during this reporting period, some of which are still underway. There are two studies involving the FOIA process currently underway: one focusing on changing the future processing FOIA requests so that new technology can be acquired to better respond to requests and another to review the current staffing structure of IPS including how to structure the FOIA offices within IPS to support an improved process. IPS management conducted reviews of existing processes to identify short and long term solutions; the focus has been on improving the FOIA experience at the Department so that responses are provided in a more timely manner and more information is posted to the FOIA website. Part of these efforts have included improving communication and coordination among offices in the Department working to process FOIA requests; these efforts have been successful to date in that communication is improving.		<a href="https://www.foia.state.gov/Request/Guide.aspx">https://www.foia.state.gov/Request/Guide.aspx</a>
DOI		7	Yes. The Departmental FOIA Policy Staff regularly conduct self-assessments of the Department's FOIA program, by reviewing Annual Report data, conducting audits of each bureau at least bi-annually, and reviewing and updating processing procedures, including its FOIA regulations.		<a href="https://www.doi.gov/foia/news/guidance/">https://www.doi.gov/foia/news/guidance/</a>
Treasury		5	During the reporting period, Treasury participated in an OGIS-facilitated self-assessment. The self-assessment focused on 23 compliance areas and was targeted to identify potential areas of improvement. To complete this assessment, OGIS and Treasury distributed a survey to all Treasury FOIA staff. Treasury used the information obtained from the survey to conduct targeted training and to develop the agenda for Treasury's FOIA summit. For example, the survey revealed discrepancies in FOIA staff understanding and knowledge of the FOIA/Privacy Act System of Records Notice, and the requirement to notify requesters of OGIS' mediation services. To mitigate this, Treasury distributed updated response letter templates and initiated an update to Treasury's FOIA/Privacy Act System of Records Notice.		<a href="http://www.treasury.gov/foia">www.treasury.gov/foia</a>



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	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide
DOT		3.97	<p>PHMSA regularly self-assesses its FOIA program, which includes evaluating the methods and processes used and areas for improvement. A 2015-2016 initiative for the FOIA program included the evaluation of template language for requester correspondence and the creation of a template library. PHMSA finalized the first version of the template library in 2016. The topic of template letters has been discussed at monthly DOT-wide FOIA meetings, and several other components extensively use template letters. We are incorporating template letter samples into our FOIA Reference Library on DOT's FOIA SharePoint site to facilitate sharing across the components.</p> <p>A 2016/2017 PHMSA initiative included the evaluation of its FOIA program processes so that standard operating procedures (SOP) can be identified and documented. PHMSA aims to complete the FOIA SOPs in 2017. This topic was discussed at a monthly DOT-wide FOIA meeting, and we are exploring expanding this initiative to all components.</p> <p>Every year, FHWA conducts a self-assessment of its FOIA program by reviewing current annual report data and comparing the data with information from prior years. Based on the review of its data, the FHWA FOIA Office sets goals for improving its effectiveness in targeted areas.</p> <p>MARAD performed a review of its FOIA activities using the reporting capability built into its FOIA processing software. The MARAD FOIA Office also regularly meets to go over policy and procedures to identify areas that can be improved.</p>		<a href="https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/FOIA%20Reference%20Guide%20%28long%29%20revised.pdf">https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/FOIA%20Reference%20Guide%20%28long%29%20revised.pdf</a>
VA		37.37	No		<a href="http://www.oprm.va.gov/foia/">http://www.oprm.va.gov/foia/</a>
EPA		4.74	<p>Yes, EPA conducted a self-assessment of the FOIA Program. Multiple data sources were used including: 1) document review of reports, policies and procedures, FOIA Lean outputs, and previous evaluations; 2) internal and external interviews; and 3) an online survey. A copy of the assessment can be located at: <a href="https://www.epa.gov/foia/evaluation-epas-foia-program">https://www.epa.gov/foia/evaluation-epas-foia-program</a></p>		<a href="https://www.epa.gov/foia/foia-request-process">https://www.epa.gov/foia/foia-request-process</a>
EEOC		6	<p>Yes, the EEOC reviewed and updated processing procedures at Headquarters to improve workflow.</p>		<a href="https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/foia/handbook.cfm">https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/foia/handbook.cfm</a>



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**Section II -- Steps Taken to Ensure that Agency Has an Effective System in Place for Responding to Requests (Req.)**

Agency	Requests for Expedited Processing		Agency conducted self-assessment of FOIA program	FOIA Reference Guide	
	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide
FTC	█	4	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.	█	<a href="https://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/foia/foia-request">https://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/foia/foia-request</a>
NARA	█	2.06	Yes. The Office of General Counsel conducted an assessment of the Operational FOIA and Appeals programs in their office, which included workflow analysis, triage of open cases, and case assignment based on specific FOIA types (simple or complex). This resulted in an improvement of response times for all cases.	█	<a href="https://www.archives.gov/foia/foia-guide.html">https://www.archives.gov/foia/foia-guide.html</a>
NLRB	█	11	Currently, the FOIA Branch uses a proprietary FOIA casehandling system. In spring 2016, the FOIA Branch and the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) staff began holding bi-weekly meetings on identifying and addressing the technical needs of the FOIA Branch in processing FOIA cases. The FOIA Branch prepared a list of technical needs that were necessary to make electronic FOIA casehandling more efficient. OCIO personnel has now implemented a number of enhancements, including automatic folder creation for electronically-filed FOIA requests, automatic acknowledgement communications to requesters that e-filed requests, and a more efficient login process for end users. In addition, the FOIA Staff developed a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual to achieve greater efficiency and consistency in the overall casehandling, and continues to discuss and update written policies for redaction of specific information. As a result, the FOIA Branch was able to move to a fully electronic casehandling process for FOIA requests.	█	<a href="https://www.nlr.gov/news-outreach/foia/foia-reference-guide">https://www.nlr.gov/news-outreach/foia/foia-reference-guide</a>



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OPM	[REDACTED]	1	Yes. The FOIA Processing Service Team conducts self- assessments of its processes, policies and backlog issues continuously throughout the year. Input from our external and internal customers is assessed and revisions are made to respond to our customers in order to maintain customer service excellence. Our processes are examined and revised to make sure that the outcomes are timely and that we are able to provide an accurate accounting of our FOIA activities at the end of the fiscal year. We updated our present tracking system to have a smoother process for our hybrid cybersecurity FOIA/Privacy Act requests. We have worked with some of the program offices to streamline their FOIA processes and to make sure that their requests are properly entered and closed-out. In reviewing our processes, it was determined that more notification was required to remind the FOIA POCs and emphasize the need for closing-out of backlog and pending requests. We made revisions to our notification system and work closely with program offices to strategize on the processing of complex requests.	[REDACTED]	<a href="https://www.opm.gov/information-management/freedom-of-information-act/#url=Reference-Guides">https://www.opm.gov/information-management/freedom-of-information-act/#url=Reference-Guides</a>
PBGC	[REDACTED]	4.56	Yes. In the beginning of the Fiscal Year, the Division met to discuss resolutions for more efficient FOIA processing in Fiscal Year 2016. This workshop focused on meeting the following three goals: 1) Time management - To decrease processing times; 2) Accuracy - To reduce the number of package exchanges between the reviewer and the analyst; and 3) Forethought in processing - To foster effective communication by being proactive, anticipating surprises or challenges, and innovating to meet those challenges.	[REDACTED]	<a href="http://www.pbgc.gov/about/pg/footer/foia.html">http://www.pbgc.gov/about/pg/footer/foia.html</a>
SEC	[REDACTED]	5.38	The Office of FOIA Services generated monthly reports that included statistical analyses, which provided the ability to compare and contrast with prior year reporting.	[REDACTED]	<a href="https://www.sec.gov/Article/foia-reference-guide.html">https://www.sec.gov/Article/foia-reference-guide.html</a>
SSA	N/A	N/A	During a review of the Annual Report data and internal reports, we discovered a processing issue that was preventing some cases from closing, causing our response times to increase. We were able to correct this problem so that cases are now closing properly.	[REDACTED]	<a href="https://www.ssa.gov/foia/reques">https://www.ssa.gov/foia/reques</a>





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USPS		4	<p>The Privacy and Records Office conducted a nationwide survey directed to FOIA Coordinators at Headquarters, Area and District offices using an online survey tool. The survey gathered information to determine what tools, information and resources are needed that will assist them with their FOIA processing duties. The results of the survey were shared with the Chief FOIA Officer and the Chief Privacy Officer.</p> <p>The Chief FOIA Officer is provided a weekly status report on the number of requests received each week, the number of requests closed each week, the number of pending requests, and the number of backlogged requests. This weekly assessment helps to identify any spikes or trends in FOIA activity.</p> <p>USPS reviewed and revised its regulations concerning FOIA compliance contained in 39, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), section 265. As part of this undertaking, USPS reviewed "Updated FOIA Regulation Template and Guidance" posted by the Office of Information Policy, benchmarked against other Federal agency FOIA regulations, incorporated new statutory requirements to ensure compliance with FOIA amendments, and reviewed online resources concerning FOIA best practices (e.g., OIP, OGIS, etc.).</p> <p>USPS began the review and updating of USPS Handbook AS-353, Guide to Privacy, the Freedom of Information Act, and Records Management, which contains policies and procedures governing the release of Postal Service records under the FOIA. The Handbook supplements USPS FOIA regulations contained in 39, CFR, section 265, and includes a chapter that contains information on how to process a FOIA request and a FOIA processing checklist for use by records custodian. The update to the Handbook is expected to be completed and published in Fiscal Year 2017.</p> <p>During this reporting period, USPS FOIA professionals began a review of its internal FOIA website, which includes FOIA resources and training opportunities, FOIA contact information and sample letters. Updates are made on a continuing basis throughout the year.</p> <p>The Postal Inspection Service conducted a review of its procedures for requesting records searches and timelines for response, and the manner in which first-party requests are recorded in the FOIA Tracking system.</p>		<a href="http://about.usps.com/handbooks/as353/as353c4_002.htm">http://about.usps.com/handbooks/as353/as353c4_002.htm</a>



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Section III -- Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures (PD)					
Agency	Process for Identifying Frequently Requested Records	System in Place to Identify Other Records for PD	Challenges to Posting Material Online	Publicized Important PDs	Other Steps Taken to Increase PDs
CIA	It is CIA's intention to post online all records released under our FOIA program. We do give priority to items that, per our FOIA logs, are frequently requested. In Fiscal Year 2017, we will be pursuing a release to one is a release to all policy by responding to all public access requesters through the electronic reading room on our public website.	■	No	■	In Fiscal Year 2017, 13 million pages of records processed by the 25-year automatic declassification program will be posted to the electronic reading room on our public website. This material was previously only available on stand-alone computer systems located at NARA. The CIA makes every effort to increase the number of records provided to the public at large.
USDA	USDA continues to employ varying methods for identifying frequently requested records. The most common among those methods continues to be routine monitoring of the FOIA logs in the component's tracking database.	■	Yes	■	Yes. Shortly after the passage of the 2016 FOIA Amendments, the Department issued guidance regarding the subsection (a)(2) requirements. This guidance (excerpts shown below) provides a deep dive on the categories of information covered by subsection (a)(2), techniques for identifying proactive disclosures, and tips for mastering the FOIA Annual Report's new (a)(2) requirements.
DOC	DOC uses FOIAonline, its FOIA tracking web-based system, to both identify and make available records for proactive disclosure. The ways in which FOIA professionals use the system to assist them include: reviewing responses to requests to determine if material disclosed may be of use to other requesters and discussing how to make responsive records available through the publicly available FOIAonline system. Through the FOIAonline system, individuals can access posted FOIA requests and view agency responses to submitted requests. Those responses include disclosed responsive records. Periodic reviews of all incoming requests are also conducted and when necessary, management is notified of materials that are of significant interest to the public, frequent requesters, as well as frequently requested material. This effort not only helps to improve awareness of FOIA responsibilities, it also helps promote DOC's obligation to proactively disclose frequently-requested material.  Additionally, FOIA professionals keep track of the records that have been frequently requested. Once a previously-released record has been requested a total of three or more times, a FOIA Officer works collaboratively with the agency office responsible for posting the frequently requested material to ensure that a copy of the properly FOIA-processed record is posted in a timely manner.	■	Yes	■	DOC FOIA Officers regularly discuss this issue with their management and program staff and encourage proactive disclosures of records in an effort to widely disseminate information of public interest and in pursuit of its openness policy. DOC has not engaged FOIA requesters regarding proactive disclosures, but does watch trends in requests to help determine those records that should be proactively disclosed. Furthermore, absent a strong business need or privacy concern, each FOIA disclosure by DOC is made publicly available without the need for a case-by-case determination of public interest. This has significantly decreased repeat FOIA request submissions for some BOUs, and improved requester awareness of activities by DOC FOIA professionals. DOC also looks for other innovative ways to proactively provide information to the public. As an example, NIST, collaborated with PubMed (see <a href="https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/funder/nist/">https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/funder/nist/</a> ) to increase public access to journal articles prepared by NIST researchers and grantees.



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DOD	Frequently requested records are easily identified at some DoD Components because case tracking systems or small staffs recognize requests and flag them for posting. Other components report not having frequently requested records or as in the case of DoD IG, already posting nearly all the requests on their website which negates the need to identify records as frequently requested in order to post them. Some components such as DSS, DFAS and JPRA report that multiple requests for the same records were not received since the vast majority of the requests fall into privacy information concerning the requester. However, most components report some level of FOIA log review or request trend analysis to pinpoint items of high public interest. These items may be subject to posting as frequently requested items.		Yes		NORTHCOM is using web analytics to determine which records are viewed in its FOIA reading room and how many visits for each record, while NRO meets with its agency historians and public affairs staff to gauge records that are of most interest. NRO's effort is a long-term one in determining which programs and topics may be good candidates for declassification efforts across the subcomponents and other agencies. It also engaged its requesters in a web survey and inquired about what type of information or topics its requesters would like to see. DFAS posted Retired Pay Statistics at the following link: <a href="https://www.dfas.mil/foia/foiareadingroom.html">https://www.dfas.mil/foia/foiareadingroom.html</a> . Additionally, DCAA continued other steps to increase proactive disclosures through its Field Liaison Advisors who work with acquisition, contract administration, and contract audit personnel to coordinate audit processes and provide other valuable audit assistance. It also focuses on assisting small businesses with training and information to help them navigate the audit process. Those presentations and guidebooks are posted on its public website at <a href="http://www.dcaa.mil/audit_process_overview.html">http://www.dcaa.mil/audit_process_overview.html</a> .
ED	ED's FSC collaborates internally with program offices across the Department as an ongoing effort to identify records for proactive disclosure. This is an effort in the Department's FSC, which, at times, requires an electronic search of the case management tracking system to identify frequently requested records. Additionally, the FOIA Coordinators in each program office are tasked with monitoring their incoming requests to identify cases that have reached the "rule of three." Also, ED's FSC in partnering with the OGC FOIA Attorneys continues to communicate to program offices to follow the "rule of three" to identify categories of records that have been frequently requested or for which there is an anticipated high public interest.		Yes		ED has begun to use web analytics as a way to assess the effectiveness of our website and to better understand what is of interest to our visitors.
DOE	The Department reviews a list of all FOIA requests received each week to determine what has been requested. The FOIA Office also conducts key word searches in the FOIA database to identify subjects of requests that have been requested multiple times. If documents are identified, they are posted to the FOIA webpage.		No		None.



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HHS	HHS continues to employ a number of ways to identify records for online public disclosure. HHS OpDivs use the established threshold of three requests for the same information to identify records of substantial public interest, either by reviewing FOIA logs, manually tracking FOIA requests or from identifying requests for the same records from an electronic tracking system. In addition, information is gathered from program areas and offices about significant policy documents that may be candidates for proactive disclosure, and public affairs and communications staff provide input and suggestions for records they believe should be proactively disclosed to the public.	■	Yes	■	Some examples include: ACF uses Google Analytics to analyze the ACF websites' popular resources and landing pages, frequently searched key words, and traffic types; including referral traffic. ACF analyzes trends and works proactively to meet the needs of our diverse users by highlighting and providing appropriate content. CMS receives a high volume for FOIA requests for data and CMS is continually communicating with requesters to identify ways to proactively post the most highly sought after and useful data. CMS also monitors high-interest issues to proactively release information. The FDA discusses proactive disclosure at FOIA training sessions and monthly FOIA Council meetings (the FOIA Council is a working group, comprised of FOIA staff from all agency components). In addition, FDA FOIA professionals work with FDA's Office of Media Affairs and other Public Affairs staff within the FDA components to ensure that records related to issues of significant public interest are being proactively posted, as appropriate. NIH web teams use data from user surveys, downloads, and views to identify material for proactive disclosure.
DHS	DHS and all of its Components follow the guidance set forth in a policy memorandum from December 2010, titled DHS FOIA Office Procedures and Standards for Effectively Implementing Section (a)(2)(D) of the FOIA "Frequently Requested Documents" Procedures, which outlines the process for determining when and how to disclose frequently requested documents. [see report for various methods of identifying frequently requested.	■	Yes	■	The Department remains committed to increasing proactive disclosures as mentioned throughout the report, and uses its FOIA requester outreach activities to solicit feedback regarding the content of its websites and reminds requesters of the wealth of records and data available on the websites.
HUD	HUD monitors its FOIA logs regularly and identifies material to be posted to its website. A comprehensive list of documents and materials have been compiled and posted, and are updated and reviewed quarterly.	■	No	■	The posted material is reviewed quarterly to ensure that the websites are functional and the materials are current and available for viewing.



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DOJ	The Department's components use different methods for identifying "frequently requested" records including: monitoring for such records as part of their ongoing case management process, conducting periodic reviews of FOIA logs, and holding monthly meetings that include not only FOIA professionals but other interested stake holders like IT and Communications personnel.	■	Yes	■	The Department has worked extensively on a "Release to One is a Release to All" policy presumption. The work began with a 6-month pilot program with seven volunteer Federal agencies to assess the viability of a policy that would direct agencies to proactively post online their FOIA responses. This concept would ensure that all citizens—not just those making a request—have access to information released under FOIA. Over the course of the Pilot, DOJ worked with participating agencies to capture metrics on the time and resources associated with implementing this policy, as well as any impacts on interested stakeholders. In June 2016, in conjunction with the signing the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016, OIP briefed the newly established Chief FOIA Officers Council on the lessons learned from the DOJ Pilot program and examined the issues critical to such a policy, including assessing the impact on investigative journalism efforts, as well as how best to address technological and resource challenges. The Department published a draft policy that reflected considerations from both the lessons learned from the DOJ Pilot and all of the issues discussed at the Chief FOIA Officers Council, including certain exceptions to the policy and two different options for the timing of when documents should be posted online. The Department solicited public feedback and comments on the policy and is currently considering those comments and working to determine the best approach forward.
Labor	As indicated, DOL's FOIA program is decentralized. Accordingly, the process for identifying "frequently requested" records varies between DOL FOIA components. Moreover, now that the statute has been amended to require the "rule of three," agency components are working to establish standard operating procedures to ensure that "frequently requested" records are consistently identified across the component and published in compliance with the law. Currently, however, most components indicate that upon recognition that a request for the same record(s) has been received three times from three different requesters, the component works to post the records to their public facing FOIA library.	■	Yes	■	The Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) is working to provide enhanced on-line search and download functionality beyond what is currently available for Form 5500 data and images. Enhancing the search and download functionality will increase accessibility to Form 5500 data and images among users who are less technically savvy and is expected to reduce the number of requesters who request customized data sets through the FOIA process. EBSA utilized usability testing, website feedback (from the "Was This Helpful" tool and comments to the webmaster) as well as web metrics to determine additional information to post in response to website visitors' requests. For example, as a result of responses in the usability testing and website feedback, EBSA is working to post guidance looking back to the enactment of ERISA law.



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Labor (cont'd)					The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) collaborates with offices both within and out of the component to identify and produce a greater number of appropriate materials for proactive disclosures. Working with these offices enables MSHA to identify material that is of interest to the public, as well as determine the best method of disclosure to the public. MSHA has also engaged with FOIA requesters to greater meet their needs in information they seek. The ability to outreach and work with a multitude of resources enables the component to increase proactive disclosures both in quantity and quality. The Office of Workers Compensation Programs (OWCP) has a survey posted on its websites for individuals to provide comments on the ease of use and the value of the information available. OWCP also solicits feedback through its public email box.
State	The Department adopted the "Release to one, Release to All" approach to posting FOIA documents online during this reporting period. With the exception of first person requests (i.e. those involving privacy or personally identifiable information), the Department now posts on its FOIA website those documents released to the public in the previous month. These releases are taking place for all FOIA cases that are not in litigation; FOIA litigation releases that are not court ordered are expected to be posted on the FOIA website later this calendar year, fully completing the adoption of "Release to One, Release to All." This approach exceeds the requirement to post documents/information that have been requested multiple times and is part of a strategy to use the website to promote transparency and possibly avoid duplicative requests in the future.		Yes		None.
DOI	A specific provision in the Department's FOIA regulations addresses frequently requested records. Additionally, sections 2.7 and 3.3 of the Department's FOIA Handbook discuss this issue. This topic is frequently discussed by Departmental FOIA Policy Staff, bureau FOIA Officers, and other Departmental employees. Bureau FOIA Officers are familiar with the requests that come in and regularly review their FOIA logs for frequently requested records.		Yes		The Department has taken other steps to improve proactive disclosures. For example, the Departmental FOIA Policy Staff worked with the Communications Office to coordinate proactive disclosures and with bureaus to increase their technical knowledge on making proactive disclosures. The importance of proactive disclosures is a reoccurring theme in formal and informal training given by (and to) Department employees, including at monthly FOIA Officer meetings. The BOR engaged with its Public Affairs Office to help publicize posted documents. BLM program offices highlight important postings on their landing pages and the BLM uses social media to highlight and link to new and important documents and resources.



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Treasury	Treasury FOIA professionals review lists of incoming FOIA requests on a quarterly basis to identify frequently requested documents and information. When three or more requests are received for substantially the same information, those records are flagged for proactive posting.	█	Yes	█	Treasury works diligently and proactively to disclose records that are of high interest to the public. For example, TTB has taken steps to improve the usefulness of information it makes publicly available by incorporating feedback received from the public. In one case, TTB received a request to include additional information in a list posted in TTB's FOIA library. TTB was able to comply with the request and make the requested information available. This collaboration and feedback has made TTB's information more useful to the public.
DOT	DOT's components regularly monitor their FOIA logs to identify frequently requested records. In addition, each DOT component included an item on identifying these records as part of its "proactive disclosure" plan, which is described in detail below.	█	Yes	█	During the previous reporting period, DOT's Chief Data Officer and Departmental FOIA Officer formed a cross-modal, cross-functional group to help implement the Open Government Plan guidance mentioned above. They sought input from those whose jobs can have a positive impact in effectively increasing proactive disclosures throughout DOT. Participants included experts in the areas of Public Affairs, Open Government, FOIA, Records, Web, Communications, and Data. Our goal was to be more systematic in the area of proactive disclosures, and we believed this collaboration was key. The Chief Information Officer and the General Counsel then sent a memorandum to the Heads of the Operating Administrations (OAs) titled, "Developing a Systemic Approach for Increasing the Public Availability of Information about Agency Operations." That memorandum directed the OAs to develop plans for systematically identifying and posting more "in demand" information on their responsive websites. The guidance to the OAs instructed them address, at a minimum, certain types of documents (Congressional reports and testimony, FOIA request logs, funding/apportionment tables, and correspondence logs). The guidance also instructed the OAs to review their current practices, including how they ensure that Electronic Reading Rooms are current, and identify new information or data releases based on various demand signals. During this reporting period, those plans were implemented. The OAs' plans are posted at <a href="https://www.transportation.gov/mission/open/plans-increasing-public-availability-information-about-agency-operations">https://www.transportation.gov/mission/open/plans-increasing-public-availability-information-about-agency-operations</a> . The OAs monitored their plans throughout the year. For example, the Executive Sponsor for OST held periodic meetings with the program offices and support offices that formed the OST Team.



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VA	The VACO Central FOIA Office is decentralized and posts records by all component offices when they make the request to this office for posting. The specific VA Program Office monitors the number of times a request has been received and via their FOIA Offices i.e. VHA, VBA, NCA and VACO FOIA offices monitors either by requester or requested records via FOIAxpress requests that are requested 3 or more times and posts those documents in the VA Reading Room.	■	Yes	■	VA continues its efforts to transition from paper to electronic business processes to provide more responsive records in electronic form at the outset, avoiding the need for FOIA Officers to scan paper records (convert them to electronic form) in order to redact them electronically.
EPA	Since October 1, 2012, EPA has posted records released through FOIA on FOIAonline. Accordingly, responses to most FOIA requests, including those containing frequently requested information, are available to the public through FOIAonline. One major exception is first party requests. A first party request is made by an individual for his or her own records.	■	No	■	EPA is proactively posting records online, but also has a robust web analytics program to identify topics/records of interest to help ensure that EPA's website reflects those of interest to the public.
EEOC	EEOC monitors non-charge file FOIA requests. If the same material has been requested three times or has been requested two times with a strong likelihood of a third request, the material is posted on-line.	■	Yes	■	None.
FTC	FOIA staff are trained to identify instances where three or more requests have sought the same set of documents. When this occurs, FOIA staff instruct the agency's Web Team to post the accessible documents in the agency's FOIA reading room. Additionally, during the FOIA Office bi-weekly meetings, we discuss all requests which helps us identify frequently requested subjects. These requests can be found here <a href="https://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/foia/foia-reading-rooms/frequently-requested-records">https://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/foia/foia-reading-rooms/frequently-requested-records</a> .	■	No	■	The agency's Web Team recently conducted a "user-experience" lab to assess strengths, weaknesses, and potential improvements of and for the agency's website. During the lab, agency personnel were asked to perform certain tasks on webpages and were surveyed by the Web Team. The labs are on-going and the FOIA Office intends to use web analytics to capture aggregated information about the FOIA Library.





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Office of Information Policy

Section III -- Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures (PD)					
Agency	Process for Identifying Frequently Requested Records	System in Place to Identify Other Records for PD	Challenges to Posting Material Online	Publicized Important PDs	Other Steps Taken to Increase PDs
NARA	The Office of General Counsel FOIA team monitors its FOIA log for requests for operational records on a regular basis to determine if there are additional sets of records that should be posted on our reading room (see <a href="http://www.archives.gov/foia/electronic-reading-room.html">http://www.archives.gov/foia/electronic-reading-room.html</a> ). NARA's archival holdings continue to be processed according to our Strategic Goal (see <a href="http://www.archives.gov/digitization/strategy.html">http://www.archives.gov/digitization/strategy.html</a> ) to digitize our holdings for greater access to the public.	█	Yes	█	None.
NLRB	FOIA managers use an embedded data Excel query to search for records requested multiple times. In addition, the FOIA Branch works with the Agency's Office of Congressional and Public Affairs to identify records from cases of great media interest. When a FOIA staff member discerns that certain records are of great interest to multiple requesters, they alert their managers that a record should be posted. FOIA managers track the identification and posting of frequently requested records in an electronic Excel log to assist staff in directing requesters to our Frequently Requested Records page for records that are publicly available.	█	Yes	█	In July 2016, the FOIA Branch met with the Agency's OCIO to discuss the redesign of the NLRB home page and to revisit the FOIA Branch's Frequently Requested Records web page. On December 23, 2016, the updated Frequently Requested Records web page went live with records from high profile NLRB cases. The FOIA Branch has been able to refer requesters to this page for these requests. Based on Google Web analytics, the FOIA Branch determined that web users went to the main page and performed a search 3,427 times. Actual web site visits were 1,923.
OPM	The determination for identifying "frequently requested" records is a joint effort between the FOIA Processing Service team and the program office. OPM proactively place records on the Program Offices pages of the OPM.gov website, when Program Offices determine that these records might be of interest to the public or may be records that have or will be frequently requested. Updated Information pertaining to issues concerning the cybersecurity breach were posted on our website FAQs page. Internal training has already been held on the "Release of One, Release to All" policy. Senior Management is being briefed on this new policy in order to garner support and collaboration for posting hyperlinks to records that were responsive to FOIA requests. Meeting will be held with the FOIA Council to determine a process that will ensure a positive outcome to posting FOIA responses on the OPM website and FOIA reading room.	█	Yes	█	We held a FOIA Council meeting in November and will continue to seek collaborative avenues as well as educating the FOIA POCs and management on the need for proactive disclosures especially, the posting of FOIA-processed responsive records. At present, we do not use web analytics to inform on proactive disclosures. As demonstrated in our response to Section III, Section A, Question 2, OPM is extremely proactive in posting the increase in publicly sought records and data as evidenced on our web "Document Count" tool.



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PBGC	Each team in the Division is led by a team leader who receives the cases assigned to their team. The team leader is tasked with assigning the cases to team members, and noting special or unique characteristics of a given request. This includes identifying frequently requested records and determining whether or not they can be posted online. If the records that are frequently sought are suitable for posting, the Division works closely with the Communications, Outreach & Legislative Affairs (COLA) Department to ensure that that material is published on online.	█	No	█	The PBGC's Customer Service Plan engages participants using a vigorous corporate communications program that includes: websites, newsletters, subscriptions, and social media. Through its website, the PBGC offers plan participants, requesters, practitioners, and third-parties the opportunity to sign up to receive information on nine different topics through the following site: <a href="http://www.pbgc.gov/res/stay-informed.html">http://www.pbgc.gov/res/stay-informed.html</a> . Statistical data regarding site visits or web analytics are collected by the PBGC website. This analytical feedback is considered to determine how areas of interest may be published to the public domain. However, the website's greatest influence is to inform potential FOIA requesters as to records available to and about them via the site, thus eliminating the need to file at all. For example, when potential requesters quickly determine whether or not they are due a pension and/or identify participation terms online, they are less likely to seek records from the Disclosure Division. See <a href="http://www.pbgc.gov/wr/find-an-insured-pension-plan/pbgc-protects-pensions.html">http://www.pbgc.gov/wr/find-an-insured-pension-plan/pbgc-protects-pensions.html</a> .
SEC	Upon receipt of each request, SEC FOIA professionals conduct a search of the electronic FOIA tracking system for all prior requests made for the same records. Under normal circumstances, where it is determined that there have been three requests made for the same records; the materials are posted to the SEC's website at Frequently Requested FOIA Documents at <a href="https://www.sec.gov/oso/foia-freq-docs-custom-list-page">https://www.sec.gov/oso/foia-freq-docs-custom-list-page</a> . In addition, the SEC is moving forward with the Office of Information Policy's "Release to One, Release to All" initiative. This is being accomplished by the implementation of a public-facing web portal that complements the SEC's FOIA system. Ultimately, the portal will allow access to all FOIA requests filed with the SEC, all substantive response letters sent to the requesters by SEC FOIA staff, and all records released in response to FOIA requests.	█	Yes	█	The SEC communicated directly with requesters regarding records that could be made proactively available online. The SEC has not used web analytics to inform its proactive disclosures.
SSA	We created a tracking sheet to identify frequently requested documents.	█	Yes	█	None.



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USPS	The FOIA Tracking System alerts FOIA professionals when the same or similar FOIA requests are received and logged into the tracking system. It is the responsibility of each USPS records custodian to ensure that records processed and disclosed in response to a FOIA request, and are likely to become the subject of subsequent requests for substantially the same records, be made available in the Postal Service's Electronic FOIA Reading Room. In this reporting period, Federal Compliance undertook a review of FOIA case logs, at the request of the Chief FOIA Officer, to identify records that have been frequently requested. Federal Compliance plans to work with records custodians to ensure that frequently requested records are posted online.	■	No	■	USPS participates in cross-functional teams that discuss/develop messaging for all stakeholders, including industry. Without the need to submit a FOIA request, information provided in the FAQs respond to customer inquiries received through various contact channels (usps.com, 1-800-ASK-USPS, etc.).



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CIA		In addition to working with CIA IMTOs as outlined in the answer to question 2, above, the CIA FOIA team this past year interacted with the Office of Public Affairs and the manager of the CIA Twitter account to publicize the public release of information.	Technological improvements, such as increased search capabilities and machine learning to assist in document review and redaction, are currently being investigated and assessed as part of our technology advancement discussions.	
USDA		Several components reported working with their CIOs, Office of Public Affairs, and Office of Legislative Affairs to identify information for public release. For example, NRCS' FOIA Public Liaison requested that copies of any public testimony or speeches made by its Chief be made available for public release via NRCS' FOIA Reading Room.	USDA's continues to take steps to utilize more advanced technology to facilitate overall FOIA efficiency. Public Access Link (PAL): Launched in 2012, PAL is USDA's public-facing web portal. PAL allows the requester community to submit requests electronically through a link on our FOIA site, track the status of requests, and directly download records responsive to requests. e-Discovery Platform: Deployed in 2013, this add-on module for the existing enterprise-wide tracking solution features e-Discovery technologies such as the identification of duplicate and near duplicate records, ability to search and categorize records, and ability to rank and view records by "record custodian." Legal Research Engine: In 2013, the Department purchased several licenses for a legal research engine for use by FOIA Officers in processing FOIAs posing complex legal issues.	
DOC		DOC FOIA Officers and FOIA professionals interact with other agency staff in order to identify if there are any new ways to post agency information online. In particular, the posting of material is a regular topic of discussion with program offices when they are working on projects that are likely of significant interest to the public. DOC FOIA Officers also regularly communicate with public affairs/communications professionals, as well as the Office of Chief Information Officer to determine whether there are new ways to post agency information online. Additionally, with the expansion of the use of eDiscovery tools, NOAA FOIA staff has asked the Information Technology staff whether there is a way to more effectively de-duplicate records, and make large volumes of records available via the FOIAonline system, which ordinarily would require separate CD disclosures to requesters. To that end, NOAA also proposed changes to the manner FOIA responses are made publicly available on FOIAonline to accommodate high-volume requests in the records tab.	DOC uses FOIAonline to facilitate overall FOIA efficiency. FOIAonline allows anyone to submit a FOIA request, correspond with FOIA professionals processing a request, track the status of a request, and download responsive documents once they are released to a requester. Many DOC FOIA professionals are using Adobe to de-duplicate documents when appropriate in processing certain complex FOIAs, as well as to apply exemptions to documents. DOC also utilizes a Secure File Transfer system to share large quantities of documents for entity review and for agency consultation and referral to speed receipt and transfer. FOIAonline has helped improve customer service by improving FOIA processing and request availability to customers. Before FOIAonline, DOC and its BOUs used a variety of costly and limited tracking tools, web sites, email forms, spreadsheets and, FOIA reports were manually generated. The public had to submit requests to each bureau separately and could not easily check request statuses. Another technological improvement was the way in which FOIA request taskers were provided to program offices. Search taskers and fee estimate taskers are sent to program offices electronically and completed forms and records are routinely returned in the same fashion, improving efficiency and conserving resources. NOAA Google accounts have been utilized to share records for viewing outside the bureau by FOIA professionals within the DOC by granting them a noaa.gov email address, as well as VPN access, so that they can view shared documents within the noaa.gov firewall for collaboration and joint processing efforts. Using the technologies identifies above has had an immediate positive impact on how DOC and its BOUs are able to communicate, process, and analyze FOIA requests more efficiently.	



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DOD		<p>The DoD Components also report that they are working with non-FOIA professional agency staff to identify other ways to post agency information online. Most work very closely with their IT professionals and with their Public Affairs Officers to address technical aspects and better gauge public interest. Others report working with document repository owners so that they are readily involved in potential releases under the foreseeable harm standard. Several components reported working with their case management system professionals, who are not necessarily agency staff, to improve the systems that serve the public as well as the agency FOIA professionals through case or document release automation. Several components have reported work with their Knowledge Management Officers to better present information that has been difficult to find on their websites and to improve the relevance of what is posted.</p>	<p>As a result of advancing technology 69% of DoD Components report using technology to facilitate overall FOIA efficiencies which is an increase over the previous reporting period. Several components reported expansion of document sharing platforms into the classified realm which is facilitating consultations and coordination efforts across subcomponents and with other agencies. Several components report moving to enterprise records management (ERM) systems which facilitate de-duplication and better searches similar to those reporting moving to document sharing platforms. Of the components reporting the move to ERMs, several eliminated wasted effort by both FOIA professionals and agency subject matter experts, naturally resulting in an increase in processing efficiencies. Several components also report movement onto agency task management systems so that FOIA deadlines have better visibility throughout the chain of command. The training on these various systems was typically offered by contractors or other agency elements to FOIA professionals and staff.</p>	
ED		<p>The staff from the FSC routinely communicates with the Office of the Chief Information Office, webmasters, and the Assistive Technology Team in order to identify if there are any new ways to post agency information online.</p>	<p>ED is continuing to utilize a robust E-Discovery tool to improve its record search capabilities. SharePoint is also being employed more into our FOIA process to take advantage of its functionalities for cases assigned to multiple program offices. Also, Federal Student Aid (FSA) is currently rolling out the FOIA Integrity Management System (FIMS) for enterprise-wide deployment. The software was developed in collaboration with FSA's Business Transformation Team and Technology Office. The system, which will connect to ED's department wide FOIA tracking system, was developed to automate and improve the internal processing of FSA FOIA requests. Among the specific process improvements is an increased ability to track the real-time progress of request fulfillment across the agency and regions, improved documentation of search terms used, more accurate reporting on the efforts of FSA personnel to prepare response documents, and an enhanced ability to search and leverage prior FOIA responses.</p>	



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DOE		<p>The FOIA Office and other FOIA professionals periodically discuss with information technology specialists and other communications professionals new ways to publicly post information in a more effective manner for the public.</p>	<p>The CBFO/WIPP utilizes an Electronic Records Management System (“Documentum”) which includes either the actual record or an index of every record that our organization has archived. Searches can be performed utilizing a variety of search criteria or key terms, in whole or in part. At Richland, Continual improvement on Electronic databases that store record copy material that can be easily searched by using keywords, authors, dates, etc... This allows searches to be conducted more quickly.</p> <p>OSTI is continually developing new search algorithms and utilizing technology to improve the search and retrieval process. These improvements impact our FOIA request processing by allowing searchers to find more documents, more accurately, (basically find what they are looking for). Sometimes this is a bibliographic record and no full-text, but we give the user a recommendation on where to find the full-text. FOIA would be one option if we have the hard copy record. OSTI enhances a user/searcher video experience via speech technology as opposed to relying solely on video metadata. Many of the requests received during FY 2016 pertained to document searches for published research and development (R&amp;D) STI reports that are either in a hard copy or a digitized format. OSTI’s mandated core mission is to disseminate and make available results of the R&amp;D funded or sponsored by DOE to the general public and/or the STI community. As a result, OSTI has always embraced technology to advance the dissemination of STI to all appropriate users. In like manner, today’s technology is the principal driver in creating resource tools to expedite the delivery of STI reports via various media platforms, tablets, smart phones, social media, etc.</p> <p>As noted earlier, the BPA anticipates that Discovery Core will greatly assist in the search and collection of potentially responsive records, which will improve the efficiency and effectiveness in processing requests. The SPR already utilizes SharePoint for document management. This enables easy searching of information and allows the FOIA Officer access to files across the organization. Additional improvements will be made over FY 2017 to increase the amount of information posted for public viewing.</p> <p>Chicago reached maximum utilization of electronic methods in its FOIA request process, with 98% paperless transmission of FOIA actions and activities as compared to 95% paperless in the prior year. The majority of responses are transmitted via e-mail. Only requests that require transmission of sensitive information where the requester does not have an encryption tool are transmitted manually (Certified Mail or Commercial Carrier via trackable method). If the requester does not provide an e-mail address, the Chicago FOIA Officer calls the requester to obtain one or alternatively ask the requester the requester’s preferred method of communication. Chicago also continues to use a documents sharing platform to process responsive records for release to the requester. All activities from cradle to grave in Chicago FOIA request processing are now done electronically to the extent possible. This approach reduces the processing time significantly. It takes less time to send an e-mail than to put together a mailing. Requesters also get a quicker turnaround through e-mail responses to the extent possible rather than their having to wait for mailed information.</p>	



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HHS		<p>The HHS FOIA Offices continue to work with other agency staff to explore new and improved ways to post online information. Some examples of these OpDiv actions are described below:</p> <p>The OS FOIA Office, which is a division within the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA), met several times during the year with ASPA's Digital Services Division (DCD) to redesign the HHS main FOIA website to improve and simplify navigation and organization (e.g, the use of tiles and a mobile first design) and, generally, make it more user-friendly. In addition, the OS FOIA Officer and Public Liaison met with DCD during December 2016 to discuss ways to post transition materials, always a subject of significant interest during a change in administrations, to the main HHS website, HHS.gov.</p> <p>The ACF FOIA Office maintains an ongoing collaboration with the ACF web staff and plans to revise and improve the ACF FOIA web page during FY 2017.</p> <p>CMS FOIA staff members have developed strong working relationships with the CMS Office of Communications and Office of Technology Solutions, in addition to other program offices, and collaborate with them on a proactive approach to posting information. As one recent example, CMS FOIA staff worked with the CMS Office of</p>	<p>The HHS FOIA Offices continue their efforts to acquire and implement technological improvements that will enable their staffs to process FOIA requests more efficiently. For example: CDC, CMS, FDA and IHS are using the SharePoint document management platform to manage FOIA records.</p> <p>ACF's FOIA Office purchased document de-duplicating software, which ACF finds has enhanced efficiency by reducing the number of emails that must be produced for FOIA requests and for litigation. ACF also purchased a web portal, which the agency anticipates will facilitate proactive posting and make the transfer of large volumes of records for consultation and response much more efficient.</p> <p>The CDC FOIA Office often receives requests for emails related to specific communications of interest to the public. CDC uses their Microsoft Enterprise Search mechanism to quickly retrieve appropriate emails from the CDC email servers and archives for a given request. This search mechanism also provides the capability to remove duplicate emails which helps reduce the number of redundant copies of electronic communications that must be reviewed. In addition, CDC FOIA staff can process emails and other electronic documents using the Advanced Document Review (ADR) process in FOIA Xpress, which enables CDC to ingest files and further de-duplicate datasets; thereby helping to reduce the analysts' workload.</p> <p>To further facilitate the movement of responsive documents between program offices and the FOIA Office, CDC created shared network drives that are restricted to each CDC program and the FOIA office and recently leveraged the CDC Enterprise SharePoint system to provide a repository where responsive records are deposited by the program areas and from which CDC FOIA analysts can retrieve the responsive records for review and processing.</p> <p>The CDC FOIA Office also uses a variety of desktop tools to assist the processing of PDF files, including Adobe Acrobat Pro, WonderShare PDFelement, and TIFfteller software. These tools enable CDC FOIA staff to consolidate PDF files into manageable large documents for review and provide the ability to forecast page counts, which helps FOIA requesters to understand the level of effort and cost of their FOIA requests.</p>	



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HHS (cont'd)		<p>Communications and the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight (which oversees the Marketplace) to post highly requested data on Marketplace enrollment by specific health plan. The NIH FOIA Office routinely works with the NIH web team to identify new ways to post NIH-related information online. This collaboration includes regular meetings with the web team to review both the FOIA website and other NIH websites that provide information to the public.</p>	<p>CMS developed a SharePoint document collaboration site and implemented FOIA-specific shared drives which can be accessed by both the FOIA Office and CMS components to share responsive records; particularly voluminous files. In addition, CMS is using Relativity software to greatly improve the speed and efficiency of sorting and de-duplicating documents on large, complex cases. The SharePoint site and designated FOIA shared drives allow for faster records delivery and enhanced collaboration on records review for larger complex cases, which cuts down on the total processing time. The Relativity software significantly reduces the time needed to review and analyze complex and voluminous records.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FDA also uses SharePoint to assist with the internal sharing of records and Adobe to assist in reviewing email records. FDA FOIA staff also are collaborating with records management staff to explore more efficient ways to search for records, particularly email.</li> <li>• IHS has begun to use SharePoint, which allows real time document retrieval from the providing offices or program areas.</li> <li>• Several NIH components are using technology to de-duplicate documents, particularly emails. However, as of the time of this report, success with the technology has been mixed and has not resulted in a significant reduction in processing times.</li> <li>• SAMHSA is implementing a new FOIA tracking system that is expected to significantly improve efficiency and centralize FOIA data; as previously referenced in the response to Question 4 of this Section, SAMHSA also has a new shared drive to store records and data.</li> </ul>	
DHS		<p>DHS and its Components listed below interacted with the following agency staff to identify new ways to post agency information online: The DHS Privacy Office, ICE, and TSA interacted with their respective Offices of Public Affairs. OIG interacted with its Office of Public Affairs and information technology staff. I&amp;A interacted with its Office of Public Affairs, information technology staff, and staff from its program offices. USCIS interacted with its Immigrant Investor Program Office and Office of Communications. USSS interacted with staff from its program offices. S&amp;T interacted with its Office of Corporate Communications, Office of Security, Office of the Associate General Counsel, and staff from its technical program offices.</p>	<p>The DHS Privacy Office and the Components have been using a COTS web application for the past four years, which allows for document sharing and complete interoperability between all Components that use the application. The application provides a de-duplication capability that is currently being used by a small number of Components. This capability allows FOIA staff to upload documents and e-mail correspondence files and reduce duplicates based on a comparison process performed by the application.</p> <p>The eFOIA mobile application that the Department launched allows mobile device users to submit requests to any DHS Component as well as check the status of any request submitted to any DHS Component currently using the COTS web application.</p> <p>FEMA is participating in a pilot for an Electronic Records Management System at one of its regional offices, which will allow for faster document searches.</p> <p>S&amp;T uses its internal SharePoint sites to coordinate the reviews of records with its program offices. USCIS has been actively engaged in FY 2016 in the procurement of a new FOIA processing system. Among the requirements for the new system are de-duplication capabilities, ability to release records to requesters electronically, improved user interface for printing requests from teleworkers, and enhanced speed in all processing actions. USCIS uses the Enterprise Collaboration Network to coordinate records searches with its program offices. Additionally, USCIS is arranging for a demonstration of an eDiscovery tool that may assist with record searches.</p>	





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DHS (cont'd)			<p>CBP's new AFI system performs searches for multiple requests in batches, eliminating the need for staff to search each request individually, which in turn allows the staff to focus on other requests. Further, AFI produces records for some request types that require no redactions, which can be immediately finalized and provided to the requester. CBP used its FOIAonline tracking system for referrals and consultations to other agencies using the system.</p> <p>ICE deployed a new eDiscovery tool for use in FOIA and litigation requests. The tool with its analytic capabilities is used in conjunction with the COTS web application to assist with culling and de-duplicating voluminous amounts of records. The tool includes de-duplication capabilities, analytics, e-mail threading, and enhanced reporting features to manage the records more efficiently. The tool has improved the productivity and response time to requesters.</p> <p>OIG uses its eDiscovery tool to sort and de-duplicate e-mails. OIG began using the COTS web</p>	
HUD		Yes, FOIA staff frequently solicit assistance from the information technology staff to help facilitate online postings.	Upgrades to HUD's electronic FOIA Management System have aided in facilitating overall efficiency. The impact includes: Improved search capabilities, enhanced accuracy in the assessment of fees and calculation of processing days, automatic population of requesters' contact information, and status updates, which are accessible to requesters via the Public Access Link of the FOIA Management System.	
DOJ		Several of the Department's components reported that their FOIA professionals interacted with other agency staff, such as technology specialists or public affairs, legislative affairs, or communications professionals in order to identify new and effective ways of posting information online. BOP's FOIA Office began an effort to work with their public affairs professionals to create workflows that will make posting records easier and more timely. EOUST's FOIA professionals regularly meet with IT and Office of Planning and Evaluation staff at meetings of the Open Government Team to find new ways of posting component information online. OLC worked with JMD to get direct access to modify the content of its webpages, thereby allowing for faster posting and more updated information.	OIP and the Department continue to champion the use of advanced technological solutions that assist with the core functions of document processing as a key component of improving FOIA administration. OIP has led the effort to explore the use of these more advanced technologies for the benefit of not only the Department, but all agencies' FOIA administration. During Sunshine Week 2017, OIP will reconvene the FOIA IT Working Group to discuss some of these technologies. In addition to OIP, many of the Department's components, including ENRD, EOIR, EOUSA, JMD, OIG, OLC, Public Affairs, and the Antitrust, Tax, Civil, Civil Rights, and Criminal Divisions are now using tools to search for, sort, and de-duplicate responsive documents. Some of these tools can also compile a Vaughn Index for use in litigation, saving components a significant amount of time. Using these tools to automate many of the internal processes for handling FOIA requests can bring great benefits in efficiency. For example, conducting an adequate search for responsive records often involves the review of both paper and electronic records originating with multiple employees throughout the agency. In turn, these searches can locate hundreds, if not thousands, of pages of material that need to be reviewed for both responsiveness and duplication before a FOIA disclosure analysis can be conducted. With the widespread use of email and the common practice of employees forwarding the same email to multiple other people, with each employee then building still further on that email, long chains of overlapping and duplicative email are frequently created. The benefits of using technology to de-duplicate, sort, and thread all those emails automatically, rather than doing so manually, are readily apparent.	



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Labor		The Department's components regularly interact with IT specialists. As an example, ETA has been working with the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) to improve communications and transparency so that they can proactively provide appropriate data, and thus reduce the number of FOIA requests. FOIA staff within ETA have also been working with Departmental IT professionals who manage their public facing websites in order to recommend improvements.	While many of the Department's components are efficiently operating their FOIA programs using SIMS-FOIA for assignments and tracking purposes, Share Point and shared computer drives, some other agencies have started exploring further options. MSHA has been conducting market research on FOIA case management systems that are capable of facilitating FOIA efficiency through document sharing platforms for consultations and referrals; routing records for review; producing standard FOIA letters; and storing responsive records. OFCCP is currently involved in a pilot program at DOL to implement a new electronic case management system.	
State		Yes, there are studies underway to examine and improve the overall FOIA process at the Department including how we interact with requesters via the website. IPS employees attended both interagency meetings events/conferences and those held by the American Society of Access Professionals (ASAP). The Department provided a briefing to another federal agency on how we post documents as a practice for their consideration during this reporting period.	The Department is undergoing short and long term efforts to improve how technology is used to facilitate FOIA requests. In the short term, new ways to use existing tools are being considered. This includes evaluating the existing process to identify steps that can be eliminated or possibly even automated.  Two significant changes occurred during this rating period. First, the Department's case management system now has the ability to electronically ingest documents into the system; they had to be printed out in paper before. This is part of a broader Department-wide effort to shift away from paper and toward managing electronic records better. Second, the Department is now moving documents electronically now instead of in paper in several parts of the FOIA process including search responses and consultations.. This significantly reduces the amount of processing time needed to process documents in that documents no longer need to be printed out which created several administrative burdens.	
DOI		The Departmental FOIA Policy Staff meets with other agency staff who are experts in Section 508, records management, and website management (including libraries) to, among other matters, identify new and more effective ways to post agency information online.	In 2012, the Department released an IT Transformation Strategic Plan. The strategic plan was a high-level roadmap to transform the Interior's IT operations. It identified an initial set of high priority IT services as part of the transformation process, including a single email system for the department, a Cloud-based electronic forms system, Cloud-based electronic records, telecommunications, account management, hosting services, workplace computing services, risk management, and an enterprise service desk (help desk). The implementation of the strategic plan is now underway and the Departmental FOIA Staff has been offering input and suggestions. Bureaus are using the new tools made available through this effort. As discussed above, one of these tools, the FOIA DMU Processing Tool was updated this year. The updates include the following features: individual emails can be selected from email threads; each email thread can be saved as individual PDF documents; and most email images will now be included in generated PDF documents.  Additionally, some bureaus reported using collaboration software and shared drives to facilitate the review process for documents requiring review by multiple offices or multiple individuals within the bureau. Some bureaus also use these tools to post internal procedural guidance for the processing of documents in response to requests.	



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Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	FOIA Staff Interacted with Other Agency Staff to ID New Ways to Post Material	Agency Taking Steps to Utilize Advanced Technology and Impact	Posted All FY 2016 Quarterly Reports
Treasury		<p>During the reporting period, Department FOIA professionals worked collaboratively with Information Technology professionals and others to identify new methods of posting information online. For example: the IRS Disclosure Office conferred with the IRS Online Services Division to identify potential improvements to the IRS FOIA Library, including alternative methods of posting information. FinCEN FOIA professionals regularly communicated with Public Affairs professionals and specific program offices which can generate and proactively post statistical information. TTB's Disclosure Office is working with TTB's Information Technology professionals and Public Certificate of Label Applications (COLA) Registry users to identify and implement improvements and enhancements to the Public COLA Registry. OCC's Disclosure Staff and Web Publishing Staff communicate regularly to ensure OCC stays abreast of changes in technology to make posting information easier. DO's FOIA Staff works closely with information technology professionals to identify and resolve issues with technology and processes to make information more accessible. Additionally, during FY 2017, DO FOIA staff will collaborate with the Treasury Library to add certain historical documents and information to the Library's collection.</p>	<p>Treasury has taken the following steps to greater utilize technology to improve FOIA efficiency: IRS updated and expanded web based technology to provide an additional research tools and services and provided training to all FOIA staff. This has improved FOIA search capabilities and access to procedures and contact information when processing FOIA requests. IRS also updated its process for procuring records from IRS Federal Records Centers to receive records electronically rather than by mail. This has reduced the need for manual scanning to make records available to FOIA casework and has improved the number of days necessary to make records available for processing. TTB is still in the planning stages of identifying a new records management application that will allow end users to quickly locate duplicate records, particularly emails, sort the records, and export the records as PDFs. TIGTA is working to implement advanced document review features with FOIAXpress. The improvements will give TIGTA the ability to sort, compare, and de-duplicate documents. It will also compare and contrast similar documents and the redactions on those documents. TIGTA plans to implement this feature in late 2017. OCC has already implemented this technology. DO program staff developed and are testing a web tool which aims to ease burden and improve the timeliness of e-mail searches</p>	
DOT		<p>As noted above, the exercise of "Developing a Systemic Approach for Increasing the Public Availability of Information about Agency Operations" undertaken by all DOT OAs brought together cross-functional teams to develop and implement their "proactive disclosure" plans. The components listened to various demand signals and feedback, including through web analytics, to target what additional information to post and/or make easier to find. The components reported great value in bringing these multi-disciplinary teams together to identify additional records and new ways to post agency information online.</p>	<p>Beyond using technology to redact documents, DOT is taking the following steps to use more advanced technology to facilitate overall FOIA efficiency. To avoid the need to review the same email more than once when responding to a FOIA request, several components purchased de-duplicating and email threading software during the reporting period, while other components are exploring the possibility of purchasing such software. Another component purchased a tool that helps search and sort emails. PHMSA is taking steps to use more advanced technology. PHMSA uses a file share site as needed to facilitate the sharing of records when the records are too large to email. This allows for requesters (or other agencies for consultations) to receive records more quickly. PHMSA also uses a de-duplication software and e-discovery database to review records. This software saved the agency time by, for example, de-duplicating records, thereby automatically reducing the records under review at an initial review stage. Furthermore, the tool allows for multiple reviewers to simultaneously work on the same review, and enhances collaboration among the</p>	



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DOT (cont'd)			<p>reviewers. The product allows for sophisticated searching to target responsive records, and allows a reviewer to find "the needle in the haystack." Lastly it has served as a customer-friendly negotiation tool with requesters. PHMSA has used the e-discovery tool to suggest search terms and immediately report back to requesters on the search results, which has helped narrow the scope of the request and hence reduce the number of documents under review. It also automatically categorizes and group records so that the requester can receive status updates on the types of records under review.</p> <p>The new FOIALOG system facilitates electronic preservation of the administrative record of initial requests to allow FHWA to more efficiently address FOIA appeals and litigation. Implementation of this system feature is planned for the first quarter of Calendar Year 2017. In addition, the new FOIALOG system facilitates more efficient transferring of referrals within DOT. (Note: Six DOT components currently use this system.)</p> <p>MARAD uses de-duplication and containment technology to ensure that its processing is efficient and that it produces high quality results for requesters.</p> <p>Several components reported using shared drives to collect documents from program offices. One component is also considering the use of existing technologies to create a process workflow that will automate search assignments and search form completions.</p> <p>Advanced technology related to FOIA processing was a primary topic of one of the monthly DOT-wide FOIA meetings. Components shared best practices and answered questions from other components regarding the various technologies throughout DOT. We then encouraged DOT agencies to provide demonstrations of their advanced technologies to other components as requested.</p>	
VA		Yes, the VA OALC FOIA Library has engaged with the VA 508 Specialist. A 508 waiver allows us to post documents for only 30 days, so a 508 waiver is not a permanent solution. Therefore, we have begun converting documents into 508-compliance.	Yes, the VA's Electronic Contract Management System (ECMS) and the VA IT are used to improve records and search capabilities. SharePoint, a document sharing platform, is used for consultation and referrals.	
EPA		The Agency continuously updates its website to ensure that information is posted in an efficient and user friendly manner.	EPA staff are using Microsoft Console; Ipro; Relativity and Encase (in limited capacity). The use of these technologies has allowed EPA to provide staff processing FOIA requests an estimate, before record collection takes place, of the number of search results expected from the Agency's email system. This early estimate provides staff the ability to modify search parameters to better target the relevant information before the collection takes place. This in turn speeds processing times and review times as more focused search results are produced. EPA also uses technologies to de-duplicate search results and provides a review platform for collaborative record review by multiple EPA staff members.	
EEOC		Yes.	Yes, we have equipment that assists in searching and locating specific terms, making it easier to locate and redact PII information, deliberative process information, etc.	



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FTC	█	As noted previously, the agency's Web Team recently conducted a "user-experience" lab to assess strengths, weaknesses and potential improvements of and for the agency's website. During the lab, agency personnel were asked to perform certain tasks on webpages and were surveyed by the Web Team. Multiple FOIA staff participated in the lab.	No.	█
NARA	█	NARA's Web Program and Social Media presence is operated, monitored and regulated by the Office of Innovation. All content that will be posted to NARA's Catalog or Social Media outlets must meet the requirements produced by this office, so therefore all FOIA professionals work closely with that office.	No.	█
NLRB	█	Yes, the FOIA Branch regularly coordinates with the OCIO and OCPA to disclose records of significant interest to the public.	The FOIA Branch uses Relativity to process large FOIA requests. This software package allows for efficient de-duplication of email threads and other electronic records. It also allows staff to redact records in their native file format, and permits multiple users to work on a case simultaneously.	█
OPM	█	Aside from attending OPEN Government updates incorporating the latest IT technology features to better the dissemination and access of information to the public, the FOIA Team interact with the IT staff on numerous opportunities from revising the FOIA web page, revisions to the FOIA tracking system, security methods and the effect on sending out FOIA-processed records, revision of data elements required for various FOIA reports such as the Annual, Chief FOIA Officer's Reports and internal ad hoc reports. As the OPM IT architecture is updated, the FOIA processes will also be incorporated in to a future case management and tracking system.	De-duplication and better search tools are desired tools to be incorporated into the designs of the OPM enterprise architecture.	█



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	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	FOIA Staff Interacted with Other Agency Staff to ID New Ways to Post Material	Agency Taking Steps to Utilize Advanced Technology and Impact	
PBGC		The Division enjoys a close working relationship with the COLA Department. This relationship includes regular meetings to discuss new developments in public information and how those developments can be incorporated into the agency's FOIA website. If new trends in information sharing can be used on the FOIA website, the Division then collaborates.	As a branch division within the Office of the General Counsel (OGC), the Division has access to the technological capabilities of e-discovery tools, such as the LRSRS. LRSRS provides OGC with the means to conduct large-scale searches in an efficient and cost effective manner by developing specialized queries in response to discovery requests.	
SEC		The SEC's Office of FOIA Services routinely works with IT specialists and with SEC components in order to find ways to accommodate the requester community by enhancing search and access capabilities. For example, the Office of FOIA Services is presently coordinating with the SEC's Office of the Secretary to explore ways in which to make available on an ongoing basis the Commission votes on actions filed in Federal Court noted in Section III, Part A. Posting Material. In another instance, despite challenges with the size of the data, FOIA staff is currently working with the SEC's Division of Investment Management to post all Form ADV data obtained from a self-regulatory organization, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority. It is anticipated that this data will updated quarterly or semi-annually.	The SEC's Office of FOIA Services is implementing a public-facing web portal known as the Public Access Link (PAL). This portal will provide efficient and secure communication between requesters and the SEC. The PAL integrates with the SEC's FOIA processing application and tracking system, FOIA Xpress, to facilitate the SEC's disclosure of information. The PAL will allow for, among other things, real time request status updates, the ability to view the original request and submission of supporting documents to requests.	
SSA		We work with our Office of Open Government and our IT Specialists to identify new or better ways to post agency information online. We also work with our Section 508 staff to ensure our website will be legally compliant.	Our agency is working with EPA to transition to FOIAOnline for processing and tracking cases. Once we transition to FOIAOnline, we will have the ability to better track case processing and It provides more management information reporting than is available on our current system.	
USPS		USPS FOIA professionals maintain regular contact with USPS.com and Public Affairs staff to determine the best means for posting agency information online. In addition, FOIA professionals met with a vendor representative to reconfigure the FOIA public access link. The reconfiguration is expected to be completed in Fiscal Year 2017.	USPS is upgrading hardware for the FOIA Tracking System to enable the installation of new software upgrades. The software upgrades will provide enhanced functionality, security and reporting. While not inclusive of all the system enhancements to be made, listed below are some of the enhancements: There is a new user interface. System defined dashboards have been added to the application and are associated to each user role created in the application. Each dashboard is configured to show specific data sets for each role. A quick search tool has been added to the top of most screens. Quick links have been added to the user's work summary for quick access to pending tasks. Multiple instances of responsive documents can be opened at one time.	



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USPS (cont'd)			<p>The application provides the ability to customize the Help drop down with links or documents to reference standard operating procedures, agency specific user manuals, or other websites.</p> <p>The system can be configured to automatically update the estimated delivery date of requests.</p> <p>The system will provide a new configuration option to automatically password protect document deliveries via email. The system will allow for the creation of multiple cost sheets to track request processing costs from various offices independently that can be invoiced separately or grouped into a single invoice. Task reminders will allow for multiple users to receive email notifications of a pending task. An email log has been added to allow for easy access to all email traffic sent from the application.</p> <p>Documents can be sorted then moved to review lists, review log, and request folder in a sorted order.</p> <p>The option to save a 508 compliant pdf will be available. There will be an option to drag and drop files to request correspondence and into document folders. A request can be put on hold while in the "request not perfected" status. The ability to compare review layers to consolidate them into a single document will be available. The application will be compatible with Internet Explorer version 11 and Microsoft Office 2013.</p> <p>USPS Information Catalog Program Office (ICP) and IT professionals provide required support and assistance in conducting electronic records searches. ICP sorts and de-duplicates email records and may provide data transfer services for the exchange of electronic files.</p>	



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Section V -- Steps Taken to Improve Timeliness in Responding to Requests (Req.) and Reducing Backlogs																			
Agency	Simple Track				Agency Backlog Decreased		Percentage of Backlog to # of Req./App. Received in FY 2016				Agency Closed Ten Oldest Req., Appeals (App.) & Consultations (Consults.). If not, # closed in FY 2016						Interim Responses		
	Has a Simple Track?	Score	Avg. No. of Days to Process	% of Req. In Simple Track	Req.	App.	Req. Score	Req. %	App. Score	App. %	Req.	If no, # closed	# closed as "Req. Withdrawn"	App.	If no, # closed	Consults.	If no, # closed	System in Place	% of Backlogged Req. Receiving Interim Response
CIA	Yes		38.72	57%				49%		80%		1/10	0		4/10		1/10		1%
USDA	Yes		6.66	95%				6%		160%		6/10	0		1/10		5/7		72%
DOC	Yes		36.55	68%				14%		29%		N/A	3		3/10		8/10		45%
DOD	Yes		19.46	55%				17%		95%		7/10	0		N/A		5/10		55%
ED	Yes		7.8	42%				16%		40%		4/10	0		6/10		N/A		35%
DOE	Yes		43.97	75%				12%		14%		6/10	0		3/10		6/10		60%
HHS	Yes		27.5	51%				13%		143%		7/10	1		7/10		3/4		10%
DHS	Yes		32.91	54%				14%		2%		N/A	8		3/10		7/10		1-35%
HUD	Yes		30.23	69%				14%		14%		9/10	4		7/10		N/A		39%
DOJ	Yes		29	69%				15%		7%		N/A	0		N/A		N/A		7%
Labor	Yes		20.8	37%				4%		127%		5/10	0		4/10		3/10		0-70%
State	Yes		342	6%				81%		316%		N/A	0		5/10		N/A		4%
DOI	Yes		12	5%				11%		179%		9/10	0		1/10		N/A		13%
Treasury	Yes		11.72	20%				7%		25%		3/10	1		4/10		N/A		20%
DOT	Yes		39.81	80%				26%		41%		7/10	0		8/10		1/2		6%
VA	Yes		21	90%				10%		43%		8/10	0		N/A		N/A		10%
EPA	Yes		18.24	76%				12%		59%		9/10	0		N/A		0/3		70%
EEOC	Yes		23.6	99%				4%		5%		N/A	0		N/A		N/A		100%
FTC	Yes		5.91	59%				<1%		0%		9/10	0		N/A		N/A		66%
NARA	Yes		11.5	98%				6%		161%		N/A	3		3/10		N/A		65%





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Section V -- Steps Taken to Improve Timeliness in Responding to Requests (Req.) and Reducing Backlogs																			
Agency	Simple Track				Agency Backlog Decreased		Percentage of Backlog to # of Req./App. Received in FY 2016				Agency Closed Ten Oldest Req., Appeals (App.) & Consultations (Consults.). If not, # closed in FY 2016						Interim Responses		
	Has a Simple Track?	Score	Avg. No. of Days to Process	% of Req. In Simple Track	Req.	App.	Req. Score	Req. %	App. Score	App. %	Req.	If no, # closed	# closed as "Req. Withdrawn"	App.	If no, # closed	Consults.	If no, # closed	System in Place	% of Backlogged Req. Receiving Interim Response
NLRB	No		32	N/A				5%		0%		N/A	7		N/A		N/A		5%
OPM	Yes		2	72%				1%		73%		8/10	0		N/A		N/A		20%
PBGC	Yes		7.13	49%				0%		0%		N/A	0		N/A		N/A		N/A
SEC	Yes		16.49	99%				<1%		<1%		7/10	2		N/A		N/A		5%
SSA	Yes		28	96%				<1%		8%		N/A	0		N/A		N/A		4-5%
USPS	Yes		12	85%				2%		3%		3/10	0		9/10		N/A		Unable to estimate



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### Section I -- Steps Taken to Apply the Presumption of Openness

Agency	Training				Agency Conducted Outreach with Requester Community	Outreach to Non-FOIA Staff
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training				
		Grade	Estimate			
CIA	DG	DG	90%	DG	DG	
USDA	DG	DG	92%	DG	DG	
DOC	DG	DG	85%	DG	DG	
DOD	DG	DG	94%	DG	DG	
ED	DG	DG	95%	DG	DG	
DOE	DG	DG	85%	Y	DG	
HHS	DG	DG	90%	DG	DG	
DHS	DG	DG	94%	DG	DG	
HUD	DG	LG	80%	DG	DG	
DOJ	DG	DG	93%	DG	DG	
Labor	DG	DG	90%	DG	DG	
State	DG	Y	70%	DG	DG	
DOI	DG	DG	>80%	DG	DG	
Treasury	DG	DG	100%	DG	DG	
DOT	DG	DG	100%	Y	DG	
VA	DG	DG	90%	Y	DG	
EPA	DG	DG	100%	DG	DG	
EEOC	DG	DG	100%	DG	DG	



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### Section I -- Steps Taken to Apply the Presumption of Openness

Agency	Training			Agency Conducted Outreach with Requester Community	Outreach to Non-FOIA Staff
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training			
		Grade	Estimate		
FTC	DG	R	30%	Y	DG
NARA	DG	LG	80%	DG	DG
NLRB	DG	DG	100%	DG	DG
OPM	DG	DG	100%	DG	DG
PBGC	DG	DG	100%	DG	DG
SEC	DG	DG	100%	DG	DG
SSA	DG	DG	95%	DG	DG
USPS	DG	DG	97%	R	DG



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**Section II -- Steps Taken to Ensure that Agency Has an Effective System in Place for Responding to Requests (Req.)**

Agency	Requests for Expedited Processing		Agency conducted self-assessment of FOIA program	FOIA Reference Guide	
	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide
CIA	DG	1.63	We use a number of methods to continually assess and improve our FOIA program. Based on our our annual report data, we established an internal strategic objective of striving to close a greater percentage of "simple track" requests within 20 days. We hold weekly production meetings to identify efficiencies in our processes and opportunities for greater customer outreach. Each supervisor within our FOIA office has access to a workflow tracking tool that updates on a daily basis providing near real-time information on the status of all open FOIA cases.	DG	<a href="http://www.foia.cia.gov//foia_request">http://www.foia.cia.gov//foia_request</a>
USDA	DG	1	<p>Yes. The FS-WO began revising its internal operating procedures and is gradually making changes to its workflow as issues are identified and resources made available. Additionally, each analyst has been assigned a task outside of processing to ensure the administration of FOIA in the FS-WO continuously improves. For example, one analyst was assigned to monitor the backlog and to make recommendations on a routine basis for reduction. Another analyst was assigned to address compliance of subsection (a)(2) and oversee the posting of records.</p> <p>NRCS also did an assessment of its program. As such, it began reviewing the structure of the FOIA response process, agency policy, and the reporting metrics available in USDA's enterprise wide tracking system to identify trends and processing issues. Lessons learned from this assessment will be compiled this reporting period along with recommendations for improvement.</p> <p>FNCS deployed its Change Initiative aimed at realigning FOIA responsibilities, reducing the backlog, and improving processing times. The first phase of this initiative ensured FOIA team members were aware of their role and responsibilities. The second phase emphasized training on the roles and responsibilities. The final result was the processing of 67 more FOIAs than the prior fiscal year, a 36% reduction in backlog for initial FOIAs, a 17% reduction in the average processing times, and a 47% increase in the number of FOIAs processed within the statutory timeframe.</p> <p>In Fiscal Year 2015, APHIS' requested a Business Process Improvement (BPI) review by APHIS' Office of Planning and Program Development. The BPI resulted in a total of 26 recommendations implemented during this</p>	DG	<a href="https://www.dm.usda.gov/foia/requestors.htm">https://www.dm.usda.gov/foia/requestors.htm</a>



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**Section II -- Steps Taken to Ensure that Agency Has an Effective System in Place for Responding to Requests (Req.)**

Agency	Requests for Expedited Processing		Agency conducted self-assessment of FOIA program	FOIA Reference Guide	
	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide
USDA (cont'd)			reporting period. These recommendations included increased communication between APHIS's program offices and the requester community, increased training requirements for APHIS' FOIA professionals, general FOIA awareness training for all APHIS employees, a reorganization of teams within APHIS' FOIA office, and utilization of more technology to streamline processes and reduce FOIA response time. The final result was the expansion of the intake team, creation of an internal standard operating procedure, coordination of 99 FOIAs between APHIS' FOIA and program offices, implementation of a 24 hours training requirement for APHIS' FOIA processors and a 16 hours training for APHIS FOIA liaisons, and finally, circulation of an email from APHIS' Administrator regarding the importance of timely processing FOIAs.		
DOC	DG	5.44	DOC did not conduct a comprehensive self-assessment of its FOIA program during this reporting period. Nonetheless, DOC did use reviews of Annual Report data to identify trends that may point to a need to streamline and improve its processes to increase the timeliness of its responses. In particular, DOC noted that in Fiscal Year 2015, the average for processing requests in the simple track exceeded the statutory processing time limit by 25 days. An analysis of Annual Report data along with discussions with DOC FOIA professionals revealed that in many cases, requests were improperly placed in the simple track. DOC made adjustments to its processes, which resulted in the processing time for simple requests to be reduced on average nine days per request during Fiscal Year 2016. The process adjustments also led to a slight decrease in the average processing time for complex requests from Fiscal Year 2015 to Fiscal Year 2016. The same review of Annual Report data helped DOC make process improvements that resulted in the agency closing all of its ten oldest requests during Fiscal Year 2016, as well as reducing the DOC backlog by 20% from the beginning to the end of the fiscal year. Improvements included conducting periodic meetings and assessments of DOC FOIA programs and identifying areas of concern that may lead to processing delays for requests. Meetings also usually included discussions of individual cases, case load, work flow, and suggestions for process improvements.	DG	<a href="http://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/FOIA/Default.html">http://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/FOIA/Default.html</a>



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**Section II -- Steps Taken to Ensure that Agency Has an Effective System in Place for Responding to Requests (Req.)**

Agency	Requests for Expedited Processing		Agency conducted self-assessment of FOIA program	FOIA Reference Guide	
	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide

DOD	DG	7.9	<p>Most DoD Components report conducting some form of self-assessment of their FOIA programs. The popular methods are case or case tracking software assessments and continuous process improvement (CPI) style initiatives where staff members are encouraged to suggest and implement improvements and streamlining opportunities. For instance:</p> <p>DIA conducted a quality review of all the open cases at the start of the year to ensure that all cases were moved to the right processing step and it also updated its internal standard operating procedures. It also anticipated completing a routine Office of the Inspector General inspection in December. NSA is actively in a formal CPI cycle while TRANSCOM revamped its entire program based on similar activities. TRANSCOM is formalizing and standardizing across their subcomponents, resulting in reductions in average response times. Army modified its case management system, FACTS to improve administrative process across the entire Army and is working to incorporate subcomponent suggestions to aid with milestone and performance measure improvements. Air Force continues to focus on its subcomponents which fail to reach required backlog reductions and also monitors monthly progress. DSS experienced staff turnover this year but still executed assessments of the tracking management system to find better ways of improving data capture for work flow simplification. It is also conducting market analysis in consideration of a full upgrade to improve its FOIA case management across the areas of routine requests, consultations, appeals and litigation. NRO transitioned to a new case management system and reviewed its entire workflow system as part of the shift. It is expecting an update to the software which will facilitate progress monitoring. As a result of the action around obtaining the new system, it reviewed internal directives and instructions and eliminated two. The Navy conducted site visits with some of its subcomponents while SOCOM reviewed workflows and case management efficiencies. DISA also executed</p>	DG	<a href="http://open.defense.gov/Transparency/FOIA/FOIA-Handbook/">http://open.defense.gov/Transparency/FOIA/FOIA-Handbook/</a>
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DOD (cont'd)			a formal review resulting in development of a Strategic Plan for program improvement. The DoD IG runs regular metric comparisons of weekly progress plotted against previous year performance. These reports are fully reported through the chain of command. AFRICOM ran a processing procedure review resulting in a proposal to reorganize the IDA structure and facilitate more uniform and timely responses. DCAA updated its program instruction so that centralization would streamline processing procedures resulting in a consistent product. DFAS used the Management Internal Control Program (MICP) to formulate process maps and enable accurate testing of its key processes, associated risks and control objectives. It is using the MICP testing cycle for the processes executed daily, weekly and monthly.		
ED	R	12.48	During this reporting period, ED implemented self-assessments through various measures. ED reviewed and updated our FOIA standard operating procedures. A Quality Control (QC) Plan was implemented. The focus of the QC Plan was to identify deficiencies within case processing for Fiscal Year 2015 and adherence to FOIA processing requirements of ED's FOIA program. Through regular metrics and dashboards, the FOIA maintained regular interaction with ED Senior Officials.	DG	<a href="https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/foia/foiatoc.html?src=ft">https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/foia/foiatoc.html?src=ft</a>
DOE	DG	9.37	The DOE continues to look for ways to improve the FOIA process. For example, the FOIA Office analyzed how records are searched and determined the most appropriate keywords and phrases that produce better results. This review of the records search process led to improved efficiency and timeliness. Under new leadership, the SPR FOIA Office has dedicated significant time to analyzing the process. Improvements have included posting documents into Microsoft SharePoint for the review and concurrence by multiple individuals simultaneously on the release of information and, when electronic data is requested, requesters receive the information via email instead of digital media (e.g., compact discs). These changes have reduced the time it takes to get information to requestors.  An internal review by the Office of Scientific and Technical Information's (OSTI) FOIA program demonstrated that their processes and procedures ensure the timely delivery of responsive documents to the FOIA requester	DG	<a href="https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/maprod/documents/Handbook.pdf">https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/maprod/documents/Handbook.pdf</a>



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DOE (cont'd)			within the 20-day requirement. The primary areas that impede OSTI's delay of responsive documents are requests for documents which are classified and unclassified sensitive. These documents require external consultation/coordination with HQ, impacting the delivery of responsive documents.		
HHS	DG	7.74	<p>The OS FOIA Officer continued to conduct meetings during 2016 with Departmental FOIA Directors to solicit opinions, encourage and engage the OpDivs' FOIA directors as a community, and foster discussion of common operational challenges and possible solutions or policy guidance. The major goal of our 2016 meetings was to draft updated departmental FOIA regulations; these efforts resulted in revised and updated HHS FOIA regulations which were published on October 28, 2016 and took effect on November 28, 2016. ACF studied the annual report data for both ACF and other HHS components to determine what additional resources were required to improve the rate of ACF's FOIA responses. ACL performs ongoing self-assessments, primarily to review quarterly and annual report data and to update its processing procedures. CDC used the following self-assessment tools: analyzing the CDC FOIA analysts' workflow and performance metrics; reviewing data on program office response time to requests for documents; and, reviewing annual FOIA report data. CMS has implemented new active workflow management weekly and monthly reports to senior leadership to self-assess the FOIA program on an ongoing basis. CMS also continues to review and update standard processing procedures to make the best use of the agency resources available to process requests. Two specific examples are:</p> <p>1) the development of new guidelines for staff entering FOIA requests into CMS' electronic tracking and processing system to improve consistency, which has greatly enhanced the ability to search for requests and identify similar requests and resulted in more efficient records processing and release; and 2) the development of a guidance manual for use by the ten CMS Regional Offices, which clarifies requirements and supports streamlined operations and collaboration between state survey agencies and the CMS Central FOIA Office necessary to process the high volume of facility survey and certification FOIA requests CMS receives annually.</p>	DG	<a href="https://www.hhs.gov/foia">https://www.hhs.gov/foia</a>





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HHS (cont'd)			<p>HRSA's FOIA Office utilizes the quarterly report and some features in the FOIA SWIFT program (its case tracking system) as benchmarks which are helpful for measuring HRSA's current performance against its past performance. The IHS FOIA staff conducted a review of its FOIA processes (tracking, processing times, and procedures) and identified several areas for improvement. As a result of this review, IHS developed an Access database that will assist the FOIA program in streamlining its tracking and reporting. A more detailed description of the improvements implemented by IHS is provided in response to Question 8 of this Section.</p> <p>The NIH FOIA Officer assessed the FOIA program regularly, using a variety of methods, to assess the following: weekly trends in the number of pending and backlogged requests and incoming requests; monthly reviews of backlogged requests to identify FOIA offices with increasing numbers; and post-audits of all closed requests to ensure compliance with the FOIA, and the HHS FOIA Regulations and consistency across the NIH. OIG conducted a full review of all open FOIA requests monthly, to ensure that FOIA professionals are apprised and aware of the current status of open FOIA requests. SAMHSA tracked its processing workflow every week, created spreadsheets to track cases in detail, and compared annual report data from previous years to the current year.</p>		
DHS	0	11.5	<p>In FY 2015 through FY 2017, OGIS assessed the DHS Privacy Office, USCG, FEMA, USSS, CBP, TSA, and ICE regarding their FOIA policies, procedures, and compliance. These Components have used the reports to conduct self-assessments and have implemented the recommendations in many instances. The DHS Privacy Office conducted multiple self-assessments of its FOIA program and as a result took the following steps to ensure that the FOIA program at the Department operates more efficiently:</p>	DG	<a href="https://www.dhs.gov/freedom-information-act-foia">https://www.dhs.gov/freedom-information-act-foia</a>



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DHS (cont'd)			<p>Detailed an individual to the DHS Privacy Office who reviewed the processes and procedures and provided suggested process improvements, including the implementation of concrete performance metrics and deliverables for FY 2017 Performance Plans for FOIA staff; revising the DHS Privacy Office FOIA Standard Operating Procedure to reflect the updated processing procedures; and updating the template letters.</p> <p>Realigned the DHS Privacy Office into the following five concrete lines of business, to operate as a policy office: FOIA Disclosure, FOIA Policy and Training, FOIA Compliance and Oversight, FOIA Appeals and Litigation, and FOIA Technology.</p> <p>ICE used a series of reporting mechanisms to focus its resources on closing its oldest cases and set higher production standards for its employees in their performance work plans D33to address an increase in cases received and to ensure production requirements are met. D33</p> <p>CBP used daily, weekly, and monthly reports to track efficiency of its program, ensure backlogged cases were addressed, and determine where the delays existed in program offices responsible for providing records.</p> <p>FEMA conducted a self-assessment following the OGIS review and is addressing the recommendations through the assistance of contractor support. FEMA also developed internal standard operating procedures for processing cases in the COTS web application.</p> <p>I&amp;A revised its processes regarding how it conducts and documents searches, triages requests, and allocates its resources for litigation, incoming requests, and the backlog.</p> <p>S&amp;T conducted self-assessments as follows: monitored workflows and used internal tracking sheets; reviewed quarterly data of FOIA requests; revised standard operating procedures and implemented best practices to process FOIA requests.</p>		



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DHS (cont'd)			<p>TSA reviewed its program as part of OGIS's compliance review and reviewed its processes as part of a Lean Six Sigma review, and implemented suggested recommendations as appropriate; produced a variety of weekly and monthly reports, tracking both team and individual metrics and production, as well as backlog and ten-oldest-cases status; established new performance goals in the second quarter focusing on case closings and pages reviewed. USCG OGC audited the FOIA program and determined a need for a semi-annual report to leadership regarding all units that process FOIA requests, and identified ways to streamline the legal review process. OIG conducted a self-assessment of its FOIA program using the number of litigations, number of pending FOIA requests, and number of incoming FOIA requests to support the need to hire additional staff to assist with the increasing and demanding workload.</p> <p>USCIS FOIA used metrics reported daily, weekly, and monthly to track the progress in its major processes to achieve significant mission goals in such areas as backlog of requests, backlog of appeals, average processing times, average number of cases closed per processor, average days to print and mail out final responses on either paper or CD, and total number of FOIA requests pending for more than 365 days. The status of each metric was assessed and analyzed by senior FOIA managers who in turn investigated causes for any downward trends or missed goals. Findings were reported to the USCIS Chief FOIA Officer with actions recommended to improve efficiencies and address identified areas for process improvements. FOIA managers closely reviewed and discussed the FOIA Annual Report, the DHS Monthly FOIA Report, and the monthly USCIS FOIA Management Analysis Report for data points indicating areas to be investigated further for cause and effect analysis, potential targets for continued improvement, and the need for reallocation of resources to address areas of immediate concern.</p>		



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HUD	DG	1	No, but The Department continuously self-assesses the FOIA process. For each FOIA request received, FOIA team members work with each other throughout the life of the request to ensure timely processing, a presumption of openness, and adherence with the FOIA and agency regulations. In addition, both the FOIA Branch and Office of General Counsel have a system of redundancy in place so that if a team member is taken away from the assignment, another person can fill in with relative ease.	DG	<a href="https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=FOIA_REF_GUIDE.pdf">https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=FOIA_REF_GUIDE.pdf</a>
DOJ	DG	7.58	<p>Many components in the Department have engaged in self-assessment efforts to improve their FOIA processing procedures. In 2014, OIP launched a Component Improvement Initiative to conduct an in-depth review of the Department's FOIA processes. As part of this initiative, every year OIP reviews components' FOIA data and provides them with direct feedback. Now entering its fourth year, an outgrowth of the initiative is the current development of a self-assessment toolkit, which was also announced in the Department's Open Government Plan 4.0. The toolkit will be a resource for all agencies to conduct their own comprehensive self-assessments. [...]</p> <p>Many of the Department's components also took advantage of the self-assessment process during the reporting year to improve their FOIA processes. Components that engaged in a self-assessment used Annual and Quarterly FOIA Report data, as well as a review of workflows and current policies and procedures as evaluative tools. For example, ATF had success by regularly reviewing data from the prior month to establish goals for the upcoming month. As a result of this strategy, ATF was able to significantly reduce its backlog by 28%. The Antitrust Division had success focusing on workflow management by grouping requests on topics together and assigning them to designated FOIA professionals. In addition to working on the toolkit mentioned above, OIP, which processes requests for the Department's Senior Leadership Offices, instituted some significant workflow changes based on the results of its own self-assessment. For years OIP processed requests from "cradle to grave," meaning the assigned FOIA professional would handle all aspects of the processing during the entire life of the request. After the self-assessment, OIP determined that the "cradle to grave"</p>	DG	<a href="https://www.justice.gov/oip/department-justice-freedom-information-act-reference-guide">https://www.justice.gov/oip/department-justice-freedom-information-act-reference-guide</a>



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DOJ (cont'd)			<p>approach, while certainly having some benefits, was not the most efficient means to handle the continuously increasing volume of requests received. Instead, OIP created three distinct teams that would handle specific aspects of FOIA request processing. The establishment of the three teams paid immediate dividends. Over the course of the first seven months of FY 2016 (October through April), OIP processed 980 requests and reduced its backlog by 107 requests. In the remaining five months of the fiscal year, OIP processed 1,118 requests and reduced its backlog by 141 requests. These successes have continued into the first quarter of FY 2017, with OIP having already processed the most requests ever during the first quarter of a fiscal year.</p>		
Labor	R	48.2	<p>DOL used the following methods to assess its FOIA programs:</p> <p><b>FOIA Administrative Agency Reviews.</b> The purpose of the FOIA administrative reviews conducted by the Office of Information Services is to (1) determine best practices related to DOL's FOIA administrative process and (2) offer agency components the opportunity to discuss any issues related to their agency's implementation of FOIA. As part of these reviews, OIS staff meets with the specific agency's FOIA coordinators and professional staff to obtain information regarding their FOIA practices. The agency components are provided, in advance, with a list of topics that may be discussed during the review. When applicable, OIS shares any identified best practices or lessons learned during the standing quarterly FOIA Coordinator meetings.</p> <p><b>Internal Agency Self-Assessments.</b> Many components conducted internal agency specific self-assessments in 2016. OFCCP engaged in a Six Sigma Continuous Project Improvement program to map and streamline its work flow. MSHA reviews FOIA requests weekly and updates a variety of spreadsheets which give a snapshot of its FOIA program at that particular moment in time. Most components regularly review its annual report data (quarterly) and update their processing procedures as needed.</p>	DG	<a href="https://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/guide6.htm">https://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/guide6.htm</a>



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State	DG	10.00	The Department conducted several self-assessment exercises during this reporting period, some of which are still underway. There are two studies involving the FOIA process currently underway: one focusing on changing the future processing FOIA requests so that new technology can be acquired to better respond to requests and another to review the current staffing structure of IPS including how to structure the FOIA offices within IPS to support an improved process. IPS management conducted reviews of existing processes to identify short and long term solutions; the focus has been on improving the FOIA experience at the Department so that responses are provided in a more timely manner and more information is posted to the FOIA website. Part of these efforts have included improving communication and coordination among offices in the Department working to process FOIA requests; these efforts have been successful to date in that communication is improving.	DG	<a href="https://www.foia.state.gov/Request/Guide.aspx">https://www.foia.state.gov/Request/Guide.aspx</a>
DOI	DG	7	Yes. The Departmental FOIA Policy Staff regularly conduct self-assessments of the Department's FOIA program, by reviewing Annual Report data, conducting audits of each bureau at least bi-annually, and reviewing and updating processing procedures, including its FOIA regulations.	DG	<a href="https://www.doi.gov/foia/news/guidance/">https://www.doi.gov/foia/news/guidance/</a>
Treasury	DG	5	During the reporting period, Treasury participated in an OGIS-facilitated self-assessment. The self-assessment focused on 23 compliance areas and was targeted to identify potential areas of improvement. To complete this assessment, OGIS and Treasury distributed a survey to all Treasury FOIA staff. Treasury used the information obtained from the survey to conduct targeted training and to develop the agenda for Treasury's FOIA summit. For example, the survey revealed discrepancies in FOIA staff understanding and knowledge of the FOIA/Privacy Act System of Records Notice, and the requirement to notify requesters of OGIS' mediation services. To mitigate this, Treasury distributed updated response letter templates and initiated an update to Treasury's FOIA/Privacy Act System of Records Notice.	DG	<a href="http://www.treasury.gov/foia">www.treasury.gov/foia</a>



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DOT	DG	3.97	<p>PHMSA regularly self-assesses its FOIA program, which includes evaluating the methods and processes used and areas for improvement. A 2015-2016 initiative for the FOIA program included the evaluation of template language for requester correspondence and the creation of a template library. PHMSA finalized the first version of the template library in 2016. The topic of template letters has been discussed at monthly DOT-wide FOIA meetings, and several other components extensively use template letters. We are incorporating template letter samples into our FOIA Reference Library on DOT's FOIA SharePoint site to facilitate sharing across the components.</p> <p>A 2016/2017 PHMSA initiative included the evaluation of its FOIA program processes so that standard operating procedures (SOP) can be identified and documented. PHMSA aims to complete the FOIA SOPs in 2017. This topic was discussed at a monthly DOT-wide FOIA meeting, and we are exploring expanding this initiative to all components.</p> <p>Every year, FHWA conducts a self-assessment of its FOIA program by reviewing current annual report data and comparing the data with information from prior years. Based on the review of its data, the FHWA FOIA Office sets goals for improving its effectiveness in targeted areas.</p> <p>MARAD performed a review of its FOIA activities using the reporting capability built into its FOIA processing software. The MARAD FOIA Office also regularly meets to go over policy and procedures to identify areas that can be improved.</p>	DG	<a href="https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/FOIA%20Reference%20Guide%20%28long%29%20revised.pdf">https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/FOIA%20Reference%20Guide%20%28long%29%20revised.pdf</a>
VA	R	37.37	No	DG	<a href="http://www.oprm.va.gov/foia/">http://www.oprm.va.gov/foia/</a>
EPA	DG	4.74	<p>Yes, EPA conducted a self-assessment of the FOIA Program. Multiple data sources were used including: 1) document review of reports, policies and procedures, FOIA Lean outputs, and previous evaluations; 2) internal and external interviews; and 3) an online survey. A copy of the assessment can be located at: <a href="https://www.epa.gov/foia/evaluation-epas-foia-program">https://www.epa.gov/foia/evaluation-epas-foia-program</a></p>	DG	<a href="https://www.epa.gov/foia/foia-request-process">https://www.epa.gov/foia/foia-request-process</a>
EEOC	DG	6	<p>Yes, the EEOC reviewed and updated processing procedures at Headquarters to improve workflow.</p>	DG	<a href="https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/foia/handbook.cfm">https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/foia/handbook.cfm</a>



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FTC	DG	4	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.	DG	<a href="https://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/foia/foia-request">https://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/foia/foia-request</a>
NARA	DG	2.06	Yes. The Office of General Counsel conducted an assessment of the Operational FOIA and Appeals programs in their office, which included workflow analysis, triage of open cases, and case assignment based on specific FOIA types (simple or complex). This resulted in an improvement of response times for all cases.	DG	<a href="https://www.archives.gov/foia/foia-guide.html">https://www.archives.gov/foia/foia-guide.html</a>
NLRB	Y	11	Currently, the FOIA Branch uses a proprietary FOIA casehandling system. In spring 2016, the FOIA Branch and the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) staff began holding bi-weekly meetings on identifying and addressing the technical needs of the FOIA Branch in processing FOIA cases. The FOIA Branch prepared a list of technical needs that were necessary to make electronic FOIA casehandling more efficient. OCIO personnel has now implemented a number of enhancements, including automatic folder creation for electronically-filed FOIA requests, automatic acknowledgement communications to requesters that e-filed requests, and a more efficient login process for end users. In addition, the FOIA Staff developed a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual to achieve greater efficiency and consistency in the overall casehandling, and continues to discuss and update written policies for redaction of specific information. As a result, the FOIA Branch was able to move to a fully electronic casehandling process for FOIA requests.	DG	<a href="https://www.nlr.gov/news-outreach/foia/foia-reference-guide">https://www.nlr.gov/news-outreach/foia/foia-reference-guide</a>





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OPM	DG	1	Yes. The FOIA Processing Service Team conducts self- assessments of its processes, policies and backlog issues continuously throughout the year. Input from our external and internal customers is assessed and revisions are made to respond to our customers in order to maintain customer service excellence. Our processes are examined and revised to make sure that the outcomes are timely and that we are able to provide an accurate accounting of our FOIA activities at the end of the fiscal year. We updated our present tracking system to have a smoother process for our hybrid cybersecurity FOIA/Privacy Act requests. We have worked with some of the program offices to streamline their FOIA processes and to make sure that their requests are properly entered and closed-out. In reviewing our processes, it was determined that more notification was required to remind the FOIA POCs and emphasize the need for closing-out of backlog and pending requests. We made revisions to our notification system and work closely with program offices to strategize on the processing of complex requests.	DG	<a href="https://www.opm.gov/information-management/freedom-of-information-act/#url=Reference-Guides">https://www.opm.gov/information-management/freedom-of-information-act/#url=Reference-Guides</a>
PBGC	DG	4.56	Yes. In the beginning of the Fiscal Year, the Division met to discuss resolutions for more efficient FOIA processing in Fiscal Year 2016. This workshop focused on meeting the following three goals: 1) Time management - To decrease processing times; 2) Accuracy - To reduce the number of package exchanges between the reviewer and the analyst; and 3) Forethought in processing - To foster effective communication by being proactive, anticipating surprises or challenges, and innovating to meet those challenges.	DG	<a href="http://www.pbgc.gov/about/pg/footer/foia.html">http://www.pbgc.gov/about/pg/footer/foia.html</a>
SEC	DG	5.38	The Office of FOIA Services generated monthly reports that included statistical analyses, which provided the ability to compare and contrast with prior year reporting.	DG	<a href="https://www.sec.gov/Article/foia-reference-guide.html">https://www.sec.gov/Article/foia-reference-guide.html</a>
SSA	N/A	N/A	During a review of the Annual Report data and internal reports, we discovered a processing issue that was preventing some cases from closing, causing our response times to increase. We were able to correct this problem so that cases are now closing properly.	DG	<a href="https://www.ssa.gov/foia/reques">https://www.ssa.gov/foia/reques</a>



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Agency	Requests for Expedited Processing		Agency conducted self-assessment of FOIA program	FOIA Reference Guide	
	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide
USPS	DG	4	<p>The Privacy and Records Office conducted a nationwide survey directed to FOIA Coordinators at Headquarters, Area and District offices using an online survey tool. The survey gathered information to determine what tools, information and resources are needed that will assist them with their FOIA processing duties. The results of the survey were shared with the Chief FOIA Officer and the Chief Privacy Officer.</p> <p>The Chief FOIA Officer is provided a weekly status report on the number of requests received each week, the number of requests closed each week, the number of pending requests, and the number of backlogged requests. This weekly assessment helps to identify any spikes or trends in FOIA activity.</p> <p>USPS reviewed and revised its regulations concerning FOIA compliance contained in 39, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), section 265. As part of this undertaking, USPS reviewed "Updated FOIA Regulation Template and Guidance" posted by the Office of Information Policy, benchmarked against other Federal agency FOIA regulations, incorporated new statutory requirements to ensure compliance with FOIA amendments, and reviewed online resources concerning FOIA best practices (e.g., OIP, OGIS, etc.).</p> <p>USPS began the review and updating of USPS Handbook AS-353, Guide to Privacy, the Freedom of Information Act, and Records Management, which contains policies and procedures governing the release of Postal Service records under the FOIA. The Handbook supplements USPS FOIA regulations contained in 39, CFR, section 265, and includes a chapter that contains information on how to process a FOIA request and a FOIA processing checklist for use by records custodian. The update to the Handbook is expected to be completed and published in Fiscal Year 2017.</p> <p>During this reporting period, USPS FOIA professionals began a review of its internal FOIA website, which includes FOIA resources and training opportunities, FOIA contact information and sample letters. Updates are made on a continuing basis throughout the year.</p> <p>The Postal Inspection Service conducted a review of its procedures for requesting records searches and timelines for response, and the manner in which first-party requests are recorded in the FOIA Tracking system.</p>	DG	<a href="http://about.usps.com/handbooks/as353/as353c4_002.htm">http://about.usps.com/handbooks/as353/as353c4_002.htm</a>



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Section III -- Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures (PD)					
Agency	Process for Identifying Frequently Requested Records	System in Place to Identify Other Records for PD	Challenges to Posting Material Online	Publicized Important PDs	Other Steps Taken to Increase PDs
CIA	It is CIA's intention to post online all records released under our FOIA program. We do give priority to items that, per our FOIA logs, are frequently requested. In Fiscal Year 2017, we will be pursuing a release to one is a release to all policy by responding to all public access requesters through the electronic reading room on our public website.	DG	No	DG	In Fiscal Year 2017, 13 million pages of records processed by the 25-year automatic declassification program will be posted to the electronic reading room on our public website. This material was previously only available on stand-alone computer systems located at NARA. The CIA makes every effort to increase the number of records provided to the public at large.
USDA	USDA continues to employ varying methods for identifying frequently requested records. The most common among those methods continues to be routine monitoring of the FOIA logs in the component's tracking database.	DG	Yes	DG	Yes. Shortly after the passage of the 2016 FOIA Amendments, the Department issued guidance regarding the subsection (a)(2) requirements. This guidance (excerpts shown below) provides a deep dive on the categories of information covered by subsection (a)(2), techniques for identifying proactive disclosures, and tips for mastering the FOIA Annual Report's new (a)(2) requirements.
DOC	DOC uses FOIAonline, its FOIA tracking web-based system, to both identify and make available records for proactive disclosure. The ways in which FOIA professionals use the system to assist them include: reviewing responses to requests to determine if material disclosed may be of use to other requesters and discussing how to make responsive records available through the publicly available FOIAonline system. Through the FOIAonline system, individuals can access posted FOIA requests and view agency responses to submitted requests. Those responses include disclosed responsive records. Periodic reviews of all incoming requests are also conducted and when necessary, management is notified of materials that are of significant interest to the public, frequent requesters, as well as frequently requested material. This effort not only helps to improve awareness of FOIA responsibilities, it also helps promote DOC's obligation to proactively disclose frequently-requested material.  Additionally, FOIA professionals keep track of the records that have been frequently requested. Once a previously-released record has been requested a total of three or more times, a FOIA Officer works collaboratively with the agency office responsible for posting the frequently requested material to ensure that a copy of the properly FOIA-processed record is posted in a timely manner.	DG	Yes	DG	DOC FOIA Officers regularly discuss this issue with their management and program staff and encourage proactive disclosures of records in an effort to widely disseminate information of public interest and in pursuit of its openness policy. DOC has not engaged FOIA requesters regarding proactive disclosures, but does watch trends in requests to help determine those records that should be proactively disclosed. Furthermore, absent a strong business need or privacy concern, each FOIA disclosure by DOC is made publicly available without the need for a case-by-case determination of public interest. This has significantly decreased repeat FOIA request submissions for some BOUs, and improved requester awareness of activities by DOC FOIA professionals. DOC also looks for other innovative ways to proactively provide information to the public. As an example, NIST, collaborated with PubMed (see <a href="https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/funder/nist/">https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/funder/nist/</a> ) to increase public access to journal articles prepared by NIST researchers and grantees.



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DOD	Frequently requested records are easily identified at some DoD Components because case tracking systems or small staffs recognize requests and flag them for posting. Other components report not having frequently requested records or as in the case of DoD IG, already posting nearly all the requests on their website which negates the need to identify records as frequently requested in order to post them. Some components such as DSS, DFAS and JPRA report that multiple requests for the same records were not received since the vast majority of the requests fall into privacy information concerning the requester. However, most components report some level of FOIA log review or request trend analysis to pinpoint items of high public interest. These items may be subject to posting as frequently requested items.	LG	Yes	DG	NORTHCOM is using web analytics to determine which records are viewed in its FOIA reading room and how many visits for each record, while NRO meets with its agency historians and public affairs staff to gauge records that are of most interest. NRO's effort is a long-term one in determining which programs and topics may be good candidates for declassification efforts across the subcomponents and other agencies. It also engaged its requesters in a web survey and inquired about what type of information or topics its requesters would like to see. DFAS posted Retired Pay Statistics at the following link: <a href="https://www.dfas.mil/foia/foiareadingroom.html">https://www.dfas.mil/foia/foiareadingroom.html</a> . Additionally, DCAA continued other steps to increase proactive disclosures through its Field Liaison Advisors who work with acquisition, contract administration, and contract audit personnel to coordinate audit processes and provide other valuable audit assistance. It also focuses on assisting small businesses with training and information to help them navigate the audit process. Those presentations and guidebooks are posted on its public website at <a href="http://www.dcaa.mil/audit_process_overview.html">http://www.dcaa.mil/audit_process_overview.html</a> .
ED	ED's FSC collaborates internally with program offices across the Department as an ongoing effort to identify records for proactive disclosure. This is an effort in the Department's FSC, which, at times, requires an electronic search of the case management tracking system to identify frequently requested records. Additionally, the FOIA Coordinators in each program office are tasked with monitoring their incoming requests to identify cases that have reached the "rule of three." Also, ED's FSC in partnering with the OGC FOIA Attorneys continues to communicate to program offices to follow the "rule of three" to identify categories of records that have been frequently requested or for which there is an anticipated high public interest.	DG	Yes	DG	ED has begun to use web analytics as a way to assess the effectiveness of our website and to better understand what is of interest to our visitors.
DOE	The Department reviews a list of all FOIA requests received each week to determine what has been requested. The FOIA Office also conducts key word searches in the FOIA database to identify subjects of requests that have been requested multiple times. If documents are identified, they are posted to the FOIA webpage.	DG	No	DG	None.



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HHS	HHS continues to employ a number of ways to identify records for online public disclosure. HHS OpDivs use the established threshold of three requests for the same information to identify records of substantial public interest, either by reviewing FOIA logs, manually tracking FOIA requests or from identifying requests for the same records from an electronic tracking system. In addition, information is gathered from program areas and offices about significant policy documents that may be candidates for proactive disclosure, and public affairs and communications staff provide input and suggestions for records they believe should be proactively disclosed to the public.	DG	Yes	DG	Some examples include: ACF uses Google Analytics to analyze the ACF websites' popular resources and landing pages, frequently searched key words, and traffic types; including referral traffic. ACF analyzes trends and works proactively to meet the needs of our diverse users by highlighting and providing appropriate content. CMS receives a high volume for FOIA requests for data and CMS is continually communicating with requesters to identify ways to proactively post the most highly sought after and useful data. CMS also monitors high-interest issues to proactively release information. The FDA discusses proactive disclosure at FOIA training sessions and monthly FOIA Council meetings (the FOIA Council is a working group, comprised of FOIA staff from all agency components). In addition, FDA FOIA professionals work with FDA's Office of Media Affairs and other Public Affairs staff within the FDA components to ensure that records related to issues of significant public interest are being proactively posted, as appropriate. NIH web teams use data from user surveys, downloads, and views to identify material for proactive disclosure.
DHS	DHS and all of its Components follow the guidance set forth in a policy memorandum from December 2010, titled DHS FOIA Office Procedures and Standards for Effectively Implementing Section (a)(2)(D) of the FOIA "Frequently Requested Documents" Procedures, which outlines the process for determining when and how to disclose frequently requested documents. [see report for various methods of identifying frequently requested.	DG	Yes	DG	The Department remains committed to increasing proactive disclosures as mentioned throughout the report, and uses its FOIA requester outreach activities to solicit feedback regarding the content of its websites and reminds requesters of the wealth of records and data available on the websites.
HUD	HUD monitors its FOIA logs regularly and identifies material to be posted to its website. A comprehensive list of documents and materials have been compiled and posted, and are updated and reviewed quarterly.	DG	No	DG	The posted material is reviewed quarterly to ensure that the websites are functional and the materials are current and available for viewing.



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DOJ	The Department's components use different methods for identifying "frequently requested" records including: monitoring for such records as part of their ongoing case management process, conducting periodic reviews of FOIA logs, and holding monthly meetings that include not only FOIA professionals but other interested stake holders like IT and Communications personnel.	DG	Yes	DG	The Department has worked extensively on a "Release to One is a Release to All" policy presumption. The work began with a 6-month pilot program with seven volunteer Federal agencies to assess the viability of a policy that would direct agencies to proactively post online their FOIA responses. This concept would ensure that all citizens—not just those making a request—have access to information released under FOIA. Over the course of the Pilot, DOJ worked with participating agencies to capture metrics on the time and resources associated with implementing this policy, as well as any impacts on interested stakeholders. In June 2016, in conjunction with the signing the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016, OIP briefed the newly established Chief FOIA Officers Council on the lessons learned from the DOJ Pilot program and examined the issues critical to such a policy, including assessing the impact on investigative journalism efforts, as well as how best to address technological and resource challenges. The Department published a draft policy that reflected considerations from both the lessons learned from the DOJ Pilot and all of the issues discussed at the Chief FOIA Officers Council, including certain exceptions to the policy and two different options for the timing of when documents should be posted online. The Department solicited public feedback and comments on the policy and is currently considering those comments and working to determine the best approach forward.
Labor	As indicated, DOL's FOIA program is decentralized. Accordingly, the process for identifying "frequently requested" records varies between DOL FOIA components. Moreover, now that the statute has been amended to require the "rule of three," agency components are working to establish standard operating procedures to ensure that "frequently requested" records are consistently identified across the component and published in compliance with the law. Currently, however, most components indicate that upon recognition that a request for the same record(s) has been received three times from three different requesters, the component works to post the records to their public facing FOIA library.	Y	Yes	DG	The Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) is working to provide enhanced on-line search and download functionality beyond what is currently available for Form 5500 data and images. Enhancing the search and download functionality will increase accessibility to Form 5500 data and images among users who are less technically savvy and is expected to reduce the number of requesters who request customized data sets through the FOIA process. EBSA utilized usability testing, website feedback (from the "Was This Helpful" tool and comments to the webmaster) as well as web metrics to determine additional information to post in response to website visitors' requests. For example, as a result of responses in the usability testing and website feedback, EBSA is working to post guidance looking back to the enactment of ERISA law.



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Labor (cont'd)					The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) collaborates with offices both within and out of the component to identify and produce a greater number of appropriate materials for proactive disclosures. Working with these offices enables MSHA to identify material that is of interest to the public, as well as determine the best method of disclosure to the public. MSHA has also engaged with FOIA requesters to greater meet their needs in information they seek. The ability to outreach and work with a multitude of resources enables the component to increase proactive disclosures both in quantity and quality. The Office of Workers Compensation Programs (OWCP) has a survey posted on its websites for individuals to provide comments on the ease of use and the value of the information available. OWCP also solicits feedback through its public email box.
State	The Department adopted the "Release to one, Release to All" approach to posting FOIA documents online during this reporting period. With the exception of first person requests (i.e. those involving privacy or personally identifiable information), the Department now posts on its FOIA website those documents released to the public in the previous month. These releases are taking place for all FOIA cases that are not in litigation; FOIA litigation releases that are not court ordered are expected to be posted on the FOIA website later this calendar year, fully completing the adoption of "Release to One, Release to All." This approach exceeds the requirement to post documents/information that have been requested multiple times and is part of a strategy to use the website to promote transparency and possibly avoid duplicative requests in the future.	DG	Yes	Y	None.
DOI	A specific provision in the Department's FOIA regulations addresses frequently requested records. Additionally, sections 2.7 and 3.3 of the Department's FOIA Handbook discuss this issue. This topic is frequently discussed by Departmental FOIA Policy Staff, bureau FOIA Officers, and other Departmental employees. Bureau FOIA Officers are familiar with the requests that come in and regularly review their FOIA logs for frequently requested records.	DG	Yes	DG	The Department has taken other steps to improve proactive disclosures. For example, the Departmental FOIA Policy Staff worked with the Communications Office to coordinate proactive disclosures and with bureaus to increase their technical knowledge on making proactive disclosures. The importance of proactive disclosures is a reoccurring theme in formal and informal training given by (and to) Department employees, including at monthly FOIA Officer meetings. The BOR engaged with its Public Affairs Office to help publicize posted documents. BLM program offices highlight important postings on their landing pages and the BLM uses social media to highlight and link to new and important documents and resources.



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Treasury	Treasury FOIA professionals review lists of incoming FOIA requests on a quarterly basis to identify frequently requested documents and information. When three or more requests are received for substantially the same information, those records are flagged for proactive posting.	DG	Yes	DG	Treasury works diligently and proactively to disclose records that are of high interest to the public. For example, TTB has taken steps to improve the usefulness of information it makes publicly available by incorporating feedback received from the public. In one case, TTB received a request to include additional information in a list posted in TTB's FOIA library. TTB was able to comply with the request and make the requested information available. This collaboration and feedback has made TTB's information more useful to the public.
DOT	DOT's components regularly monitor their FOIA logs to identify frequently requested records. In addition, each DOT component included an item on identifying these records as part of its "proactive disclosure" plan, which is described in detail below.	DG	Yes	DG	During the previous reporting period, DOT's Chief Data Officer and Departmental FOIA Officer formed a cross-modal, cross-functional group to help implement the Open Government Plan guidance mentioned above. They sought input from those whose jobs can have a positive impact in effectively increasing proactive disclosures throughout DOT. Participants included experts in the areas of Public Affairs, Open Government, FOIA, Records, Web, Communications, and Data. Our goal was to be more systematic in the area of proactive disclosures, and we believed this collaboration was key. The Chief Information Officer and the General Counsel then sent a memorandum to the Heads of the Operating Administrations (OAs) titled, "Developing a Systemic Approach for Increasing the Public Availability of Information about Agency Operations." That memorandum directed the OAs to develop plans for systematically identifying and posting more "in demand" information on their responsive websites. The guidance to the OAs instructed them address, at a minimum, certain types of documents (Congressional reports and testimony, FOIA request logs, funding/apportionment tables, and correspondence logs). The guidance also instructed the OAs to review their current practices, including how they ensure that Electronic Reading Rooms are current, and identify new information or data releases based on various demand signals. During this reporting period, those plans were implemented. The OAs' plans are posted at <a href="https://www.transportation.gov/mission/open/plans-increasing-public-availability-information-about-agency-operations">https://www.transportation.gov/mission/open/plans-increasing-public-availability-information-about-agency-operations</a> . The OAs monitored their plans throughout the year. For example, the Executive Sponsor for OST held periodic meetings with the program offices and support offices that formed the OST Team.





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VA	The VACO Central FOIA Office is decentralized and posts records by all component offices when they make the request to this office for posting. The specific VA Program Office monitors the number of times a request has been received and via their FOIA Offices i.e. VHA, VBA, NCA and VACO FOIA offices monitors either by requester or requested records via FOIAxpress requests that are requested 3 or more times and posts those documents in the VA Reading Room.	DG	Yes	Y	VA continues its efforts to transition from paper to electronic business processes to provide more responsive records in electronic form at the outset, avoiding the need for FOIA Officers to scan paper records (convert them to electronic form) in order to redact them electronically.
EPA	Since October 1, 2012, EPA has posted records released through FOIA on FOIAonline. Accordingly, responses to most FOIA requests, including those containing frequently requested information, are available to the public through FOIAonline. One major exception is first party requests. A first party request is made by an individual for his or her own records.	DG	No	DG	EPA is proactively posting records online, but also has a robust web analytics program to identify topics/records of interest to help ensure that EPA's website reflects those of interest to the public.
EEOC	EEOC monitors non-charge file FOIA requests. If the same material has been requested three times or has been requested two times with a strong likelihood of a third request, the material is posted on-line.	DG	Yes	DG	None.
FTC	FOIA staff are trained to identify instances where three or more requests have sought the same set of documents. When this occurs, FOIA staff instruct the agency's Web Team to post the accessible documents in the agency's FOIA reading room. Additionally, during the FOIA Office bi-weekly meetings, we discuss all requests which helps us identify frequently requested subjects. These requests can be found here <a href="https://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/foia/foia-reading-rooms/frequently-requested-records">https://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/foia/foia-reading-rooms/frequently-requested-records</a> .	DG	No	DG	The agency's Web Team recently conducted a "user-experience" lab to assess strengths, weaknesses, and potential improvements of and for the agency's website. During the lab, agency personnel were asked to perform certain tasks on webpages and were surveyed by the Web Team. The labs are on-going and the FOIA Office intends to use web analytics to capture aggregated information about the FOIA Library.



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NARA	The Office of General Counsel FOIA team monitors its FOIA log for requests for operational records on a regular basis to determine if there are additional sets of records that should be posted on our reading room (see <a href="http://www.archives.gov/foia/electronic-reading-room.html">http://www.archives.gov/foia/electronic-reading-room.html</a> ). NARA's archival holdings continue to be processed according to our Strategic Goal (see <a href="http://www.archives.gov/digitization/strategy.html">http://www.archives.gov/digitization/strategy.html</a> ) to digitize our holdings for greater access to the public.	DG	Yes	DG	None.
NLRB	FOIA managers use an embedded data Excel query to search for records requested multiple times. In addition, the FOIA Branch works with the Agency's Office of Congressional and Public Affairs to identify records from cases of great media interest. When a FOIA staff member discerns that certain records are of great interest to multiple requesters, they alert their managers that a record should be posted. FOIA managers track the identification and posting of frequently requested records in an electronic Excel log to assist staff in directing requesters to our Frequently Requested Records page for records that are publicly available.	DG	Yes	DG	In July 2016, the FOIA Branch met with the Agency's OCIO to discuss the redesign of the NLRB home page and to revisit the FOIA Branch's Frequently Requested Records web page. On December 23, 2016, the updated Frequently Requested Records web page went live with records from high profile NLRB cases. The FOIA Branch has been able to refer requesters to this page for these requests. Based on Google Web analytics, the FOIA Branch determined that web users went to the main page and performed a search 3,427 times. Actual web site visits were 1,923.
OPM	The determination for identifying "frequently requested" records is a joint effort between the FOIA Processing Service team and the program office. OPM proactively place records on the Program Offices pages of the OPM.gov website, when Program Offices determine that these records might be of interest to the public or may be records that have or will be frequently requested. Updated Information pertaining to issues concerning the cybersecurity breach were posted on our website FAQs page. Internal training has already been held on the "Release of One, Release to All" policy. Senior Management is being briefed on this new policy in order to garner support and collaboration for posting hyperlinks to records that were responsive to FOIA requests. Meeting will be held with the FOIA Council to determine a process that will ensure a positive outcome to posting FOIA responses on the OPM website and FOIA reading room.	DG	Yes	DG	We held a FOIA Council meeting in November and will continue to seek collaborative avenues as well as educating the FOIA POCs and management on the need for proactive disclosures especially, the posting of FOIA-processed responsive records. At present, we do not use web analytics to inform on proactive disclosures. As demonstrated in our response to Section III, Section A, Question 2, OPM is extremely proactive in posting the increase in publicly sought records and data as evidenced on our web "Document Count" tool.



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PBGC	Each team in the Division is led by a team leader who receives the cases assigned to their team. The team leader is tasked with assigning the cases to team members, and noting special or unique characteristics of a given request. This includes identifying frequently requested records and determining whether or not they can be posted online. If the records that are frequently sought are suitable for posting, the Division works closely with the Communications, Outreach & Legislative Affairs (COLA) Department to ensure that that material is published on online.	DG	No	DG	The PBGC's Customer Service Plan engages participants using a vigorous corporate communications program that includes: websites, newsletters, subscriptions, and social media. Through its website, the PBGC offers plan participants, requesters, practitioners, and third-parties the opportunity to sign up to receive information on nine different topics through the following site: <a href="http://www.pbgc.gov/res/stay-informed.html">http://www.pbgc.gov/res/stay-informed.html</a> . Statistical data regarding site visits or web analytics are collected by the PBGC website. This analytical feedback is considered to determine how areas of interest may be published to the public domain. However, the website's greatest influence is to inform potential FOIA requesters as to records available to and about them via the site, thus eliminating the need to file at all. For example, when potential requesters quickly determine whether or not they are due a pension and/or identify participation terms online, they are less likely to seek records from the Disclosure Division. See <a href="http://www.pbgc.gov/wr/find-an-insured-pension-plan/pbgc-protects-pensions.html">http://www.pbgc.gov/wr/find-an-insured-pension-plan/pbgc-protects-pensions.html</a> .
SEC	Upon receipt of each request, SEC FOIA professionals conduct a search of the electronic FOIA tracking system for all prior requests made for the same records. Under normal circumstances, where it is determined that there have been three requests made for the same records; the materials are posted to the SEC's website at Frequently Requested FOIA Documents at <a href="https://www.sec.gov/oso/foia-freq-docs-custom-list-page">https://www.sec.gov/oso/foia-freq-docs-custom-list-page</a> . In addition, the SEC is moving forward with the Office of Information Policy's "Release to One, Release to All" initiative. This is being accomplished by the implementation of a public-facing web portal that complements the SEC's FOIA system. Ultimately, the portal will allow access to all FOIA requests filed with the SEC, all substantive response letters sent to the requesters by SEC FOIA staff, and all records released in response to FOIA requests.	DG	Yes	DG	The SEC communicated directly with requesters regarding records that could be made proactively available online. The SEC has not used web analytics to inform its proactive disclosures.
SSA	We created a tracking sheet to identify frequently requested documents.	DG	Yes	DG	None.



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USPS	<p>The FOIA Tracking System alerts FOIA professionals when the same or similar FOIA requests are received and logged into the tracking system. It is the responsibility of each USPS records custodian to ensure that records processed and disclosed in response to a FOIA request, and are likely to become the subject of subsequent requests for substantially the same records, be made available in the Postal Service's Electronic FOIA Reading Room.</p> <p>In this reporting period, Federal Compliance undertook a review of FOIA case logs, at the request of the Chief FOIA Officer, to identify records that have been frequently requested. Federal Compliance plans to work with records custodians to ensure that frequently requested records are posted online.</p>	DG	No	DG	<p>USPS participates in cross-functional teams that discuss/develop messaging for all stakeholders, including industry.</p> <p>Without the need to submit a FOIA request, information provided in the FAQs respond to customer inquiries received through various contact channels (usps.com, 1-800-ASK-USPS, etc.).</p>



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Section IV -- Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology				
Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	FOIA Staff Interacted with Other Agency Staff to ID New Ways to Post Material	Agency Taking Steps to Utilize Advanced Technology and Impact	Posted All FY 2016 Quarterly Reports
CIA	DG	In addition to working with CIA IMTOs as outlined in the answer to question 2, above, the CIA FOIA team this past year interacted with the Office of Public Affairs and the manager of the CIA Twitter account to publicize the public release of information.	Technological improvements, such as increased search capabilities and machine learning to assist in document review and redaction, are currently being investigated and assessed as part of our technology advancement discussions.	DG
USDA	DG	Several components reported working with their CIOs, Office of Public Affairs, and Office of Legislative Affairs to identify information for public release. For example, NRCS' FOIA Public Liaison requested that copies of any public testimony or speeches made by its Chief be made available for public release via NRCS' FOIA Reading Room.	USDA's continues to take steps to utilize more advanced technology to facilitate overall FOIA efficiency. Public Access Link (PAL): Launched in 2012, PAL is USDA's public-facing web portal. PAL allows the requester community to submit requests electronically through a link on our FOIA site, track the status of requests, and directly download records responsive to requests. e-Discovery Platform: Deployed in 2013, this add-on module for the existing enterprise-wide tracking solution features e-Discovery technologies such as the identification of duplicate and near duplicate records, ability to search and categorize records, and ability to rank and view records by "record custodian." Legal Research Engine: In 2013, the Department purchased several licenses for a legal research engine for use by FOIA Officers in processing FOIAs posing complex legal issues.	DG
DOC	DG	DOC FOIA Officers and FOIA professionals interact with other agency staff in order to identify if there are any new ways to post agency information online. In particular, the posting of material is a regular topic of discussion with program offices when they are working on projects that are likely of significant interest to the public. DOC FOIA Officers also regularly communicate with public affairs/communications professionals, as well as the Office of Chief Information Officer to determine whether there are new ways to post agency information online. Additionally, with the expansion of the use of eDiscovery tools, NOAA FOIA staff has asked the Information Technology staff whether there is a way to more effectively de-duplicate records, and make large volumes of records available via the FOIAonline system, which ordinarily would require separate CD disclosures to requesters. To that end, NOAA also proposed changes to the manner FOIA responses are made publicly available on FOIAonline to accommodate high-volume requests in the records tab.	DOC uses FOIAonline to facilitate overall FOIA efficiency. FOIAonline allows anyone to submit a FOIA request, correspond with FOIA professionals processing a request, track the status of a request, and download responsive documents once they are released to a requester. Many DOC FOIA professionals are using Adobe to de-duplicate documents when appropriate in processing certain complex FOIAs, as well as to apply exemptions to documents. DOC also utilizes a Secure File Transfer system to share large quantities of documents for entity review and for agency consultation and referral to speed receipt and transfer. FOIAonline has helped improve customer service by improving FOIA processing and request availability to customers. Before FOIAonline, DOC and its BOUs used a variety of costly and limited tracking tools, web sites, email forms, spreadsheets and, FOIA reports were manually generated. The public had to submit requests to each bureau separately and could not easily check request statuses. Another technological improvement was the way in which FOIA request taskers were provided to program offices. Search taskers and fee estimate taskers are sent to program offices electronically and completed forms and records are routinely returned in the same fashion, improving efficiency and conserving resources. NOAA Google accounts have been utilized to share records for viewing outside the bureau by FOIA professionals within the DOC by granting them a noaa.gov email address, as well as VPN access, so that they can view shared documents within the noaa.gov firewall for collaboration and joint processing efforts. Using the technologies identifies above has had an immediate positive impact on how DOC and its BOUs are able to communicate, process, and analyze FOIA requests more efficiently.	LG



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DOD	DG	The DoD Components also report that they are working with non-FOIA professional agency staff to identify other ways to post agency information online. Most work very closely with their IT professionals and with their Public Affairs Officers to address technical aspects and better gauge public interest. Others report working with document repository owners so that they are readily involved in potential releases under the foreseeable harm standard. Several components reported working with their case management system professionals, who are not necessarily agency staff, to improve the systems that serve the public as well as the agency FOIA professionals through case or document release automation. Several components have reported work with their Knowledge Management Officers to better present information that has been difficult to find on their websites and to improve the relevance of what is posted.	As a result of advancing technology 69% of DoD Components report using technology to facilitate overall FOIA efficiencies which is an increase over the previous reporting period. Several components reported expansion of document sharing platforms into the classified realm which is facilitating consultations and coordination efforts across subcomponents and with other agencies. Several components report moving to enterprise records management (ERM) systems which facilitate de-duplication and better searches similar to those reporting moving to document sharing platforms. Of the components reporting the move to ERMs, several eliminated wasted effort by both FOIA professionals and agency subject matter experts, naturally resulting in an increase in processing efficiencies. Several components also report movement onto agency task management systems so that FOIA deadlines have better visibility throughout the chain of command. The training on these various systems was typically offered by contractors or other agency elements to FOIA professionals and staff.	DG
ED	DG	The staff from the FSC routinely communicates with the Office of the Chief Information Office, webmasters, and the Assistive Technology Team in order to identify if there are any new ways to post agency information online.	ED is continuing to utilize a robust E-Discovery tool to improve its record search capabilities. SharePoint is also being employed more into our FOIA process to take advantage of its functionalities for cases assigned to multiple program offices. Also, Federal Student Aid (FSA) is currently rolling out the FOIA Integrity Management System (FIMS) for enterprise-wide deployment. The software was developed in collaboration with FSA's Business Transformation Team and Technology Office. The system, which will connect to ED's department wide FOIA tracking system, was developed to automate and improve the internal processing of FSA FOIA requests. Among the specific process improvements is an increased ability to track the real-time progress of request fulfillment across the agency and regions, improved documentation of search terms used, more accurate reporting on the efforts of FSA personnel to prepare response documents, and an enhanced ability to search and leverage prior FOIA responses.	DG



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DOE	DG	The FOIA Office and other FOIA professionals periodically discuss with information technology specialists and other communications professionals new ways to publicly post information in a more effective manner for the public.	<p>The CBFO/WIPP utilizes an Electronic Records Management System (“Documentum”) which includes either the actual record or an index of every record that our organization has archived. Searches can be performed utilizing a variety of search criteria or key terms, in whole or in part. At Richland, Continual improvement on Electronic databases that store record copy material that can be easily searched by using keywords, authors, dates, etc... This allows searches to be conducted more quickly.</p> <p>OSTI is continually developing new search algorithms and utilizing technology to improve the search and retrieval process. These improvements impact our FOIA request processing by allowing searchers to find more documents, more accurately, (basically find what they are looking for). Sometimes this is a bibliographic record and no full-text, but we give the user a recommendation on where to find the full-text. FOIA would be one option if we have the hard copy record. OSTI enhances a user/searcher video experience via speech technology as opposed to relying solely on video metadata. Many of the requests received during FY 2016 pertained to document searches for published research and development (R&amp;D) STI reports that are either in a hard copy or a digitized format. OSTI’s mandated core mission is to disseminate and make available results of the R&amp;D funded or sponsored by DOE to the general public and/or the STI community. As a result, OSTI has always embraced technology to advance the dissemination of STI to all appropriate users. In like manner, today’s technology is the principal driver in creating resource tools to expedite the delivery of STI reports via various media platforms, tablets, smart phones, social media, etc.</p> <p>As noted earlier, the BPA anticipates that Discovery Core will greatly assist in the search and collection of potentially responsive records, which will improve the efficiency and effectiveness in processing requests. The SPR already utilizes SharePoint for document management. This enables easy searching of information and allows the FOIA Officer access to files across the organization. Additional improvements will be made over FY 2017 to increase the amount of information posted for public viewing.</p> <p>Chicago reached maximum utilization of electronic methods in its FOIA request process, with 98% paperless transmission of FOIA actions and activities as compared to 95% paperless in the prior year. The majority of responses are transmitted via e-mail. Only requests that require transmission of sensitive information where the requester does not have an encryption tool are transmitted manually (Certified Mail or Commercial Carrier via trackable method). If the requester does not provide an e-mail address, the Chicago FOIA Officer calls the requester to obtain one or alternatively ask the requester the requester’s preferred method of communication. Chicago also continues to use a documents sharing platform to process responsive records for release to the requester. All activities from cradle to grave in Chicago FOIA request processing are now done electronically to the extent possible. This approach reduces the processing time significantly. It takes less time to send an e-mail than to put together a mailing. Requesters also get a quicker turnaround through e-mail responses to the extent possible rather than their having to wait for mailed information.</p>	DG



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HHS	DG	<p>The HHS FOIA Offices continue to work with other agency staff to explore new and improved ways to post online information. Some examples of these OpDiv actions are described below:</p> <p>The OS FOIA Office, which is a division within the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA), met several times during the year with ASPA's Digital Services Division (DCD) to redesign the HHS main FOIA website to improve and simplify navigation and organization (e.g, the use of tiles and a mobile first design) and, generally, make it more user-friendly. In addition, the OS FOIA Officer and Public Liaison met with DCD during December 2016 to discuss ways to post transition materials, always a subject of significant interest during a change in administrations, to the main HHS website, HHS.gov.</p> <p>The ACF FOIA Office maintains an ongoing collaboration with the ACF web staff and plans to revise and improve the ACF FOIA web page during FY 2017.</p> <p>CMS FOIA staff members have developed strong working relationships with the CMS Office of Communications and Office of Technology Solutions, in addition to other program offices, and collaborate with them on a proactive approach to posting information. As one recent example, CMS FOIA staff worked with the CMS Office of</p>	<p>The HHS FOIA Offices continue their efforts to acquire and implement technological improvements that will enable their staffs to process FOIA requests more efficiently. For example: CDC, CMS, FDA and IHS are using the SharePoint document management platform to manage FOIA records.</p> <p>ACF's FOIA Office purchased document de-duplicating software, which ACF finds has enhanced efficiency by reducing the number of emails that must be produced for FOIA requests and for litigation. ACF also purchased a web portal, which the agency anticipates will facilitate proactive posting and make the transfer of large volumes of records for consultation and response much more efficient.</p> <p>The CDC FOIA Office often receives requests for emails related to specific communications of interest to the public. CDC uses their Microsoft Enterprise Search mechanism to quickly retrieve appropriate emails from the CDC email servers and archives for a given request. This search mechanism also provides the capability to remove duplicate emails which helps reduce the number of redundant copies of electronic communications that must be reviewed. In addition, CDC FOIA staff can process emails and other electronic documents using the Advanced Document Review (ADR) process in FOIA Xpress, which enables CDC to ingest files and further de-duplicate datasets; thereby helping to reduce the analysts' workload.</p> <p>To further facilitate the movement of responsive documents between program offices and the FOIA Office, CDC created shared network drives that are restricted to each CDC program and the FOIA office and recently leveraged the CDC Enterprise SharePoint system to provide a repository where responsive records are deposited by the program areas and from which CDC FOIA analysts can retrieve the responsive records for review and processing.</p> <p>The CDC FOIA Office also uses a variety of desktop tools to assist the processing of PDF files, including Adobe Acrobat Pro, WonderShare PDFelement, and TIFfteller software. These tools enable CDC FOIA staff to consolidate PDF files into manageable large documents for review and provide the ability to forecast page counts, which helps FOIA requesters to understand the level of effort and cost of their FOIA requests.</p>	DG





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HHS (cont'd)		<p>Communications and the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight (which oversees the Marketplace) to post highly requested data on Marketplace enrollment by specific health plan. The NIH FOIA Office routinely works with the NIH web team to identify new ways to post NIH-related information online. This collaboration includes regular meetings with the web team to review both the FOIA website and other NIH websites that provide information to the public.</p>	<p>CMS developed a SharePoint document collaboration site and implemented FOIA-specific shared drives which can be accessed by both the FOIA Office and CMS components to share responsive records; particularly voluminous files. In addition, CMS is using Relativity software to greatly improve the speed and efficiency of sorting and de-duplicating documents on large, complex cases. The SharePoint site and designated FOIA shared drives allow for faster records delivery and enhanced collaboration on records review for larger complex cases, which cuts down on the total processing time. The Relativity software significantly reduces the time needed to review and analyze complex and voluminous records.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FDA also uses SharePoint to assist with the internal sharing of records and Adobe to assist in reviewing email records. FDA FOIA staff also are collaborating with records management staff to explore more efficient ways to search for records, particularly email.</li> <li>• IHS has begun to use SharePoint, which allows real time document retrieval from the providing offices or program areas.</li> <li>• Several NIH components are using technology to de-duplicate documents, particularly emails. However, as of the time of this report, success with the technology has been mixed and has not resulted in a significant reduction in processing times.</li> <li>• SAMHSA is implementing a new FOIA tracking system that is expected to significantly improve efficiency and centralize FOIA data; as previously referenced in the response to Question 4 of this Section, SAMHSA also has a new shared drive to store records and data.</li> </ul>	
DHS	DG	<p>DHS and its Components listed below interacted with the following agency staff to identify new ways to post agency information online:            The DHS Privacy Office, ICE, and TSA interacted with their respective Offices of Public Affairs. OIG interacted with its Office of Public Affairs and information technology staff. I&amp;A interacted with its Office of Public Affairs, information technology staff, and staff from its program offices. USCIS interacted with its Immigrant Investor Program Office and Office of Communications. USSS interacted with staff from its program offices. S&amp;T interacted with its Office of Corporate Communications, Office of Security, Office of the Associate General Counsel, and staff from its technical program offices.</p>	<p>The DHS Privacy Office and the Components have been using a COTS web application for the past four years, which allows for document sharing and complete interoperability between all Components that use the application. The application provides a de-duplication capability that is currently being used by a small number of Components. This capability allows FOIA staff to upload documents and e-mail correspondence files and reduce duplicates based on a comparison process performed by the application.</p> <p>The eFOIA mobile application that the Department launched allows mobile device users to submit requests to any DHS Component as well as check the status of any request submitted to any DHS Component currently using the COTS web application.</p> <p>FEMA is participating in a pilot for an Electronic Records Management System at one of its regional offices, which will allow for faster document searches.</p> <p>S&amp;T uses its internal SharePoint sites to coordinate the reviews of records with its program offices. USCIS has been actively engaged in FY 2016 in the procurement of a new FOIA processing system. Among the requirements for the new system are de-duplication capabilities, ability to release records to requesters electronically, improved user interface for printing requests from teleworkers, and enhanced speed in all processing actions. USCIS uses the Enterprise Collaboration Network to coordinate records searches with its program offices. Additionally, USCIS is arranging for a demonstration of an eDiscovery tool that may assist with record searches.</p>	DG



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DHS (cont'd)			<p>CBP's new AFI system performs searches for multiple requests in batches, eliminating the need for staff to search each request individually, which in turn allows the staff to focus on other requests. Further, AFI produces records for some request types that require no redactions, which can be immediately finalized and provided to the requester. CBP used its FOIAonline tracking system for referrals and consultations to other agencies using the system.</p> <p>ICE deployed a new eDiscovery tool for use in FOIA and litigation requests. The tool with its analytic capabilities is used in conjunction with the COTS web application to assist with culling and de-duplicating voluminous amounts of records. The tool includes de-duplication capabilities, analytics, e-mail threading, and enhanced reporting features to manage the records more efficiently. The tool has improved the productivity and response time to requesters.</p> <p>OIG uses its eDiscovery tool to sort and de-duplicate e-mails. OIG began using the COTS web</p>	
HUD	DG	Yes, FOIA staff frequently solicit assistance from the information technology staff to help facilitate online postings.	Upgrades to HUD's electronic FOIA Management System have aided in facilitating overall efficiency. The impact includes: Improved search capabilities, enhanced accuracy in the assessment of fees and calculation of processing days, automatic population of requesters' contact information, and status updates, which are accessible to requesters via the Public Access Link of the FOIA Management System.	DG
DOJ	DG	Several of the Department's components reported that their FOIA professionals interacted with other agency staff, such as technology specialists or public affairs, legislative affairs, or communications professionals in order to identify new and effective ways of posting information online. BOP's FOIA Office began an effort to work with their public affairs professionals to create workflows that will make posting records easier and more timely. EOUST's FOIA professionals regularly meet with IT and Office of Planning and Evaluation staff at meetings of the Open Government Team to find new ways of posting component information online. OLC worked with JMD to get direct access to modify the content of its webpages, thereby allowing for faster posting and more updated information.	OIP and the Department continue to champion the use of advanced technological solutions that assist with the core functions of document processing as a key component of improving FOIA administration. OIP has led the effort to explore the use of these more advanced technologies for the benefit of not only the Department, but all agencies' FOIA administration. During Sunshine Week 2017, OIP will reconvene the FOIA IT Working Group to discuss some of these technologies. In addition to OIP, many of the Department's components, including ENRD, EOIR, EOUSA, JMD, OIG, OLC, Public Affairs, and the Antitrust, Tax, Civil, Civil Rights, and Criminal Divisions are now using tools to search for, sort, and de-duplicate responsive documents. Some of these tools can also compile a Vaughn Index for use in litigation, saving components a significant amount of time. Using these tools to automate many of the internal processes for handling FOIA requests can bring great benefits in efficiency. For example, conducting an adequate search for responsive records often involves the review of both paper and electronic records originating with multiple employees throughout the agency. In turn, these searches can locate hundreds, if not thousands, of pages of material that need to be reviewed for both responsiveness and duplication before a FOIA disclosure analysis can be conducted. With the widespread use of email and the common practice of employees forwarding the same email to multiple other people, with each employee then building still further on that email, long chains of overlapping and duplicative email are frequently created. The benefits of using technology to de-duplicate, sort, and thread all those emails automatically, rather than doing so manually, are readily apparent.	DG



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Labor	DG	The Department's components regularly interact with IT specialists. As an example, ETA has been working with the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) to improve communications and transparency so that they can proactively provide appropriate data, and thus reduce the number of FOIA requests. FOIA staff within ETA have also been working with Departmental IT professionals who manage their public facing websites in order to recommend improvements.	While many of the Department's components are efficiently operating their FOIA programs using SIMS-FOIA for assignments and tracking purposes, Share Point and shared computer drives, some other agencies have started exploring further options. MSHA has been conducting market research on FOIA case management systems that are capable of facilitating FOIA efficiency through document sharing platforms for consultations and referrals; routing records for review; producing standard FOIA letters; and storing responsive records. OFCCP is currently involved in a pilot program at DOL to implement a new electronic case management system.	DG
State	DG	Yes, there are studies underway to examine and improve the overall FOIA process at the Department including how we interact with requesters via the website. IPS employees attended both interagency meetings events/conferences and those held by the American Society of Access Professionals (ASAP). The Department provided a briefing to another federal agency on how we post documents as a practice for their consideration during this reporting period.	The Department is undergoing short and long term efforts to improve how technology is used to facilitate FOIA requests. In the short term, new ways to use existing tools are being considered. This includes evaluating the existing process to identify steps that can be eliminated or possibly even automated.  Two significant changes occurred during this rating period. First, the Department's case management system now has the ability to electronically ingest documents into the system; they had to be printed out in paper before. This is part of a broader Department-wide effort to shift away from paper and toward managing electronic records better. Second, the Department is now moving documents electronically now instead of in paper in several parts of the FOIA process including search responses and consultations.. This significantly reduces the amount of processing time needed to process documents in that documents no longer need to be printed out which created several administrative burdens.	0
DOI	DG	The Departmental FOIA Policy Staff meets with other agency staff who are experts in Section 508, records management, and website management (including libraries) to, among other matters, identify new and more effective ways to post agency information online.	In 2012, the Department released an IT Transformation Strategic Plan. The strategic plan was a high-level roadmap to transform the Interior's IT operations. It identified an initial set of high priority IT services as part of the transformation process, including a single email system for the department, a Cloud-based electronic forms system, Cloud-based electronic records, telecommunications, account management, hosting services, workplace computing services, risk management, and an enterprise service desk (help desk). The implementation of the strategic plan is now underway and the Departmental FOIA Staff has been offering input and suggestions. Bureaus are using the new tools made available through this effort. As discussed above, one of these tools, the FOIA DMU Processing Tool was updated this year. The updates include the following features: individual emails can be selected from email threads; each email thread can be saved as individual PDF documents; and most email images will now be included in generated PDF documents.  Additionally, some bureaus reported using collaboration software and shared drives to facilitate the review process for documents requiring review by multiple offices or multiple individuals within the bureau. Some bureaus also use these tools to post internal procedural guidance for the processing of documents in response to requests.	DG



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Treasury	DG	<p>During the reporting period, Department FOIA professionals worked collaboratively with Information Technology professionals and others to identify new methods of posting information online. For example: the IRS Disclosure Office conferred with the IRS Online Services Division to identify potential improvements to the IRS FOIA Library, including alternative methods of posting information. FinCEN FOIA professionals regularly communicated with Public Affairs professionals and specific program offices which can generate and proactively post statistical information. TTB's Disclosure Office is working with TTB's Information Technology professionals and Public Certificate of Label Applications (COLA) Registry users to identify and implement improvements and enhancements to the Public COLA Registry. OCC's Disclosure Staff and Web Publishing Staff communicate regularly to ensure OCC stays abreast of changes in technology to make posting information easier. DO's FOIA Staff works closely with information technology professionals to identify and resolve issues with technology and processes to make information more accessible. Additionally, during FY 2017, DO FOIA staff will collaborate with the Treasury Library to add certain historical documents and information to the Library's collection.</p>	<p>Treasury has taken the following steps to greater utilize technology to improve FOIA efficiency: IRS updated and expanded web based technology to provide an additional research tools and services and provided training to all FOIA staff. This has improved FOIA search capabilities and access to procedures and contact information when processing FOIA requests. IRS also updated its process for procuring records from IRS Federal Records Centers to receive records electronically rather than by mail. This has reduced the need for manual scanning to make records available to FOIA casework and has improved the number of days necessary to make records available for processing. TTB is still in the planning stages of identifying a new records management application that will allow end users to quickly locate duplicate records, particularly emails, sort the records, and export the records as PDFs. TIGTA is working to implement advanced document review features with FOIAXpress. The improvements will give TIGTA the ability to sort, compare, and de-duplicate documents. It will also compare and contrast similar documents and the redactions on those documents. TIGTA plans to implement this feature in late 2017. OCC has already implemented this technology. DO program staff developed and are testing a web tool which aims to ease burden and improve the timeliness of e-mail searches</p>	DG
DOT	DG	<p>As noted above, the exercise of "Developing a Systemic Approach for Increasing the Public Availability of Information about Agency Operations" undertaken by all DOT OAs brought together cross-functional teams to develop and implement their "proactive disclosure" plans. The components listened to various demand signals and feedback, including through web analytics, to target what additional information to post and/or make easier to find. The components reported great value in bringing these multi-disciplinary teams together to identify additional records and new ways to post agency information online.</p>	<p>Beyond using technology to redact documents, DOT is taking the following steps to use more advanced technology to facilitate overall FOIA efficiency. To avoid the need to review the same email more than once when responding to a FOIA request, several components purchased de-duplicating and email threading software during the reporting period, while other components are exploring the possibility of purchasing such software. Another component purchased a tool that helps search and sort emails. PHMSA is taking steps to use more advanced technology. PHMSA uses a file share site as needed to facilitate the sharing of records when the records are too large to email. This allows for requesters (or other agencies for consultations) to receive records more quickly. PHMSA also uses a de-duplication software and e-discovery database to review records. This software saved the agency time by, for example, de-duplicating records, thereby automatically reducing the records under review at an initial review stage. Furthermore, the tool allows for multiple reviewers to simultaneously work on the same review, and enhances collaboration among the</p>	DG



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DOT (cont'd)			<p>reviewers. The product allows for sophisticated searching to target responsive records, and allows a reviewer to find "the needle in the haystack." Lastly it has served as a customer-friendly negotiation tool with requesters. PHMSA has used the e-discovery tool to suggest search terms and immediately report back to requesters on the search results, which has helped narrow the scope of the request and hence reduce the number of documents under review. It also automatically categorizes and group records so that the requester can receive status updates on the types of records under review.</p> <p>The new FOIALOG system facilitates electronic preservation of the administrative record of initial requests to allow FHWA to more efficiently address FOIA appeals and litigation. Implementation of this system feature is planned for the first quarter of Calendar Year 2017. In addition, the new FOIALOG system facilitates more efficient transferring of referrals within DOT. (Note: Six DOT components currently use this system.)</p> <p>MARAD uses de-duplication and containment technology to ensure that its processing is efficient and that it produces high quality results for requesters.</p> <p>Several components reported using shared drives to collect documents from program offices. One component is also considering the use of existing technologies to create a process workflow that will automate search assignments and search form completions.</p> <p>Advanced technology related to FOIA processing was a primary topic of one of the monthly DOT-wide FOIA meetings. Components shared best practices and answered questions from other components regarding the various technologies throughout DOT. We then encouraged DOT agencies to provide demonstrations of their advanced technologies to other components as requested.</p>	
VA	DG	Yes, the VA OALC FOIA Library has engaged with the VA 508 Specialist. A 508 waiver allows us to post documents for only 30 days, so a 508 waiver is not a permanent solution. Therefore, we have begun converting documents into 508-compliance.	Yes, the VA's Electronic Contract Management System (ECMS) and the VA IT are used to improve records and search capabilities. SharePoint, a document sharing platform, is used for consultation and referrals.	Y
EPA	DG	The Agency continuously updates its website to ensure that information is posted in an efficient and user friendly manner.	EPA staff are using Microsoft Console; Ipro; Relativity and Encase (in limited capacity). The use of these technologies has allowed EPA to provide staff processing FOIA requests an estimate, before record collection takes place, of the number of search results expected from the Agency's email system. This early estimate provides staff the ability to modify search parameters to better target the relevant information before the collection takes place. This in turn speeds processing times and review times as more focused search results are produced. EPA also uses technologies to de-duplicate search results and provides a review platform for collaborative record review by multiple EPA staff members.	DG
EEOC	DG	Yes.	Yes, we have equipment that assists in searching and locating specific terms, making it easier to locate and redact PII information, deliberative process information, etc.	DG



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Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	FOIA Staff Interacted with Other Agency Staff to ID New Ways to Post Material	Agency Taking Steps to Utilize Advanced Technology and Impact	Posted All FY 2016 Quarterly Reports
FTC	DG	As noted previously, the agency's Web Team recently conducted a "user-experience" lab to assess strengths, weaknesses and potential improvements of and for the agency's website. During the lab, agency personnel were asked to perform certain tasks on webpages and were surveyed by the Web Team. Multiple FOIA staff participated in the lab.	No.	DG
NARA	DG	NARA's Web Program and Social Media presence is operated, monitored and regulated by the Office of Innovation. All content that will be posted to NARA's Catalog or Social Media outlets must meet the requirements produced by this office, so therefore all FOIA professionals work closely with that office.	No.	R
NLRB	DG	Yes, the FOIA Branch regularly coordinates with the OCIO and OCPA to disclose records of significant interest to the public.	The FOIA Branch uses Relativity to process large FOIA requests. This software package allows for efficient de-duplication of email threads and other electronic records. It also allows staff to redact records in their native file format, and permits multiple users to work on a case simultaneously.	DG
OPM	DG	Aside from attending OPEN Government updates incorporating the latest IT technology features to better the dissemination and access of information to the public, the FOIA Team interact with the IT staff on numerous opportunities from revising the FOIA web page, revisions to the FOIA tracking system, security methods and the effect on sending out FOIA-processed records, revision of data elements required for various FOIA reports such as the Annual, Chief FOIA Officer's Reports and internal ad hoc reports. As the OPM IT architecture is updated, the FOIA processes will also be incorporated in to a future case management and tracking system.	De-duplication and better search tools are desired tools to be incorporated into the designs of the OPM enterprise architecture.	DG



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Agency	Section IV -- Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology			Posted All FY 2016 Quarterly Reports
	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	FOIA Staff Interacted with Other Agency Staff to ID New Ways to Post Material	Agency Taking Steps to Utilize Advanced Technology and Impact	
PBGC	DG	The Division enjoys a close working relationship with the COLA Department. This relationship includes regular meetings to discuss new developments in public information and how those developments can be incorporated into the agency's FOIA website. If new trends in information sharing can be used on the FOIA website, the Division then collaborates.	As a branch division within the Office of the General Counsel (OGC), the Division has access to the technological capabilities of e-discovery tools, such as the LRSRS. LRSRS provides OGC with the means to conduct large-scale searches in an efficient and cost effective manner by developing specialized queries in response to discovery requests.	DG
SEC	DG	The SEC's Office of FOIA Services routinely works with IT specialists and with SEC components in order to find ways to accommodate the requester community by enhancing search and access capabilities. For example, the Office of FOIA Services is presently coordinating with the SEC's Office of the Secretary to explore ways in which to make available on an ongoing basis the Commission votes on actions filed in Federal Court noted in Section III, Part A. Posting Material. In another instance, despite challenges with the size of the data, FOIA staff is currently working with the SEC's Division of Investment Management to post all Form ADV data obtained from a self-regulatory organization, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority. It is anticipated that this data will updated quarterly or semi-annually.	The SEC's Office of FOIA Services is implementing a public-facing web portal known as the Public Access Link (PAL). This portal will provide efficient and secure communication between requesters and the SEC. The PAL integrates with the SEC's FOIA processing application and tracking system, FOIA Xpress, to facilitate the SEC's disclosure of information. The PAL will allow for, among other things, real time request status updates, the ability to view the original request and submission of supporting documents to requests.	DG
SSA	DG	We work with our Office of Open Government and our IT Specialists to identify new or better ways to post agency information online. We also work with our Section 508 staff to ensure our website will be legally compliant.	Our agency is working with EPA to transition to FOIAOnline for processing and tracking cases. Once we transition to FOIAOnline, we will have the ability to better track case processing and It provides more management information reporting than is available on our current system.	DG
USPS	DG	USPS FOIA professionals maintain regular contact with USPS.com and Public Affairs staff to determine the best means for posting agency information online. In addition, FOIA professionals met with a vendor representative to reconfigure the FOIA public access link. The reconfiguration is expected to be completed in Fiscal Year 2017.	USPS is upgrading hardware for the FOIA Tracking System to enable the installation of new software upgrades. The software upgrades will provide enhanced functionality, security and reporting. While not inclusive of all the system enhancements to be made, listed below are some of the enhancements: There is a new user interface. System defined dashboards have been added to the application and are associated to each user role created in the application. Each dashboard is configured to show specific data sets for each role. A quick search tool has been added to the top of most screens. Quick links have been added to the user's work summary for quick access to pending tasks. Multiple instances of responsive documents can be opened at one time.	DG



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Section IV -- Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology				
Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	FOIA Staff Interacted with Other Agency Staff to ID New Ways to Post Material	Agency Taking Steps to Utilize Advanced Technology and Impact	Posted All FY 2016 Quarterly Reports
USPS (cont'd)			<p>The application provides the ability to customize the Help drop down with links or documents to reference standard operating procedures, agency specific user manuals, or other websites.</p> <p>The system can be configured to automatically update the estimated delivery date of requests.</p> <p>The system will provide a new configuration option to automatically password protect document deliveries via email. The system will allow for the creation of multiple cost sheets to track request processing costs from various offices independently that can be invoiced separately or grouped into a single invoice. Task reminders will allow for multiple users to receive email notifications of a pending task. An email log has been added to allow for easy access to all email traffic sent from the application.</p> <p>Documents can be sorted then moved to review lists, review log, and request folder in a sorted order.</p> <p>The option to save a 508 compliant pdf will be available. There will be an option to drag and drop files to request correspondence and into document folders. A request can be put on hold while in the "request not perfected" status. The ability to compare review layers to consolidate them into a single document will be available. The application will be compatible with Internet Explorer version 11 and Microsoft Office 2013.</p> <p>USPS Information Catalog Program Office (ICP) and IT professionals provide required support and assistance in conducting electronic records searches. ICP sorts and de-duplicates email records and may provide data transfer services for the exchange of electronic files.</p>	





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Section V -- Steps Taken to Improve Timeliness in Responding to Requests (Req.) and Reducing Backlogs																			
Agency	Simple Track				Backlog Decreased		Percentage of Backlog to # of Req./App. Received in FY 2016				Agency Closed Ten Oldest Req., Appeals (App.) & Consultations (Consults.). If not, # closed in FY 2016						Interim Responses		
	Has a Simple Track?	Score	Avg. No. of Days to Process	% of Req. In Simple Track	Req.	App.	Req. Score	Req. %	App. Score	App. %	Req.	If no, # closed	# closed as "Req. Withdrawn"	App.	If no, # closed	Consults.	If no, # closed	System in Place	% of Backlogged Req. Receiving Interim Response
CIA	Yes	R	38.72	57%	R	DG	R	49%	R	80%	R	1/10	0	R	4/10	R	1/10	DG	1%
USDA	Yes	DG	6.66	95%	R	R	DG	6%	R	160%	R	6/10	0	R	1/10	R	5/7	DG	72%
DOC	Yes	R	36.55	68%	DG	DG	LG	14%	Y	29%	DG	N/A	3	R	3/10	R	8/10	DG	45%
DOD	Yes	DG	19.46	55%	DG	R	LG	17%	R	95%	R	7/10	0	DG	N/A	R	5/10	DG	55%
ED	Yes	DG	7.8	42%	R	DG	LG	16%	R	40%	R	4/10	0	R	6/10	DG	N/A	DG	35%
DOE	Yes	R	43.97	75%	DG	Y	LG	12%	Y	14%	R	6/10	0	R	3/10	R	6/10	DG	60%
HHS	Yes	R	27.5	51%	DG	DG	LG	13%	R	143%	R	7/10	1	R	7/10	R	3/4	DG	10%
DHS	Yes	R	32.91	54%	R	DG	LG	14%	DG	2%	DG	N/A	8	R	3/10	R	7/10	DG	1-35%
HUD	Yes	R	30.23	69%	R	R	LG	14%	LG	14%	R	9/10	4	R	7/10	DG	N/A	DG	39%
DOJ	Yes	R	29	69%	R	DG	LG	15%	DG	7%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A	DG	7%
Labor	Yes	LG	20.8	37%	R	R	DG	4%	R	127%	R	5/10	0	R	4/10	R	3/10	DG	0-70%
State	Yes	R	342	6%	R	R	R	81%	R	316%	DG	N/A	0	R	5/10	DG	N/A	DG	4%
DOI	Yes	DG	12	5%	R	R	LG	11%	R	179%	R	9/10	0	R	1/10	DG	N/A	DG	13%
Treasury	Yes	DG	11.72	20%	R	DG	DG	7%	Y	25%	R	3/10	1	R	4/10	DG	N/A	DG	20%
DOT	Yes	R	39.81	80%	R	R	Y	26%	R	41%	R	7/10	0	R	8/10	R	1/2	DG	6%
VA	Yes	LG	21	90%	R	DG	LG	10%	R	43%	R	8/10	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A	DG	10%
EPA	Yes	DG	18.24	76%	DG	DG	LG	12%	R	59%	R	9/10	0	DG	N/A	R	0/3	DG	70%
EEOC	Yes	O	23.6	99%	R	R	DG	4%	DG	5%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A	DG	100%
FTC	Yes	DG	5.91	59%	R	DG	DG	<1%	DG	0%	R	9/10	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A	DG	66%
NARA	Yes	DG	11.5	98%	DG	R	DG	6%	R	161%	DG	N/A	3	R	3/10	DG	N/A	DG	65%



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Section V -- Steps Taken to Improve Timeliness in Responding to Requests (Req.) and Reducing Backlogs																			
Agency	Simple Track				Backlog Decreased		Percentage of Backlog to # of Req./App. Received in FY 2016				Agency Closed Ten Oldest Req., Appeals (App.) & Consultations (Consults.). If not, # closed in FY 2016						Interim Responses		
	Has a Simple Track?	Score	Avg. No. of Days to Process	% of Req. In Simple Track	Req.	App.	Req. Score	Req. %	App. Score	App. %	Req.	If no, # closed	# closed as "Req. Withdrawn"	App.	If no, # closed	Consults.	If no, # closed	System in Place	% of Backlogged Req. Receiving Interim Response
NLRB	No	Y	32	N/A	DG	DG	DG	5%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	7	DG	N/A	DG	N/A	DG	5%
OPM	Yes	DG	2	72%	R	R	DG	1%	R	73%	R	8/10	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A	DG	20%
PBGC	Yes	DG	7.13	49%	DG	DG	DG	0%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
SEC	Yes	DG	16.49	99%	DG	DG	DG	<1%	DG	<1%	R	7/10	2	DG	N/A	DG	N/A	DG	5%
SSA	Yes	R	28	96%	DG	DG	DG	<1%	DG	8%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A	DG	4-5%
USPS	Yes	DG	12	85%	DG	DG	DG	2%	DG	3%	R	3/10	0	R	9/10	DG	N/A	DG	Unable to estimate









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Agency	Training		Informed non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations	Efforts to inform non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
NRPC		100%		An internal FOIA training was conducted by the FOIA Office. Amtrak employees were instructed on the rules and regulations of the FOIA and the importance of Amtrak complying with these regulations.
FRB		95%		The Board has modified its search request to Board staff to notify non-FOIA professionals of their obligation to provide any documents deemed to be potentially responsive to a FOIA request in order to help ensure that an adequate search is conducted and that all potentially responsive documents are identified. In addition, the Board has incorporated OIP's FOIA training modules into the Board's internal training application, which is accessible by all Board staff.
CFTC		50%		FOIA professionals met with subject matter experts throughout the agency to explain the importance of providing documents in a timely fashion regardless of whether or not they will not be withheld, to explain the foreseeable harm standard that has been codified in the FOIA Improvement Act, to explain that requests have to be interpreted broadly under FOIA, and to explain fee limitations depending upon the requester's fee category. These discussions resulted in greater understanding of agency staff responsibilities under FOIA, more timely searches for records and, increased discussions between FOIA requesters and agency subject matter experts to facilitate clearer understanding of record types and records sought which has led to more efficient FOIA processing.











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Agency	Training		Informed non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations	Efforts to inform non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
CFPB		100%		The CFPB FOIA Office provided training to each CFPB program office and the FOIA Points of Contact within each program office. We also provide a FOIA briefing at each New Employee Orientation.
CEQ		50%		Consistent with previous years, all new CEQ entrants – interns, clerks, detailees, and staff – are required to attend training within 30 days of their start date. This training instructs new entrants on their obligations under the FOIA and the Federal Records Act. The training also covered [FOIA memoranda] and the presumption of openness. Also, long-term employees must attend an annual refresher training which reiterates CEQ’s FOIA obligations and the presumption of openness. Personnel who work on FOIA issues have reviewed [FOIA memoranda]. Given CEQ’s relatively small size, CEQ provides targeted in-person training and legal counseling to all CEQ staff, detailees, interns, and clerks who help process incoming FOIA requests and consultations.
CSOSA		100%		CSOSA’s FOIA Office created a Search Memorandum that is sent to program offices within the agency. This Search Memorandum describes the FOIA requests and their obligations under the FOIA. Furthermore, the FOIA Office created a one-page infographic that provides a snapshot of what FOIA is and how requests are processed. Lastly, training is provided to new staff members during new hire orientation.
Ex-Im Bank		100%		The FOIA Office has met with various components within the Agency to discuss various aspects of the FOIA process, most significant being how to conduct a reasonable search.













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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
FCC		80%		The FCC's online training portal includes a FOIA Training for Federal Employees module. This module takes less than an hour to complete and is directed at employees who are not FOIA professionals, but who may need to provide records in response to a FOIA request or are otherwise interested in the FOIA process.
FDIC		100%		The Department of Justice's e-Learning module FOIA Training for All Employees has been made available online to all employees through the FDIC's Corporate University.
FEC		85%		The Agency did not undertake any such efforts in FY 2016.
FERC		80%		Training for new employees and refresher training advise individuals of their role and obligations under FOIA. This includes their role of providing responsive material along with their views regarding the impact of the possible release of such material. These elements are critical to have a successful FOIA program.
FHFA		100%		Each office within FHFA-HQ has designated a staff member to be a liaison between the office and the FOIA Office to assist in responding to FOIA requests. Each liaison received refresher training on their duties and responsibilities as the liaison between their office and the FHFA-HQ FOIA Office. In particular, the training focused on their role in identifying individuals who might have responsive records and ensuring that thorough and adequate searches of records where conducted. The FHFA-OIG provided guidance to non-FOIA professionals in OIG on an as-needed basis.











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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
FLRA		100%		The Chief FOIA Officer kept agency leadership aware of the overall performance of the FOIA program and also notified them about changes the agency would need to make to comply with the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016.
FMCS		100%		While not engaged in any formal initiatives, the CFO has initiated numerous informal conversations with non-FOIA professionals of the Agency – principally, IT personnel, mediators and mediator supervisors, and Regional Directors with geographical field responsibility – to educate them as to their responsibilities under the FOIA.
FMSHRC		33%		We provide FOIA training to our FOIA staff, including all new hires within their first 60 days. Our last training was on August 10, 2016. On September 14, 2016, we provided our management and executive staff with OIP’s Senior Executive Briefing.
GSA		100%		GSA FOIA professionals engage GSA’s non-FOIA professionals through a variety of outreach meetings and training sessions, as well as presenting at assigned Directors and GSA Office and Division staff meetings. GSA employees are continually made aware that FOIA is every employee’s responsibility. During these times, FOIA professionals are able to reiterate the importance of FOIA and Records Management responsibilities as well as provide necessary training and updates. Additionally, the GSA Chief FOIA Officer sends out memorandums with updates and key information regarding FOIA processes and responsibilities in a continued effort to ensure accountability of the FOIA program at GSA. Also, during this reporting period,





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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
GSA (cont'd)				the GSA FOIA professionals provided full FOIA and Records Management training to the Federal government employees that were selected to work on the Presidential Transition Teams.
LSC		100%		<p>Guidance Provided: On January 18, 2017, LSC's President issued a comprehensive memorandum to all LSC staff regarding FOIA compliance. This memorandum has been disseminated in past years and provides background on FOIA and LSC's disclosure obligations, including: (1) a detailed description of how FOIA requests are processed (including general intake, approval or denial of requests, conducting searches for responsive documents, document review and determination of disclosure, and appeals); (2) guidance on the role of staff members in processing FOIA requests; and (3) information on maintaining records in LSC's FOIA Reading Rooms (including proactively disclosed documents and other records routinely made available to the public). The Guidance also described the changes to LSC's FOIA regulations, which became effective on December 16, 2016.</p> <p>Training Provided: In February 2017, LSC will hold a mandatory FOIA training session for all employees hired since the last mandatory FOIA training sessions in February 2016. This training will cover the following: (1) general overview of FOIA, (2) LSC's obligations under FOIA, and (3) LSC's system for responding to FOIA requests. The training will also address the importance of complying with FOIA and the presumption of openness and will highlight LSC's improvements in FOIA over the last several years.</p>









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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
LSC (cont'd)				The training will also be offered to veteran employees as an optional refresher training. LSC's OIG will also conduct a FOIA refresher training for OIG employees in February that covers the same topics as the LSC training. In addition to the training and guidance described above, LSC also incorporates basic FOIA compliance into its onboarding procedures for new employees.
MSPB		100%		MSPB took several steps this year to raise awareness of FOIA obligations for non-FOIA professionals. With the addition of a new, full-time Government Information Specialist (GIS), search memos to program offices are more thorough and detailed. Additionally, during Sunshine Week 2016, MSPB's Chief FOIA Officer sent a series of agency-wide emails that explained the purpose and history of Sunshine Week; how MSPB's FOIA program operates, including how requests are processed; the statutory deadline requirements; and each employee's role regarding FOIA. The all-employee emails included links to MSPB's FOIA reports, OIP's FOIA Infographic, and ways to obtain more information on FOIA. During Sunshine Week, MSPB's senior staff members received a separate email asking them to view OIP's video specifically for agency senior executives and reminding them that "FOIA is everyone's responsibility."
NASA		100%		FOIA Staff are providing overview training to other staff throughout the Agency.
NCUA		100%		The agency offered all employees privacy training covering their FOIA obligations in 2016.















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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
NEA		95%		NEA employees are notified of their responsibilities under the FOIA at their newcomer's orientation. We have also placed the FOIA learning modules by DOJ in our NEA Knowledge University library making available for all employees.
NEH		70%		Our primary FOIA professional conducts one-on-one training verbally and in writing, as needed, to provide refreshers about the FOIA responsibilities and to respond to specific questions.
NSF		100%		The FOIA Officer makes a presentation about FOIA at bi-weekly New Employee Orientation Training sessions.
NTSB		100%		Staff are sent emails describing the requested records, the procedure/process for maintaining the records and the procedure/process for sending the record to the FOIA Office.
USNRC		100%		The NRC FOIA staff planned and conducted a FOIA seminar in May 2016, which was open to all agency employees and covered a variety of topics of interest to staff. This seminar included guest speakers from DOJ/OIP. The agency's FOIA officer as well as acting FOIA officer provided FOIA training to agency leadership and program office personnel. Topics covered included an overview of the FOIA, exemptions, and the role and responsibilities of program offices and employees. The NRC also recommended that non-FOIA staff take the DOJ Module "FOIA Training for Federal Employees" as well as participate in the above-mentioned trainings.





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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
OSHRC		80%		OSHRC's handbook for new employees continues to include OIP's 2015 infographic to immediately apprise employees of the role they play in the FOIA process. Additionally, in accordance with OIP's guidance, the Chief FOIA Officer notified all OSHRC personnel of their responsibility under the Federal Records Act to provide any records in a non-official email account that have not been copied into an OSHRC email account if such records are responsive to a FOIA request. In conjunction with this notification, OSHRC revised the search requests that its FOIA professionals provide non-FOIA personnel to assist in processing FOIA requests so that the requests now include information regarding records contained in non-official email accounts.
OGE		100%		Through email and staff meeting reminders, OGE's FOIA professionals regularly inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under the FOIA, particularly that any documents created or maintained as part of the non-FOIA professional's job may be responsive to a FOIA request.
OMB		100%		Outside of the few staff members that perform FOIA work on a regular basis, personnel throughout the agency may be assigned FOIA responsibilities periodically. To ensure that this staff is properly trained, OMB's staff who work with FOIA more frequently continue to offer guidance tailored to the specific needs of other staff members. Typically, this guidance will address specific issues, which can include discussing the legal framework of FOIA, such as the applicability of an exemption, or offering practical best practices, including how to most efficiently conduct a search for records.









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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
ONHIR		0%		We took no actions of this type.
OSTP		100%		To ensure that all OSTP personnel are knowledgeable of the presumption of openness, every OSTP employee receives a basic overview of relevant FOIA responsibilities and their roles and responsibilities as records custodians under the Federal Records Act (FRA) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) as part of their orientation training upon beginning official duty with OSTP. In Fiscal Year 2016, OSTP continued to distribute OIP's FOIA infographic into the agency's onboarding materials for new employees. OSTP now provides this one-page infographic as a resource on FOIA basics for all new employees upon their arrival at OSTP. OSTP and its dedicated open government team also continue to lead by example in supporting Federal open government and transparency efforts. OSTP's open government staff helps to coordinate the Administration's participation in the global Open Government Partnership (OGP), a platform where nearly 70 countries promote transparency, accountability and citizen engagement.
OSC		100%		OSC included a FOIA training component in its September 2016 agency-wide conference.











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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
ODNI		100%		ODNI is developing in-house FOIA slides. Upon completion, they will be posted on the IMD Outreach and Training website. The slides will be used by its public access professionals for training purposes. Until the FOIA slides are in place, ODNI provides in-house training to its FOIA professionals. High-level training is made available to the workforce. ODNI also provides community outreach, inviting speakers from other agencies to discuss topics of interest as part of our IC FOIA Day. ODNI has partnered with other agencies such as DoD to leverage existing training. ODNI implemented a plan from last year and provided brown bag training regularly for non-FOIA professionals who are routinely tasked with conducting FOIA search and review.
USTR		75%		The FOIA staff has provided advice and counsel concerning obligations under the FOIA to USTR staff in small group settings either in response to questions or in the process of responding to a particular FOIA request.
PC		100%		The FOIA Office provides training to new employees through the New Employee Orientation. We inform FOIA points-of-contact with a one-to-one introduction, as well as group training. Additionally, we conduct annual supervisory training.
USRRB		100%		All agency employees participate in annual mandatory Privacy Awareness training and are trained on their obligations pursuant to the FOIA.











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### Section I -- Steps Taken to Apply the Presumption of Openness



Agency	Training		Informed non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations	Efforts to inform non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
SBA		100%		Office of Information Policy FOIA Training Video - Each SBA employee has an account in the agency's Learning Management System (LMS) with a mandatory curriculum of online trainings to be completed once a year. During this reporting period, SBA implemented a change to include the Office of Information Policy's FOIA training video in the LMS as a mandatory requirement for all of the agency's employees.
STB		100%		The Board's FOIA office created a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "FOIA Perspective for Record Keeping" and presented it to the entire Board, as part of a broader records presentation. The FOIA part of the presentation was designed to further inform staff about what FOIA required and how be prepared for a FOIA records search.
TVA		100%		FOIA training and counsel is provided to agency personnel by the FOIA Officer and TVA's advisory attorney year-round, as needed. TVA's standard operating procedures governing communications incorporate the presumption of openness and outline the responsibilities of all agency personnel to comply with the requirements of FOIA.
USAID		100%		USAID is committed to FOIA compliance and, as such, recognizes the need to inform all of its employees, including non-FOIA professionals, of their role and obligation in this regard. To this end, USAID employs a variety of mechanisms to promulgate the important responsibility enterprise-wide. Related governing policy is codified in the Agency's Automated Directive Systems and agency-wide notices covering various FOIA topics are distributed. A variety of training



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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
USAID (cont'd)				opportunities are provided as well. For example, the Agency FOIA Public Liasion delivered a FOIA overview at each of the newly rolled out M Bureau Knowledge and Learning Program (MKL) trainings last year. MKL is the USAID Bureau for Management's corporate program that provides an integrated approach to knowledge sharing and training on operations processes, systems and tools. In addition, a one week-long Records Management and FOIA Access Training targeting various audiences was delivered worldwide. The FOIA topics provide an overview of the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016, as well as describes how to scope a request, conduct a search for responsive records in response to a FOIA request, provide release recommendations, and the importance of administrative records, to help ensure compliance. In Calendar Year 2016, there were nine (9) sessions held globally. As needed, other briefings and information sessions are used to inform USAID employees at all levels, regardless of labor category, of their FOIA responsibilities.
USCPSC		100%		The Office of the General Counsel provided detailed training on FOIA and related obligations to non-FOIA staff. The training involved topics including interpreting the scope of a FOIA request, the obligations involved in searching for agency records and the CPSC'S Exemption 3 statutory obligations. This year the Secretariat FOIA office and Office of General Counsel conducted in-house training for the program office designees or liaisons on the requirements for conducting FOIA searches and to provide all responsive information, regardless of sensitivity, to the FOIA office for a final determination on release.



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Section II -- Steps Taken to Ensure that Agency Has an Effective System in Place for Responding to Requests (Req.)				
Agency	Requests for Expedited Processing		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide
	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		
NRPC		1.0		<a href="http://www.amtrak.com/foia">www.amtrak.com/foia</a>
FRB		8.0		<a href="https://www.federalreserve.gov/foia/about_foia.htm">https://www.federalreserve.gov/foia/about_foia.htm</a>
CFTC	N/A	N/A		<a href="http://www.cftc.gov/FOI/foiarequests">http://www.cftc.gov/FOI/foiarequests</a>
CFPB		1.0		<a href="http://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201204_cfpb_foia-and-pa-request-">http://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201204_cfpb_foia-and-pa-request-</a>
CEQ		10.0		<a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ceq/foia_handbook_2-27-12.pdf">https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ceq/foia_handbook_2-27-12.pdf</a>
CSOSA	N/A	N/A		<a href="http://www.csosa.gov/about/foia/csosa-guide.aspx">http://www.csosa.gov/about/foia/csosa-guide.aspx</a>
Ex-Im Bank		2.0		<a href="http://www.exim.gov/about/foia">http://www.exim.gov/about/foia</a>
FCC		8.7		<a href="http://transition.fcc.gov/foia/foiahandbook.pdf">http://transition.fcc.gov/foia/foiahandbook.pdf</a>
FDIC		6.2		<a href="https://www.fdic.gov/about/freedom/Guide.html">https://www.fdic.gov/about/freedom/Guide.html</a>
FEC		8.0		<a href="http://www.fec.gov/press/foia.shtml">http://www.fec.gov/press/foia.shtml</a>
FERC		8.0		<a href="https://www.ferc.gov/resources/guides/filing-guide/foia-request.asp">https://www.ferc.gov/resources/guides/filing-guide/foia-request.asp</a>
FHFA		1.7		FHFA-HQ - <a href="https://www.fhfa.gov/AboutUs/FOIAPrivacy/Pages/FOIA-Reference-Guide.aspx">https://www.fhfa.gov/AboutUs/FOIAPrivacy/Pages/FOIA-Reference-Guide.aspx</a> . FHFA-OIG - <a href="https://fhfaoig.gov/FOIA">https://fhfaoig.gov/FOIA</a> .
FLRA		5.8		<a href="https://www.flra.gov/freedom-information-act-program">https://www.flra.gov/freedom-information-act-program</a>
FMCS	N/A	N/A		<a href="https://www.fmcs.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/YourRightToFederalRecords.pdf">https://www.fmcs.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/YourRightToFederalRecords.pdf</a>
FMSHRC		2.0		<a href="https://www.fmshrc.gov/guides/foia-guide">https://www.fmshrc.gov/guides/foia-guide</a>
GSA		1.4		<a href="https://www.gsa.gov/graphics/staffoffices/PublicInformationHandbook.doc">https://www.gsa.gov/graphics/staffoffices/PublicInformationHandbook.doc</a>
LSC		4.8		<a href="http://www.lsc.gov/about-lsc/foia/foia-handbook">http://www.lsc.gov/about-lsc/foia/foia-handbook</a>
MSPB		2.7		<a href="http://www.mspb.gov/foia/request.htm">http://www.mspb.gov/foia/request.htm</a>
NASA		2.8		<a href="https://www.nasa.gov/FOIA/guidance.html">https://www.nasa.gov/FOIA/guidance.html</a>



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Agency	Requests for Expedited Processing		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide
	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		
NCUA		4.0		<a href="https://www.ncua.gov/Resources/Documents/FOIA/FOIAHandbook.pdf">https://www.ncua.gov/Resources/Documents/FOIA/FOIAHandbook.pdf</a>
NEA		6.0		<a href="https://www.arts.gov/freedom-information-act-guide">https://www.arts.gov/freedom-information-act-guide</a>
NEH		3.0		<a href="https://www.neh.gov/about/foia/how-to-submit-foia-request">https://www.neh.gov/about/foia/how-to-submit-foia-request</a>
NSF	N/A	N/A		<a href="https://www.nsf.gov/policies/foia.jsp">https://www.nsf.gov/policies/foia.jsp</a>
NTSB		58.0		<a href="https://www.nts.gov/about/foia/Pages/foia_requests.aspx">https://www.nts.gov/about/foia/Pages/foia_requests.aspx</a>
USNRC		1.0		<a href="https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/foia/foia-privacy.html">https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/foia/foia-privacy.html</a>
OSHRC		3.0		<a href="http://www.oshrc.gov/foia/foiaguide.html">http://www.oshrc.gov/foia/foiaguide.html</a> [updated version in progress]
OGE	N/A	N/A		<a href="https://www.oge.gov/Web/OGE.nsf/Freedom%20of%20Information%20Act%20(FOIA)/431FE97135A2CF85257EF5006DAABF?opendocument">https://www.oge.gov/Web/OGE.nsf/Freedom%20of%20Information%20Act%20(FOIA)/431FE97135A2CF85257EF5006DAABF?opendocument</a>
OMB	N/A	N/A		<a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/foia">https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/foia</a>
ONHIR	N/A	N/A		We do not have a FOIA reference guide.
OSTP		57.5		<a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/foia">https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/foia</a>
OSC		9.7		<a href="https://osc.gov/Pages/FOIA-Handbook.aspx">https://osc.gov/Pages/FOIA-Handbook.aspx</a>
ODNI		1.0		<a href="https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/FOIA/odni_foia_handbook.pdf">https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/FOIA/odni_foia_handbook.pdf</a>
USTR		8.0		<a href="https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/Office-of-the-US-Trade-Representative-FOIA-Reference-Guide.pdf">https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/Office-of-the-US-Trade-Representative-FOIA-Reference-Guide.pdf</a>
PC	N/A	N/A		<a href="https://www.peacecorps.gov/about/open-government/foia/">https://www.peacecorps.gov/about/open-government/foia/</a>
USRRB	N/A	N/A		<a href="http://www.rrb.gov/blaw/foia/foia.asp">http://www.rrb.gov/blaw/foia/foia.asp</a>
SBA		4.5		<a href="https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-performance/open-government/foia/general-foia-information">https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-performance/open-government/foia/general-foia-information</a>
STB	N/A	N/A		<a href="https://www.stb.gov/stb/docs/FOIA/FOIA%20Reference%20Guide_files/FOIARefDoc.html">https://www.stb.gov/stb/docs/FOIA/FOIA%20Reference%20Guide_files/FOIARefDoc.html</a>











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Agency	Requests for Expedited Processing		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide
	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		
TVA		5.0		<a href="https://www.tva.com/Information/Freedom-of-Information/A-Guide-to-Information-About-The-Tennessee-Valley-Authority">https://www.tva.com/Information/Freedom-of-Information/A-Guide-to-Information-About-The-Tennessee-Valley-Authority</a>
USAID		3.1		<a href="https://www.usaid.gov/foia-requests">https://www.usaid.gov/foia-requests</a>
USCPSC		3.0		<a href="https://www.cpsc.gov/Newsroom/FOIA">https://www.cpsc.gov/Newsroom/FOIA</a>



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Section III -- Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures (PD)				
Agency	Process for Identifying Frequently Requested Records	System in Place to Identify Other Records for PD	Challenges to Posting Material Online	Other Steps Taken to Increase PDs
NRPC	The FOIA Office makes decisions regarding the disclosure of frequently requested records and departments are notified. Amtrak is currently in the process of setting up a more formal process for identifying frequently requested records.		No	Not at this time.
FRB	When the Board receives a FOIA request, FOIA professionals use processing software to identify previous requests for the same or similar records. If it is determined that multiple requests for records subject to disclosure under the FOIA have been received, the documents are deemed "frequently requested" and are posted on the Board's website.		Yes	None.
CFTC	The agency routinely monitors its FOIA logs to determine if records have been frequently requested. However, the agency does not receive a high volume of requests that fall into this category.		No	None.
CFPB	The CFPB FOIA Office has the ability to utilize eFOIA software and review of FOIA logs to identify records that have been requested at least three times. CFPB FOIA staff meets weekly to discuss any requested records that have been produced or requested at least three times.		No	In June 2015, the CFPB began publishing consumer complaint narratives where the consumer has consented to publication about mortgages, bank accounts and services, credit cards, debt collection, credit reporting, and more. These consumer narratives provide a firsthand account of the consumer's experience and provide context to complaints, are easily searchable, and help spotlight specific trends. Additionally, the narratives can also help consumers to make more informed decisions as well as encourage companies to improve the overall quality of their products and services. Since the proactive posting of the consumer complaint narratives the CFPB FOIA Office has received less FOIA requests concerning consumer complaints. In August 2016, the CFPB FOIA reading room started posting frequently requested records, FOIA reports, and FOIA logs. Requests are posted frequently to save the public time and effort.
CEQ	CEQ monitors its FOIA logs to identify "frequently requested" material for posting and determines whether requests are likely to become the subject of subsequent requests for substantially the same records.		No	Yes, CEQ engaged with the public and stakeholders on determining how and what to post and received public comment and feedback concerning proactive disclosures.
CSOSA	A majority of CSOSA's FOIA requests are first-party requests (approximately 99%), which are not required to be posted online; however, the database utilized to process CSOSA's FOIA requests does have a method of pulling up prior records for identical first-party requesters. In order to identify if other records are frequently requested, a keyword search is conducted in CSOSA's database within the file cabinet for document management.		No	None.



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Ex-Im Bank	The FOIA Team reviews recent disclosure trends to identify requests or information that may be of interest to the public. When three or more requests are received for the same information, those records are flagged and then posted on the website. Also, the Bank continues to update the downloadable statistical data relating to Bank transactions and as required by the Bank's Charter, the Bank releases environmental and social documents. This information is available on the Ex-Im Bank website.		No	None.
FCC	The agency processes relatively few FOIA requests for similar records each year and similar requests are processed using the same staff. Given this, it is often readily apparent to the staff that the same record has been frequently requested. More formally, the Commission uses metadata tagging in FOIAonline, its online FOIA portal, to track the subject matter of requested records. If it is suspected that a certain record has been requested multiple times, FOIA staff will search for the metadata tag in question, pull the records, confirm they have been requested three or more times, and post them to the Commission's FOIA reading room.		No	It is the FCC's policy to post on its website any of its information that is of general interest to the public so long as there are no national security, law enforcement, legal, or privacy issues that prohibit its publication. The inventory of website content disclosed pursuant to this policy also is posted online at <a href="https://www.fcc.gov/general/website-inventory-priorities-and-schedules">https://www.fcc.gov/general/website-inventory-priorities-and-schedules</a> .
FDIC	When a FOIA request is received, the FDIC's FOIA Group uses its FOIA processing software to identify previous requests for the same or similar records. If it is determined that multiple requests for publicly releasable records under the FOIA have been received, those records are deemed "frequently requested" and are posted on the FDIC's website or otherwise made available for public inspection and copying.		No	The FDIC continues to use its website, social media, webcasts, podcasts, and publications to proactively make information available to the general public. An email subscription service, RSS feeds, as well as the FDIC pages on Facebook and Twitter allow the public to receive many different alerts, including news releases, Financial Institution Letters, consumer updates, statistical publications and other information.
FEC	Many requests received by the FEC seek documents that are already proactively disclosed on the Agency's website consistent with the requirements of the Federal Election Campaign Act, FEC regulations, and Commission policies. Outside of these requests, the FEC generally does not receive many FOIA requests for the same documents. However, the Agency's FOIA Requester Service Center monitors its FOIA request log, and if frequently requested records are identified, they will be posted to the Commission's website.		No	None.
FERC	Yes, reports from the FOIA tracker system are reviewed to identify frequently requested records.		No	FERC will continue to pursue potential opportunities to increase proactive disclosures and implement them accordingly.



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FHFA	FHFA-HQ regularly reviews its FOIA log to determine if there are multiple requests for the same records. In those instances where there are multiple requests, FHFA identifies them as "frequently requested" and makes a determination to post to the FOIA reading room. FHFA-OIG uses a commercial-off-the-shelf FOIA software system that facilitates the identification of frequently requested records. Requests are monitored to determine whether they seek similar records. When records are identified as being requested frequently, OIG posts such records on its website in the Electronic Reading Room.		No	None.
FLRA	The Chief FOIA Officer works closely with top-level agency officials to ensure that any agency publications or materials that would be subject to the FOIA are available to the public and posted to the agency's "electronic reading room" and its website pages dedicated to the agency's decisions, manuals, and other appropriate materials. Currently, there is a process in place to automatically include certain records to the publicly-accessible areas.		No	As the agency "refreshed" its website this past reporting period, the Chief FOIA Officer and FOIA staff reviewed the agency's FOIA web pages and worked with key agency personnel to determine if there were additional materials beyond those covered by FOIA requests that are appropriate for posting.
FMCS	The Chief FOIA Officer periodically reviews the FOIA log to determine whether any "frequently requested" records can be identified for the purpose of creating a proactive disclosure. No more formal system is required in view of the relatively few (about 55) requests received annually.		No	None.
FMSHRC	FMSHRC's FOIA officers monitor our FOIA log to classify frequently requested material. When material is detected, it is brought to the attention of our General Counsel and Office of the Chairman who are charged with identifying records for proactive disclosure. The General Counsel and Chairman's offices also consult with FOIA officers to identify records that may be of general interest to the public for the purpose of posting on the agency's website.		No	FMSHRC is currently constructing a new section of the agency's website that will allow the public to conduct status checks of its cases via an online database.
GSA	GSA, through use of the FOIAonline system, makes available online all released FOIA request responses (so long as they don't involve an individual's private personnel records), regardless if they are "frequently requested" records or not.		No	GSA engages requesters in determining the types of information to post, as well as data sets and webpages linked to government-wide data analytics at data.gov. GSA has solicited information for groups of media requesters and business segments that have an interest in the types of products and services that GSA is managing acquisitions across the Federal government. These data sets are often prepared and proactively posted to the various sites such as those listed in question 5 above.



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LSC	Because many of the records identified for proactive disclosures are either generated by or must be reviewed by the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA), the FOIA professionals, most of whom are staff members in OLA, are able to routinely post such records on the LSC website without delay. The FOIA Analyst also routinely reviews the FOIA electronic reading room to see when new postings of proactive disclosure documents are made by individual offices and includes this information in the weekly FOIA report to management. In addition, LSC has emphasized the importance of proactively disclosing records and the categories of proactive disclosures under FOIA to its employees by highlighting the types of records to be proactively disclosed in LSC's annual FOIA guidance and training. LSC is also conducting an internal review of its records to ensure that it is proactively disclosing all relevant documents.		No	LSC has a webpage dedicated exclusively to FOIA. The new FOIA page has a user-friendly interface and contains the following categories of information: (1) FOIA Handbook; (2) FOIA Reports; (3) FOIA Public Reading Room; (4) FOIA Appeal Letters; (5) Status of FOIA Requests; (6) Status of FOIA Request Archives. LSC continues to convert information from PDF to HTML format so it is searchable and its website contents are mobile friendly to ensure the public has access to LSC's information and records from tablets and smartphones. Lastly, LSC increased the use of social media tools such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter to highlight and disseminate information about LSC and its grant recipients.
MSPB	We use the FOIAonline system to identify frequently requested records. For example, we received numerous requests for a series of identical or related records, and we were able to locate the records using FOIAonline and post them on our website.		Yes	As awareness of FOIA grows among MSPB program staff, there has been a willingness to consider whether the public would benefit from proactively disclosing a record before requests are received for the document. For example, a program office proactively identified a dataset used by its staff that would likely be the subject of multiple FOIA requests and initiated discussions with the FOIA office on how best to proactively post it.
NASA	NASA offices post material that is of current public interest on the FOIA and mission websites. Typically, FOIA offices post all contract documents that have been requested under the FOIA. In general, the FOIA offices post material that has been the subject of public interest or is anticipated to be of public interest regardless of the number of FOIA requests for the documents. The FOIA offices also work with the mission/program offices to identify documents that should be posted on both websites.		Yes	NASA uses webmetrics to determine what the public is seeking and then works with the program offices to ensure information is posted about these topics.
NCUA	When a record is requested multiple times, FOIA staff identifies the record and informs the Chief FOIA Officer that it should be posted online. The FOIA staff then send the record to the agency webmaster to post it at <a href="https://www.ncua.gov/services/Pages/freedom-of-information-act/requested-information.aspx">https://www.ncua.gov/services/Pages/freedom-of-information-act/requested-information.aspx</a> .		No	The agency continues to proactively disclose information to increase the public's awareness of its mission and role through releases to the public, including postings on its open government page at <a href="https://www.ncua.gov/About/Pages/open-government.aspx">https://www.ncua.gov/About/Pages/open-government.aspx</a> . The agency solicits comments and suggestions for improving its website at <a href="mailto:plainwriting@ncua.gov">plainwriting@ncua.gov</a> . The agency does not use web analytics to inform proactive disclosures.
NEA	The NEA FOIA Officer processes all FOIA request and reviews records upon initial review. The FOIA Officer is familiar with the topics of interest at the agency that tend to generate frequently requested records and ensures that these records are posted online.		No	Not at this time.



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NEH	Prior to Fiscal Year, 2016, our FOIA professionals regularly reviewed the NEH FOIA log and automatically evaluated any record that had been requested twice as a potential "frequently requested" record. In Fiscal Year 2016, NEH revised its process for identifying "frequently requested records" and began reviewing all responsive documents for posting to the NEH FOIA Library. With the exception of documents responsive to first-party requests or those involving OIG investigations into an individual, the NEH posted almost all responsive documents to the NEH FOIA Library in Fiscal Year 2016.		No	Please see previous answers.
NSF	The NSF FOIA Officer processes all FOIA requests received by NSF and reviews records for proactive disclosure on a case-by-case basis. The majority of the requests NSF receives are for research proposals. While, NSF rarely receives a request for the same research proposal more than once, the NSF FOIA Officer maintains all requested proposals in a central electronic file by proposal number and the requester last name to facilitate easy identification of frequently requested records.		No	NSF engages with the public through various social media outlets and in-person events such as grants conferences. Based in part on these interactions, NSF continues to update the information on its website that is of public interest.
NTSB	FOIA logs are monitored for "frequently requested" records.		No	None.
USNRC	The agency's FOIA processing system links similar or duplicate requests and identifies frequently requested records.		Yes	Effective June 15, 2015, the staff discontinued the practice of presumptively withholding documents containing fire protection or emergency preparedness information from public release. Since then, the staff has been proactively applying the NRC's policies on protecting sensitive information to the review, release, and withholding of such documents.
OSHRC	Consistent with the recent FOIA amendments, any record requested (or anticipated to be requested) three or more times is flagged by our FOIA professionals and posted online in our e-FOIA Reading Room.		No	The Chief FOIA Officer works to maintain open lines of communication between the FOIA Requester Service Center and key agency personnel. The inclusion of OIP's FOIA infographic in the agency's handbook for new employees reminds them of their role in identifying records suitable for proactive disclosure.
OGE	OGE has included a distinct step in its FOIA processing procedures that directs FOIA professionals to determine whether a record has been subject to previous FOIA requests, and, if so, to flag that record for proactive disclosure in OGE's FOIA log.		No	OGE's FOIA processing procedures direct FOIA professionals to identify records of interest to the public on an ongoing basis and to systematically post such records, whether or not they are responsive to a specific FOIA request.



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OMB	Both "frequently requested" and proactive disclosures are identified through the agency's FOIA processing system. As described in prior years' annual Chief FOIA Officer report, as OMB completes a response to a FOIA request, staff in the relevant program office, the Office of General Counsel (OGC), and the Management and Operations Division (MOD) review those records to determine whether it would be helpful to post any material provided to the requester on OMB's various websites, including examining whether the material is subject to frequent requests.		No	None.
ONHIR	Our process is that if any material has been requested over 3 times we will evaluate it for posting it online. This has not happened yet.		No	None.
OSTP	OSTP is a small agency and does not frequently receive multiple requests for the same or similar records. Should records become "frequently requested," the FOIA professionals will post these records online. Additionally, as described below, OSTP endeavors to proactively disclose records whenever possible.		Yes	OSTP has expanded its efforts to proactively provide the public with information about Administration initiatives through robust use of the OSTP website. OSTP's website now includes descriptions and links for much of OSTP's current work, including timely information about current initiatives. OSTP continues to proactively post more information to its website and does so in ways that will be most useful to the public, as described further in Section IV.
OSC	When OSC receives a request that appears similar to one we have already received, the FOIA Team searches our electronic tracking system for similar requests to discuss at weekly meetings.		Yes	OSC will continue to review and post its FOIA Logs and other releasable materials in 2017.
ODNI	Whenever a direct response is made to a requester under FOIA, those documents are posted to our website. Additionally, based on public interest or world event that are high profile, we may identify records that should be posted.		No	None.
USTR	USTR maintains a centralized tracking system that is sortable by subject matter. Upon receipt of three requests for the same or similar records, the FOIA staff contacts the IT staff to upload the records to www.ustr.gov.		Yes	USTR participated in several interagency Open Government joint stakeholder sessions with civil society where participants were encouraged to provide feedback on the types of information they wanted from USTR. In addition, USTR continues to use social media like Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube as a key medium to publicize information and to engage the public in discussion and awareness of free trade agreement issues.
PC	If we receive three requests asking for the same information, that information is considered for posting by the FOIA Officer.		No	None.
USRRB	We routinely continue to review, analyze and improve our release of "frequently requested" records consulting with agency administration, program, and operation bureaus with an emphasis on routine/recurring requests and website content identified through monitoring our agency FOIA logs and website.		No	None.



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Section III -- Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures (PD)				
Agency	Process for Identifying Frequently Requested Records	System in Place to Identify Other Records for PD	Challenges to Posting Material Online	Other Steps Taken to Increase PDs
SBA	The FOIA team reviews the agency's quarterly FOIA activity numbers for each program office to identify program offices with the highest numbers of FOIA requests. The FOIA team has worked with the program offices with high numbers of FOIA requests to identify the most frequently requested records that should be proactively disclosed on the agency's website.		Yes	None.
STB	If an item is requested three times, or if the Board anticipates that a record might be frequently requested (based upon staff's experience or its review of the Board's FOIA logs), the Board posts that record on its website.		No	The Board's FOIA staff has worked with the Board offices that often develop data to make proactive disclosures in the past. We have also worked to inform these offices of the objective of proactive disclosures under FOIA.
TVA	The FOIA Officer closely monitors information requested under FOIA to identify records that meet the requirement for online posting.		No	We review web analytics from the TVA website to determine stakeholders' primary areas of interest and work to continually improve the content and usability of the information available. We have had no feedback from FOIA requesters indicating an interest in having records they receive in response to FOIA requests posted online.
USAID	USAID has a robust open data program and proactively posts much of its program and project information online. To further its commitment to open data, USAID has included mandatory language in all of its acquisition and assistance awards to indicate that any dataset created during the implementation of the award be submitted and added to USAID's Development Data Library ( <a href="http://www.usaid.gov/data">www.usaid.gov/data</a> ), which is a public repository for Agency-funded, machine readable data. More pointedly, with regard to FOIA, the FOIA Registrar reviews all incoming FOIA requests and scans the database to identify any similar information requests. If more than two (2) similar requests are identified, the responsive documents are reviewed to consider if the information is appropriate for proactive disclosure by virtue of posting online.		Yes	USAID is continually improving proactive disclosures and is doing so by investing in data quality improvements and looking into ways to make data more useable. For example, USAID is undertaking pilot work to see if its International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) data can be automatically mapped to developing countries' AID Information Management Systems. USAID is also examining a theory of change around open data to advance transparency and openness more generally in government. The Agency is launching a connect stream of work to develop guidelines for the responsible use of data by governments to ensure openness and transparency does not infringe on the rights of citizens.
USCPSC	"Frequently requested" records are determined by the Commission's FOIA professionals, based on the subject matter of FOIA requests received by the FOIA office. For example, if the FOIA office receives multiple requests for the same information, and if appropriate requirements have been satisfied, we post the material online. Similarly, documents relating to subjects that have garnered significant public interest routinely are posted online.		Yes	We post information proactively on the Commission's website. Requesters are continuously made aware of the Commission's publicly available website, <a href="http://www.SaferProducts.gov">www.SaferProducts.gov</a> which provides information that was previously only available through FOIA requests.





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Section IV -- Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology			
Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	Examples of Improvements	Posted All FY 2015 Quarterly Reports
NRPC		Amtrak's Instagram, Facebook, Google, Twitter accounts, Blog (Amtrak Blog) and mobile applications allows interaction with the public. Since Amtrak's website is also customer/passenger oriented, Amtrak teamed up with Google to create an interactive train locator map, which is located on www.amtrak.com.	
FRB		The Board's Data Download Program (DDP) has significantly improved the transparency and accessibility of Federal Reserve statistical data. The DDP allows users to download datasets in a variety of electronic formats (Excel, CSV, and XML), either as preformatted or customizable data packages (including charts and graphs), for easy publication or distribution. In addition, the Board has improved the usefulness of information by, for example: creating new charts and redesigning the Financial Accounts of the United States - Z.1 release; adding a new data series in FEDS Notes: Recession Risk and the Excess Bond Premium; and adding the following new data as part of the Enhanced Financial Accounts initiative: Funding Agreement-Backed Securities, and Rest of the World: International Portfolio Investment Holdings of Long-term Securities by Country.	
CFTC		The agency website was completely redesigned in 2016 and features easy access to important information and events at the agency, efficient site navigation, and dynamic dropdown menus for primary and secondary navigation, all of which provide greater transparency of agency actions. In addition to efficient website navigation, the agency has taken other steps to increase proactive disclosure. For example, the agency's program offices routinely provide updated market data ( <a href="http://www.cftc.gov/MarketReports/index.htm">http://www.cftc.gov/MarketReports/index.htm</a> ), industry filings and information about new regulatory developments ( <a href="http://www.cftc.gov/IndustryOversight/IndustryFilings/index.htm">http://www.cftc.gov/IndustryOversight/IndustryFilings/index.htm</a> ). For instance, the Dodd-Frank Act created new entities, Swap Data Repositories ("SDRs"), to provide central facilities for swap data reporting and recordkeeping. The agency's website includes a page on these entities, including FAQs and instructions on how to apply for SDR status ( <a href="http://www.cftc.gov/IndustryOversight/DataRepositories/index.htm">http://www.cftc.gov/IndustryOversight/DataRepositories/index.htm</a> ). The agency allows anyone in the world to sign up on the agency's website to receive updates on specific or all information that is posted on the website. For example, more than 25,000 people receive the agency's press releases, 24,000 received federal register notices and 16,000 received any letter the agency posts to the website. Further, all of the agency's releases are instantly tweeted and posted on Facebook. To date, the agency has over 12,000 Facebook followers and over 16,000 Twitter followers.	
CFPB		In the posted CFPB FOIA Logs, we hyperlink the frequently requested records so they can be viewed without searching the CFPB Reading Room.	
CEQ		CEQ took steps to ensure that information posted to its website was compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.	
CSOSA		CSOSA's FOIA reference guide will be updated to be more useful to the public.	
Ex-Im Bank		Ex-Im Bank continuously updates its website and FOIA page to make information easily accessible to the public and more user friendly. Content on the website is provided either in HTML, PDF, XML and CSV formats. Electronic forms are provided to allow requesters or users to apply for services online. Also, the Bank continues to update the downloadable statistical data relating to Bank transactions.	



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Section IV -- Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology			
Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	Examples of Improvements	Posted All FY 2015 Quarterly Reports
FCC		The FCC's policy on open data is showcased in a webpage providing further links, including: 1) FCC Open Data, enabling public innovation by publishing data underlying FCC regulatory proceedings with a focus on improving quality, openness, accessibility and utility; 2) FCC Developers Page, promoting the innovative application of FCC data by connecting developers with the tools they need to unlock government data; 3) FCC Digital Strategy, the agency's participating in federal cross-agency initiatives to increase data usability and consumption; 4) FCC Data and Information Officers, a roster of FCC staff members dedicated to providing data and information; and 5) FCC blog posts on open government. The webpage may be accessed at <a href="https://www.fcc.gov/general/open-government-fcc">https://www.fcc.gov/general/open-government-fcc</a> .	
FDIC		The FDIC continues to utilize YouTube to make information available to the public. For example, during the reporting period it posted several presentations on YouTube to assist bank employees to understand FDIC deposit insurance rules. The FDIC also posted a video on community bank corporate governance to assist community bank directors and officers in the development of a sound corporate governance framework.	
FEC		During Fiscal Year 2016, the FEC continued work on its website improvement initiative in partnership with 18F, a digital services delivery team in the General Services Administration, with the goal of enhancing the public's access to and the delivery of campaign finance data. The FEC introduced its betaFEC website, which provides members of the public with a first look at a redesign that will bring easier access to the agency's rich data, during the first quarter of FY 2016. The new website is anticipated to go "live" in March 2017.	
FERC		FERC received feedback from users of FERC elibrary expressing their concerns and frustrations on inconsistencies with search and retrieve functionality. As a result FERC has taken measures enhance the FERC elibrary by reducing slowness or downtime and automating frequent checks on eLibrary. These efforts have increased the ability of users to identify material that they may have believed required the submission of a FOIA request.	
FHFA		FHFA-HQ revised its public facing website to make it more user-friendly as well as easier to locate/search for information about FHFA. FHFA-OIG revised its FOIA webpage with more user-friendly information to help requesters understand the FOIA process.	
FLRA		The agency continues to place the most recent decisions, training, and news announcements on the home page of the website. For example, the website has been updated to provide the public information on key agency staff employees and upcoming agency trainings. This is done to provide the public easier access to key agency information. Additionally, during this past reporting period, all of the FOIA pages were updated to make them more user friendly.	
FMCS		In addition to steadily increasing the use of email to correspond with requesters during the processing of requests, FMCS has greatly expanded the use of email to provide a final response with the documents sought as attachments. This has cut some three (3) days from the average response time utilizing the U.S. mail.	



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Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	Examples of Improvements	Posted All FY 2015 Quarterly Reports
FMSHRC		In FY 2015 FMSHRC re-designed its website to make it more user-friendly. The site is easier to navigate as the material is more clearly laid out and organized in simpler categories. All documents are accessible in plain text and PDF format. The site now contains enhanced search capabilities for FMSHRC decisions. In addition, the site contains a PDF version of each volume of the agency's official reporter publishing all substantive agency decisions and orders. In 2016, FMSHRC continued to devise new ways to improve the website experience for our visitors. In the meantime, we do our best to keep the website updated and running smoothly for its visitors.	
GSA		In addition to posting the information and data sets to the web for public access, GSA provides several innovative features and websites to assist the public to access, view, and analyze provided information and data sets. Many of GSA's publicly available information is posted in a format that the user can perform analysis, view charts, graphs, tables and see historical trends either quarterly or annually as most appropriate. Some of the nationwide data has information broken out by region of the country, by metropolitan area including demographical information in many cases and include a background or instructions on what the information is covering and how to understand what is being presented. Many of the posted information pages solicit feedback, including surveys on the usefulness of the information and provide the opportunity for the user of the information to suggest ways that the information can be presented differently in any way that may be more useable. In general, GSA websites that host this information have just undergone a major upgrade to increase compatibility with mobile devices and social media interaction.	
LSC		LSC's website includes a page dedicated exclusively to FOIA. The FOIA page has a user-friendly interface and contains the following categories of information: (1) FOIA Handbook; (2) FOIA Reports; (3) FOIA Public Reading Room; (4) FOIA Appeal Letters; (5) Status of FOIA Requests; (6) Status of FOIA Request Archives. LSC continues to convert information from PDF to HTML format so it is searchable and its website contents are mobile friendly to ensure the public has access to LSC's information and records from tablets and smartphones. LSC increased the use of social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter to highlight and disseminate information about LSC and its grant recipients. Lastly, LSC added a FOIA feedback form on the FOIA page.	
MSPB		In March 2016, we made substantial revisions to our FOIA Requester Service Center page to make it more user-friendly. We continue to evaluate the usefulness of that information and have made additional changes to the page, as appropriate. All FOIA materials, including our annual reports, FY 2016 raw data report, and e-FOIA Reading Room, are available from this page. Our FOIA Requester Service Center page summarizes the categories of records available elsewhere on the MSPB website and includes hyperlinks to allow requesters to easily access those records. In addition, the MSPB website is organized so that records for new and relevant topics—most likely to be of interest to the public—are highlighted and easily accessible from the home page. We continue to use Twitter to inform the public when new information or records are available on our website, including new press releases, reports, and newsletters.	
NASA		The websites are continually updated with the most current information as events occur. The Public Inquiries site updates and posts links to information that is timely, for example the John Glenn, Hidden Figures and Eugene Cernan information.	



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Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	Examples of Improvements	Posted All FY 2015 Quarterly Reports
NCUA		The agency has implemented its website featuring improved navigation and a mobile-responsive design that adapts to facilitate its viewing on various platforms, including smartphones, tablets, laptops, and desktops. Other website features and improvements include: a "Small Credit Union Learning Center" featuring training videos and materials; an online newsroom and social media hub where stakeholders can get the latest news, read articles from The NCUA Report and download graphics and photos; an "I'm a..." search function that allows users to self-identify and quickly access the agency's most frequently requested content; and a consumer section that links to the agency's consumer protection resources, consumer assistance center, share insurance information, and financial literacy materials.	
NEA		NEA is already making its posted information in a useful format.	
NEH		NEH maintains a search results interface which allows users to sort results by various fields. During the reporting period, NEH has increased the accessibility of materials on its website by increasing the amount of alt-text (descriptive text that is inserted or attached to an image and which can be read by machine readers). Also, NEH has improved video accessibility has through the increased use of captions.	
NSF		To facilitate information reaching a broad segment of the public, NSF posts information on different social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. These activities allow the public to interact with NSF and access information in many different ways.	
NTSB		The NTSB is currently revising its website to increase the transparency of information and to optimize usability. The new website will better highlight investigation information of interest to the public, and better integrate investigative documentation for public consumption.	
USNRC		The agency has a single, unified public site, available at <a href="http://www.nrc.gov">http://www.nrc.gov</a> , for public users to perform full-text searches of all NRC public records, Web pages, and files. A search can be conducted by a specific topic. The site also has an advanced search feature for all NRC public records with full access to metadata attributes. After a review of the NRC FOIA Web site, a new search field was added to shorten the time spent by the public searching for records that have been provided to requesters in FOIA responses. The addition of the search field box makes the public repository of FOIA responses more user-friendly because it enables the public to more effectively wade through thousands of pages of FOIA responses and find what they may be looking for; which reduces the need for making a FOIA request.	
OSHRC		Decisions issued by both levels of adjudication at OSHRC, which are of particular interest to the regulated community, are easily accessed on the agency's website via a dropdown menu that organizes the decisions by year. The website's search function allows any individual to research a topic of interest using natural word searches. Also, records that OSHRC posts on its dedicated FOIA webpage and in its comprehensive e-FOIA Reading Room are posted in the most useful format (both PDF and/or HTML file types). Records are also posted in the same format on the website's Open Government page. Additionally, FOIA professionals are trained to provide any voluntary feedback received from requesters to the Chief FOIA Officer for review and evaluation.	



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Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	Examples of Improvements	Posted All FY 2015 Quarterly Reports
OGE		OGE continues to use highlighted features on its website homepage and its Twitter account to provide public-friendly explanations of OGE's mission and direct individuals to newly posted information.	
OMB		OMB is the process of updating its websites. As the agency transitions to new websites, OMB continues to look for ways to make more information available to the public and easy to use. This can include allowing the public to provide feedback, ratings, and access machine-readable datasets on a variety of topics.	
ONHIR		No.	
OSTP		OSTP uses its website to offer the public a variety of information that might otherwise be requested through FOIA. As described above, the agency has placed various documents, memoranda, testimony, federal charters, and R&D budgets on its website for the public to view at its convenience, as well as its Open Government Plan. OSTP maintains a blog, Twitter account, and a virtual Press Room, each of which offers the public a window into the different initiatives and activities spearheaded by the agency. Through these new media outlets, OSTP can reach a larger audience than is possible through a FOIA request or through posting in OSTP's FOIA library online. OSTP also provides materials to the public to improve ease of use. For instance, OSTP has posted helpful documents for the public related to its FOIA process, including a handbook that compiled existing FOIA information into a single, handy reference document. This FOIA Reference Guide includes pertinent information such as the President's FOIA Memorandum, the Attorney General's FOIA Guidelines, the Chief of Staff's FOIA Memorandum, OSTP's FOIA regulations, and a link to the Department of Justice, Office of Information Policy's guidelines. These documents aid the staff and the public and provide additional information on Federal activities and FOIA policies.	
OSC		OSC will continue to index its publicly-posted materials.	
ODNI		ODNI is currently making information available in its most useful format on our website to include sub-categorizing common reports, policies, and documents for easy retrieval purposes. The ODNI allows keyword searches on our website for the general public to pursue documents that most interests their needs.	
USTR		In FY2015, USTR updated its website to improve significantly the readability and usability of the information, and to embrace more modern design paradigms to match the expectations of Internet users. USTR continues to post information in easily consumable formats both on the website itself and through highly popular social media platforms such as Twitter and Medium.	
PC		The agency is taking steps toward expanding the Open Government component (and there is a public input form on the website soliciting ideas).	
USRRB		In FY 2016, the RRB digitized, indexed, and catalogued 258 binders of Legal Opinions maintained in the Board's Office of General Counsel so they are electronically retrievable through www.rrb.gov by Board staff and the public, including attorneys, claimants, railroad employers, etc.	



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Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	Examples of Improvements	Posted All FY 2015 Quarterly Reports
SBA		In the last year, the agency has changed the visual appearance of the SBA.gov website. Larger font, easy-to-read white space v. lettering format, improved quality and relevancy of the SBA program content posted are all noticeable improvements. These improvements are a result of collaborative efforts by the Office of Communications and Public Liaison and the Office of the Chief Information Officer.	
STB		In an effort to make our posted economic data more user-friendly, the Board posts many reports in both XML and searchable pdf (as it does with its annual FOIA reports). Additionally, the Board provides complicated programs that it uses in its cases and industry analysis (such as the Uniform Railroad Cost System; see <a href="https://www.stb.gov/stb/industry/urcs.html">https://www.stb.gov/stb/industry/urcs.html</a> ). This enables interested parties to independently follow and even evaluate the Board's work. The Board also posts to its website many of its worksheets as Excel spreadsheets.	
TVA		In 2015, we executed a complete overhaul of TVA's web properties to enhance our ability to make information available to our users. The web redesign focused on streamlining available content, a mobile-first approach, improved usability, and an all-new search engine. TVA also has a Lake Info app, an easy-to-use resource for operating on and around reservoirs and dams in the TVA region. TVA has several feedback mechanisms in place for website visitors to comment on all aspects of information posted on its website and strives for continuous improvement.	
USAID		<p>USAID established USAID Open—a front door function in Washington, DC—to respond to inquiries received from the general public. USAID Open, through its public email address (<a href="mailto:open@usaid.gov">open@usaid.gov</a>) and the public inquiries phone line (202-712-4810), responds to public inquiries by directing the public to information already available on the <a href="http://usaid.gov">usaid.gov</a> website, or forwarding queries to the appropriate bureau or independent office to obtain relevant information for an accurate response.</p> <p>Through the use of social media (e.g., Facebook and Twitter), USAID posts information for public consumption to these channels on a regular basis. These platforms provide a way for the public to engage with the agency on a variety of subjects. In addition, the public can sign-up for newsletters and other types of updates. USAID maintains a number of mailing lists you can join for updates on USAID activities (<a href="https://www.usaid.gov/stayconnected">https://www.usaid.gov/stayconnected</a>). Further, USAID's new captivating storytelling experience (<a href="https://stories.usaid.gov/">https://stories.usaid.gov/</a>) conveys the stories of individuals, families, and communities in transformation.</p> <p>Specific improvements include the following:</p> <p>In fiscal year 2016, USAID updated Dollars to Results (<a href="https://results.usaid.gov/">https://results.usaid.gov/</a>) with fiscal year 2015 data for the 44 countries listed on the website. Users can now view fiscal year 2015 financial data and high-level information at the country, sector, or subsector level with the results shown at the subsector level. Dollars to Results was presented at the International Open Data Conference in Madrid, Spain in October 2016. After the presentation, users filled out a survey on USAID's data portals—including the Dollars to Results site—so that</p>	



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Section IV -- Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology			
Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	Examples of Improvements	Posted All FY 2015 Quarterly Reports
USAID (cont'd)		<p>USAID can learn how to improve the site and raise awareness about its data portals. In Fiscal Year 2016, USAID implemented the first three (3) phases of the IATI cost management plan (<a href="https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1870/usaid/iati-cost-management-plan">https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1870/usaid/iati-cost-management-plan</a>), publishing a total of 17 new fields and making considerable progress delivering on its IATI commitments. As a result, USAID achieved a 19 percentage point increase between 2014 and 2016 in Publish What You Fund's Aid Transparency Index. USAID also developed the capability to report in XML, and streamlined its internal processes for removing sensitive information prior to public, including more clearly noting to the public when the Agency redacted information.</p> <p>Using its information technology expertise and the modern, agile development process, the Power Africa Tracking Tool (PATT) (<a href="https://www.usaid.gov/power-africa/newsletter/jan2016/powerafrica-trackingtool">https://www.usaid.gov/power-africa/newsletter/jan2016/powerafrica-trackingtool</a>) is a mobile application that makes data on electricity publicly available in Sub-Saharan Africa.</p>	
USCPSC		<p>The CPSC regularly updates and redesigns its website to improve its usability, partly based on comments from the public and agency stakeholders. CPSC is in the process of making our website more compatible to consumers who access the Internet through mobile devices, which will improve the usefulness and availability of information found on CPSC.gov. The CPSC website directs the public to post their comments on regulatory matters on <a href="http://www.Regulations.gov">www.Regulations.gov</a>, which allows the public to review all comments on a given matter. The CPSC's technical staff also solicits comments from the public for statistical reports that are posted. The website also offers a way for consumers or businesses to contact the agency by email. The website also provides a quarterly listing of Letters of Advice (LOAs), which inform manufacturers and importers of violations of safety standards and notify them of the corrective action required.</p>	



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Section V -- Steps Taken to Improve Timeliness in Responding to Requests (Req.) and Reducing Backlogs																	
Agency	Simple Track				Agency Backlog Decreased		Percentage of Backlog to # of Req./App. Received in FY 2015				Agency Closed Ten Oldest Req., Appeals (App.) & Consultations (Consults.). If not, # closed in FY 2015						
	Has a Simple Track?	Score	Avg. No. of Days to Process	% of Req. In Simple Track	Req.	App.	Req. Score	Req. %	App. Score	App. %	Req.	If no, # closed	# closed as "Req. Withdrawn"	App.	If no, # closed	Consults.	If no, # closed
NRPC	Yes		20.98	42%				32%		250%		5/10	2		3/8		N/A
FRB	Yes		9	53%				6%		18%		N/A	0		N/A		N/A
CFTC	Yes		77.64	60%				13%		0%		7/10	1		N/A		N/A
CFPB	Yes		10.09	94%				<1%		0%		N/A	0		N/A		N/A
CEQ	Yes		135	18%				64%		0%		9/10	2		N/A		N/A
CSOSA	Yes		22.15	99%				<1%		0%		N/A	0		N/A		N/A
Ex-Im Bank	Yes		26.3	53%				27%		0%		8/10	0		N/A		N/A
FCC	Yes		22.57	93%				1%		39%		N/A	2		9/10		N/A
FDIC	Yes		14.11	55%				<1%		0%		N/A	0		N/A		N/A
FEC	Yes		21.3	72%				36%		100%		0/10	0		0/4		N/A
FERC	Yes		34	87%				10%		0%		7/10	0		N/A		N/A
FHFA	Yes		8.48	81%				7%		0%		4/10	1		N/A		N/A
FLRA	Yes		8	90%				0%		0%		N/A	0		N/A		N/A
FMCS	Yes		41	90%				3%		0%		3/4	0		N/A		N/A
FMSHRC	Yes		2.15	77%				0%		0%		N/A	1		N/A		N/A
GSA	Yes		9.97	53%				5%		12%		N/A	0		N/A		N/A
LSC	No		10.7	N/A				0%		0%		N/A	0		N/A		N/A
MSPB	Yes		53.7	89%				33%		18%		5/10	2		N/A		N/A
NASA	Yes		10.34	61%				<1%		15%		N/A	0		N/A		N/A
NCUA	Yes		4.07	43%				0%		0%		N/A	1		N/A		N/A





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Section V -- Steps Taken to Improve Timeliness in Responding to Requests (Req.) and Reducing Backlogs																	
Agency	Simple Track				Agency Backlog Decreased		Percentage of Backlog to # of Req./App. Received in FY 2015				Agency Closed Ten Oldest Req., Appeals (App.) & Consultations (Consults.). If not, # closed in FY 2015						
	Has a Simple Track?	Score	Avg. No. of Days to Process	% of Req. In Simple Track	Req.	App.	Req. Score	Req. %	App. Score	App. %	Req.	If no, # closed	# closed as "Req. Withdrawn"	App.	If no, # closed	Consults.	If no, # closed
NEA	Yes	█	12	95%	█	█	█	0%	█	0%	█	N/A	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
NEH	Yes	█	13.1	87%	█	█	█	0%	█	0%	█	N/A	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
NSF	Yes	█	39	11%	█	█	█	61%	█	0%	█	9/10	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
NTSB	Yes	█	332.36	31%	█	█	█	128%	█	57%	█	N/A	2	█	6/10	█	N/A
USNRC	Yes	█	8	81%	█	█	█	3%	█	<1%	█	N/A	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
OSHRC	Yes	█	9.75	94%	█	█	█	0%	█	0%	█	N/A	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
OGE	No	█	12.6	N/A	█	█	█	0%	█	0%	█	N/A	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
OMB	No	█	131	N/A	█	█	█	39%	█	133%	█	5/10	0	█	3/5	█	N/A
ONHIR	No	█	1.58	N/A	█	█	█	0%	█	0%	█	N/A	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
OSTP	Yes	█	13.13	81%	█	█	█	24%	█	0%	█	5/10	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
OSC	Yes	█	135.16	32%	█	█	█	124%	█	44%	█	3/10	1	█	7/10	█	2/3
ODNI	Yes	█	46.65	62%	█	█	█	76%	█	62%	█	9/10	0	█	7/10	█	N/A
USTR	Yes	█	24	38%	█	█	█	19%	█	0%	█	7/10	1	█	N/A	█	6/7
PC	Yes	█	65	81%	█	█	█	45%	█	0%	█	6/10	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
USRRB	No	█	12.85	N/A	█	█	█	11%	█	0%	█	5/10	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
SBA	No	█	12.47	N/A	█	█	█	2%	█	0%	█	N/A	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
STB	No	█	9.22	N/A	█	█	█	0%	█	0%	█	N/A	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
TVA	Yes	█	6	73%	█	█	█	6%	█	0%	█	N/A	0	█	N/A	█	N/A
USAID	Yes	█	30.77	7%	█	█	█	84%	█	35%	█	N/A	1	█	N/A	█	N/A
USCPSC	Yes	█	28	22%	█	█	█	24%	█	0	█	8/10	5	█	N/A	█	N/A



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Agency	Training		Informed non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations	Efforts to inform non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
NRPC	DG	100%	DG	An internal FOIA training was conducted by the FOIA Office. Amtrak employees were instructed on the rules and regulations of the FOIA and the importance of Amtrak complying with these regulations.
FRB	DG	95%	DG	The Board has modified its search request to Board staff to notify non-FOIA professionals of their obligation to provide any documents deemed to be potentially responsive to a FOIA request in order to help ensure that an adequate search is conducted and that all potentially responsive documents are identified. In addition, the Board has incorporated OIP's FOIA training modules into the Board's internal training application, which is accessible by all Board staff.
CFTC	DG	50%	DG	FOIA professionals met with subject matter experts throughout the agency to explain the importance of providing documents in a timely fashion regardless of whether or not they will not be withheld, to explain the foreseeable harm standard that has been codified in the FOIA Improvement Act, to explain that requests have to be interpreted broadly under FOIA, and to explain fee limitations depending upon the requester's fee category. These discussions resulted in greater understanding of agency staff responsibilities under FOIA, more timely searches for records and, increased discussions between FOIA requesters and agency subject matter experts to facilitate clearer understanding of record types and records sought which has led to more efficient FOIA processing.



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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
CFPB	DG	100%	DG	The CFPB FOIA Office provided training to each CFPB program office and the FOIA Points of Contact within each program office. We also provide a FOIA briefing at each New Employee Orientation.
CEQ	DG	50%	DG	Consistent with previous years, all new CEQ entrants – interns, clerks, detailees, and staff – are required to attend training within 30 days of their start date. This training instructs new entrants on their obligations under the FOIA and the Federal Records Act. The training also covered [FOIA memoranda] and the presumption of openness. Also, long-term employees must attend an annual refresher training which reiterates CEQ’s FOIA obligations and the presumption of openness. Personnel who work on FOIA issues have reviewed [FOIA memoranda]. Given CEQ’s relatively small size, CEQ provides targeted in-person training and legal counseling to all CEQ staff, detailees, interns, and clerks who help process incoming FOIA requests and consultations.
CSOSA	DG	100%	DG	CSOSA’s FOIA Office created a Search Memorandum that is sent to program offices within the agency. This Search Memorandum describes the FOIA requests and their obligations under the FOIA. Furthermore, the FOIA Office created a one-page infographic that provides a snapshot of what FOIA is and how requests are processed. Lastly, training is provided to new staff members during new hire orientation.
Ex-Im Bank	DG	100%	DG	The FOIA Office has met with various components within the Agency to discuss various aspects of the FOIA process, most significant being how to conduct a reasonable search.



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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
FCC	DG	80%	DG	The FCC's online training portal includes a FOIA Training for Federal Employees module. This module takes less than an hour to complete and is directed at employees who are not FOIA professionals, but who may need to provide records in response to a FOIA request or are otherwise interested in the FOIA process.
FDIC	DG	100%	DG	The Department of Justice's e-Learning module FOIA Training for All Employees has been made available online to all employees through the FDIC's Corporate University.
FEC	DG	85%	R	The Agency did not undertake any such efforts in FY 2016.
FERC	DG	80%	DG	Training for new employees and refresher training advise individuals of their role and obligations under FOIA. This includes their role of providing responsive material along with their views regarding the impact of the possible release of such material. These elements are critical to have a successful FOIA program.
FHFA	DG	100%	DG	Each office within FHFA-HQ has designated a staff member to be a liaison between the office and the FOIA Office to assist in responding to FOIA requests. Each liaison received refresher training on their duties and responsibilities as the liaison between their office and the FHFA-HQ FOIA Office. In particular, the training focused on their role in identifying individuals who might have responsive records and ensuring that thorough and adequate searches of records where conducted. The FHFA-OIG provided guidance to non-FOIA professionals in OIG on an as-needed basis.



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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
FLRA	DG	100%	DG	The Chief FOIA Officer kept agency leadership aware of the overall performance of the FOIA program and also notified them about changes the agency would need to make to comply with the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016.
FMCS	DG	100%	DG	While not engaged in any formal initiatives, the CFO has initiated numerous informal conversations with non-FOIA professionals of the Agency – principally, IT personnel, mediators and mediator supervisors, and Regional Directors with geographical field responsibility – to educate them as to their responsibilities under the FOIA.
FMSHRC	DG	33%	DG	We provide FOIA training to our FOIA staff, including all new hires within their first 60 days. Our last training was on August 10, 2016. On September 14, 2016, we provided our management and executive staff with OIP’s Senior Executive Briefing.
GSA	DG	100%	DG	GSA FOIA professionals engage GSA’s non-FOIA professionals through a variety of outreach meetings and training sessions, as well as presenting at assigned Directors and GSA Office and Division staff meetings. GSA employees are continually made aware that FOIA is every employee’s responsibility. During these times, FOIA professionals are able to reiterate the importance of FOIA and Records Management responsibilities as well as provide necessary training and updates. Additionally, the GSA Chief FOIA Officer sends out memorandums with updates and key information regarding FOIA processes and responsibilities in a continued effort to ensure accountability of the FOIA program at GSA. Also, during this reporting period,



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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
GSA (cont'd)				the GSA FOIA professionals provided full FOIA and Records Management training to the Federal government employees that were selected to work on the Presidential Transition Teams.
LSC	DG	100%	DG	<p>Guidance Provided: On January 18, 2017, LSC's President issued a comprehensive memorandum to all LSC staff regarding FOIA compliance. This memorandum has been disseminated in past years and provides background on FOIA and LSC's disclosure obligations, including: (1) a detailed description of how FOIA requests are processed (including general intake, approval or denial of requests, conducting searches for responsive documents, document review and determination of disclosure, and appeals); (2) guidance on the role of staff members in processing FOIA requests; and (3) information on maintaining records in LSC's FOIA Reading Rooms (including proactively disclosed documents and other records routinely made available to the public). The Guidance also described the changes to LSC's FOIA regulations, which became effective on December 16, 2016.</p> <p>Training Provided: In February 2017, LSC will hold a mandatory FOIA training session for all employees hired since the last mandatory FOIA training sessions in February 2016. This training will cover the following: (1) general overview of FOIA, (2) LSC's obligations under FOIA, and (3) LSC's system for responding to FOIA requests. The training will also address the importance of complying with FOIA and the presumption of openness and will highlight LSC's improvements in FOIA over the last several years.</p>



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Agency	Training		Informed non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations	Efforts to inform non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
LSC (cont'd)				The training will also be offered to veteran employees as an optional refresher training. LSC's OIG will also conduct a FOIA refresher training for OIG employees in February that covers the same topics as the LSC training. In addition to the training and guidance described above, LSC also incorporates basic FOIA compliance into its onboarding procedures for new employees.
MSPB	DG	100%	DG	MSPB took several steps this year to raise awareness of FOIA obligations for non-FOIA professionals. With the addition of a new, full-time Government Information Specialist (GIS), search memos to program offices are more thorough and detailed. Additionally, during Sunshine Week 2016, MSPB's Chief FOIA Officer sent a series of agency-wide emails that explained the purpose and history of Sunshine Week; how MSPB's FOIA program operates, including how requests are processed; the statutory deadline requirements; and each employee's role regarding FOIA. The all-employee emails included links to MSPB's FOIA reports, OIP's FOIA Infographic, and ways to obtain more information on FOIA. During Sunshine Week, MSPB's senior staff members received a separate email asking them to view OIP's video specifically for agency senior executives and reminding them that "FOIA is everyone's responsibility."
NASA	DG	100%	DG	FOIA Staff are providing overview training to other staff throughout the Agency.
NCUA	DG	100%	DG	The agency offered all employees privacy training covering their FOIA obligations in 2016.



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Agency	Training		Informed non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations	Efforts to inform non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
NEA	DG	95%	DG	NEA employees are notified of their responsibilities under the FOIA at their newcomer's orientation. We have also placed the FOIA learning modules by DOJ in our NEA Knowledge University library making available for all employees.
NEH	DG	70%	DG	Our primary FOIA professional conducts one-on-one training verbally and in writing, as needed, to provide refreshers about the FOIA responsibilities and to respond to specific questions.
NSF	DG	100%	DG	The FOIA Officer makes a presentation about FOIA at bi-weekly New Employee Orientation Training sessions.
NTSB	DG	100%	DG	Staff are sent emails describing the requested records, the procedure/process for maintaining the records and the procedure/process for sending the record to the FOIA Office.
USNRC	DG	100%	DG	The NRC FOIA staff planned and conducted a FOIA seminar in May 2016, which was open to all agency employees and covered a variety of topics of interest to staff. This seminar included guest speakers from DOJ/OIP. The agency's FOIA officer as well as acting FOIA officer provided FOIA training to agency leadership and program office personnel. Topics covered included an overview of the FOIA, exemptions, and the role and responsibilities of program offices and employees. The NRC also recommended that non-FOIA staff take the DOJ Module "FOIA Training for Federal Employees" as well as participate in the above-mentioned trainings.





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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
OSHRC	DG	80%	DG	OSHRC's handbook for new employees continues to include OIP's 2015 infographic to immediately apprise employees of the role they play in the FOIA process. Additionally, in accordance with OIP's guidance, the Chief FOIA Officer notified all OSHRC personnel of their responsibility under the Federal Records Act to provide any records in a non-official email account that have not been copied into an OSHRC email account if such records are responsive to a FOIA request. In conjunction with this notification, OSHRC revised the search requests that its FOIA professionals provide non-FOIA personnel to assist in processing FOIA requests so that the requests now include information regarding records contained in non-official email accounts.
OGE	DG	100%	DG	Through email and staff meeting reminders, OGE's FOIA professionals regularly inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under the FOIA, particularly that any documents created or maintained as part of the non-FOIA professional's job may be responsive to a FOIA request.
OMB	DG	100%	DG	Outside of the few staff members that perform FOIA work on a regular basis, personnel throughout the agency may be assigned FOIA responsibilities periodically. To ensure that this staff is properly trained, OMB's staff who work with FOIA more frequently continue to offer guidance tailored to the specific needs of other staff members. Typically, this guidance will address specific issues, which can include discussing the legal framework of FOIA, such as the applicability of an exemption, or offering practical best practices, including how to most efficiently conduct a search for records.



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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
ONHIR	R	0%	R	We took no actions of this type.
OSTP	DG	100%	DG	To ensure that all OSTP personnel are knowledgeable of the presumption of openness, every OSTP employee receives a basic overview of relevant FOIA responsibilities and their roles and responsibilities as records custodians under the Federal Records Act (FRA) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) as part of their orientation training upon beginning official duty with OSTP. In Fiscal Year 2016, OSTP continued to distribute OIP's FOIA infographic into the agency's onboarding materials for new employees. OSTP now provides this one-page infographic as a resource on FOIA basics for all new employees upon their arrival at OSTP. OSTP and its dedicated open government team also continue to lead by example in supporting Federal open government and transparency efforts. OSTP's open government staff helps to coordinate the Administration's participation in the global Open Government Partnership (OGP), a platform where nearly 70 countries promote transparency, accountability and citizen engagement.
OSC	DG	100%	DG	OSC included a FOIA training component in its September 2016 agency-wide conference.



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	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
ODNI	DG	100%	DG	ODNI is developing in-house FOIA slides. Upon completion, they will be posted on the IMD Outreach and Training website. The slides will be used by its public access professionals for training purposes. Until the FOIA slides are in place, ODNI provides in-house training to its FOIA professionals. High-level training is made available to the workforce. ODNI also provides community outreach, inviting speakers from other agencies to discuss topics of interest as part of our IC FOIA Day. ODNI has partnered with other agencies such as DoD to leverage existing training. ODNI implemented a plan from last year and provided brown bag training regularly for non-FOIA professionals who are routinely tasked with conducting FOIA search and review.
USTR	DG	75%	DG	The FOIA staff has provided advice and counsel concerning obligations under the FOIA to USTR staff in small group settings either in response to questions or in the process of responding to a particular FOIA request.
PC	DG	100%	DG	The FOIA Office provides training to new employees through the New Employee Orientation. We inform FOIA points-of-contact with a one-to-one introduction, as well as group training. Additionally, we conduct annual supervisory training.
USRRB	DG	100%	DG	All agency employees participate in annual mandatory Privacy Awareness training and are trained on their obligations pursuant to the FOIA.



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Agency	Training		Informed non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations	Efforts to inform non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
SBA	DG	100%	DG	Office of Information Policy FOIA Training Video - Each SBA employee has an account in the agency's Learning Management System (LMS) with a mandatory curriculum of online trainings to be completed once a year. During this reporting period, SBA implemented a change to include the Office of Information Policy's FOIA training video in the LMS as a mandatory requirement for all of the agency's employees.
STB	DG	100%	DG	The Board's FOIA office created a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "FOIA Perspective for Record Keeping" and presented it to the entire Board, as part of a broader records presentation. The FOIA part of the presentation was designed to further inform staff about what FOIA required and how be prepared for a FOIA records search.
TVA	DG	100%	DG	FOIA training and counsel is provided to agency personnel by the FOIA Officer and TVA's advisory attorney year-round, as needed. TVA's standard operating procedures governing communications incorporate the presumption of openness and outline the responsibilities of all agency personnel to comply with the requirements of FOIA.
USAID	DG	100%	DG	USAID is committed to FOIA compliance and, as such, recognizes the need to inform all of its employees, including non-FOIA professionals, of their role and obligation in this regard. To this end, USAID employs a variety of mechanisms to promulgate the important responsibility enterprise-wide. Related governing policy is codified in the Agency's Automated Directive Systems and agency-wide notices covering various FOIA topics are distributed. A variety of training



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Agency	Training		Informed non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations	Efforts to inform non-FOIA staff of FOIA obligations
	Attended FOIA Training	Estimate of FOIA Professionals who Attended Training		
USAID (cont'd)				opportunities are provided as well. For example, the Agency FOIA Public Liaison delivered a FOIA overview at each of the newly rolled out M Bureau Knowledge and Learning Program (MKL) trainings last year. MKL is the USAID Bureau for Management's corporate program that provides an integrated approach to knowledge sharing and training on operations processes, systems and tools. In addition, a one week-long Records Management and FOIA Access Training targeting various audiences was delivered worldwide. The FOIA topics provide an overview of the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016, as well as describes how to scope a request, conduct a search for responsive records in response to a FOIA request, provide release recommendations, and the importance of administrative records, to help ensure compliance. In Calendar Year 2016, there were nine (9) sessions held globally. As needed, other briefings and information sessions are used to inform USAID employees at all levels, regardless of labor category, of their FOIA responsibilities.
USCPSC	DG	100%	DG	The Office of the General Counsel provided detailed training on FOIA and related obligations to non-FOIA staff. The training involved topics including interpreting the scope of a FOIA request, the obligations involved in searching for agency records and the CPSC'S Exemption 3 statutory obligations. This year the Secretariat FOIA office and Office of General Counsel conducted in-house training for the program office designees or liaisons on the requirements for conducting FOIA searches and to provide all responsive information, regardless of sensitivity, to the FOIA office for a final determination on release.



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Section II -- Steps Taken to Ensure that Agency Has an Effective System in Place for Responding to Requests (Req.)				
Agency	Requests for Expedited Processing		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide
	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		
NRPC	DG	1.0	DG	<a href="http://www.amtrak.com/foia">www.amtrak.com/foia</a>
FRB	DG	8.0	DG	<a href="https://www.federalreserve.gov/foia/about_foia.htm">https://www.federalreserve.gov/foia/about_foia.htm</a>
CFTC	N/A	N/A	DG	<a href="http://www.cftc.gov/FOI/foiarequests">http://www.cftc.gov/FOI/foiarequests</a>
CFPB	DG	1.0	DG	<a href="http://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201204_cfpb_foia-and-pa-request-">http://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201204_cfpb_foia-and-pa-request-</a>
CEQ	DG	10.0	DG	<a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ceq/foia_handbook_2-27-12.pdf">https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ceq/foia_handbook_2-27-12.pdf</a>
CSOSA	N/A	N/A	DG	<a href="http://www.csosa.gov/about/foia/csosa-guide.aspx">http://www.csosa.gov/about/foia/csosa-guide.aspx</a>
Ex-Im Bank	DG	2.0	DG	<a href="http://www.exim.gov/about/foia">http://www.exim.gov/about/foia</a>
FCC	DG	8.7	DG	<a href="http://transition.fcc.gov/foia/foiahandbook.pdf">http://transition.fcc.gov/foia/foiahandbook.pdf</a>
FDIC	DG	6.2	DG	<a href="https://www.fdic.gov/about/freedom/Guide.html">https://www.fdic.gov/about/freedom/Guide.html</a>
FEC	DG	8.0	DG	<a href="http://www.fec.gov/press/foia.shtml">http://www.fec.gov/press/foia.shtml</a>
FERC	DG	8.0	DG	<a href="https://www.ferc.gov/resources/guides/filing-guide/foia-request.asp">https://www.ferc.gov/resources/guides/filing-guide/foia-request.asp</a>
FHFA	DG	1.7	DG	FHFA-HQ - <a href="https://www.fhfa.gov/AboutUs/FOIAPrivacy/Pages/FOIA-Reference-Guide.aspx">https://www.fhfa.gov/AboutUs/FOIAPrivacy/Pages/FOIA-Reference-Guide.aspx</a> . FHFA-OIG - <a href="https://fhfaoig.gov/FOIA">https://fhfaoig.gov/FOIA</a> .
FLRA	DG	5.8	DG	<a href="https://www.flra.gov/freedom-information-act-program">https://www.flra.gov/freedom-information-act-program</a>
FMCS	N/A	N/A	DG	<a href="https://www.fmcs.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/YourRightToFederalRecords.pdf">https://www.fmcs.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/YourRightToFederalRecords.pdf</a>
FMSHRC	DG	2.0	DG	<a href="https://www.fmshrc.gov/guides/foia-guide">https://www.fmshrc.gov/guides/foia-guide</a>
GSA	DG	1.4	DG	<a href="https://www.gsa.gov/graphics/staffoffices/PublicInformationHandbook.doc">https://www.gsa.gov/graphics/staffoffices/PublicInformationHandbook.doc</a>
LSC	DG	4.8	DG	<a href="http://www.lsc.gov/about-lsc/foia/foia-handbook">http://www.lsc.gov/about-lsc/foia/foia-handbook</a>
MSPB	DG	2.7	DG	<a href="http://www.mspb.gov/foia/request.htm">http://www.mspb.gov/foia/request.htm</a>
NASA	DG	2.8	DG	<a href="https://www.nasa.gov/FOIA/guidance.html">https://www.nasa.gov/FOIA/guidance.html</a>



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Agency	Requests for Expedited Processing		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide
	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		
NCUA	DG	4.0	DG	<a href="https://www.ncua.gov/Resources/Documents/FOIA/FOIAHandbook.pdf">https://www.ncua.gov/Resources/Documents/FOIA/FOIAHandbook.pdf</a>
NEA	DG	6.0	DG	<a href="https://www.arts.gov/freedom-information-act-guide">https://www.arts.gov/freedom-information-act-guide</a>
NEH	DG	3.0	DG	<a href="https://www.neh.gov/about/foia/how-to-submit-foia-request">https://www.neh.gov/about/foia/how-to-submit-foia-request</a>
NSF	N/A	N/A	DG	<a href="https://www.nsf.gov/policies/foia.jsp">https://www.nsf.gov/policies/foia.jsp</a>
NTSB	R	58.0	DG	<a href="https://www.nts.gov/about/foia/Pages/foia_requests.aspx">https://www.nts.gov/about/foia/Pages/foia_requests.aspx</a>
USNRC	DG	1.0	DG	<a href="https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/foia/foia-privacy.html">https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/foia/foia-privacy.html</a>
OSHRC	DG	3.0	DG	<a href="http://www.oshrc.gov/foia/foiaguide.html">http://www.oshrc.gov/foia/foiaguide.html</a> [updated version in progress]
OGE	N/A	N/A	DG	<a href="https://www.oge.gov/Web/OGE.nsf/Freedom%20of%20Information%20Act%20(FOIA)/431FE97135A2CF85257EF5006DAABF?opendocument">https://www.oge.gov/Web/OGE.nsf/Freedom%20of%20Information%20Act%20(FOIA)/431FE97135A2CF85257EF5006DAABF?opendocument</a>
OMB	N/A	N/A	DG	<a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/foia">https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/foia</a>
ONHIR	N/A	N/A	R	We do not have a FOIA reference guide.
OSTP	R	57.5	DG	<a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/foia">https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/foia</a>
OSC	DG	9.7	DG	<a href="https://osc.gov/Pages/FOIA-Handbook.aspx">https://osc.gov/Pages/FOIA-Handbook.aspx</a>
ODNI	DG	1.0	DG	<a href="https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/FOIA/odni_foia_handbook.pdf">https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/FOIA/odni_foia_handbook.pdf</a>
USTR	DG	8.0	DG	<a href="https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/Office-of-the-US-Trade-Representative-FOIA-Reference-Guide.pdf">https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/Office-of-the-US-Trade-Representative-FOIA-Reference-Guide.pdf</a>
PC	N/A	N/A	DG	<a href="https://www.peacecorps.gov/about/open-government/foia/">https://www.peacecorps.gov/about/open-government/foia/</a>
USRRB	N/A	N/A	DG	<a href="http://www.rrb.gov/blaw/foia/foia.asp">http://www.rrb.gov/blaw/foia/foia.asp</a>
SBA	DG	4.5	DG	<a href="https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-performance/open-government/foia/general-foia-information">https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-performance/open-government/foia/general-foia-information</a>
STB	N/A	N/A	DG	<a href="https://www.stb.gov/stb/docs/FOIA/FOIA%20Reference%20Guide_files/FOIARefDoc.html">https://www.stb.gov/stb/docs/FOIA/FOIA%20Reference%20Guide_files/FOIARefDoc.html</a>



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**Section II -- Steps Taken to Ensure that Agency Has an Effective System in Place for Responding to Requests (Req.)**

Agency	Requests for Expedited Processing		Agency posted FOIA Reference Guide online	Link to FOIA Reference Guide
	Did agency maintain an avg. of 10 calendar days or less to adjudicate expedition?	Avg. Time to Adjudicate		
TVA	DG	5.0	DG	<a href="https://www.tva.com/Information/Freedom-of-Information/A-Guide-to-Information-About-The-Tennessee-Valley-Authority">https://www.tva.com/Information/Freedom-of-Information/A-Guide-to-Information-About-The-Tennessee-Valley-Authority</a>
USAID	DG	3.1	DG	<a href="https://www.usaid.gov/foia-requests">https://www.usaid.gov/foia-requests</a>
USCPSC	DG	3.0	DG	<a href="https://www.cpsc.gov/Newsroom/FOIA">https://www.cpsc.gov/Newsroom/FOIA</a>





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Section III -- Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures (PD)				
Agency	Process for Identifying Frequently Requested Records	System in Place to Identify Other Records for PD	Challenges to Posting Material Online	Other Steps Taken to Increase PDs
NRPC	The FOIA Office makes decisions regarding the disclosure of frequently requested records and departments are notified. Amtrak is currently in the process of setting up a more formal process for identifying frequently requested records.	DG	No	Not at this time.
FRB	When the Board receives a FOIA request, FOIA professionals use processing software to identify previous requests for the same or similar records. If it is determined that multiple requests for records subject to disclosure under the FOIA have been received, the documents are deemed "frequently requested" and are posted on the Board's website.	DG	Yes	None.
CFTC	The agency routinely monitors its FOIA logs to determine if records have been frequently requested. However, the agency does not receive a high volume of requests that fall into this category.	DG	No	None.
CFPB	The CFPB FOIA Office has the ability to utilize eFOIA software and review of FOIA logs to identify records that have been requested at least three times. CFPB FOIA staff meets weekly to discuss any requested records that have been produced or requested at least three times.	DG	No	In June 2015, the CFPB began publishing consumer complaint narratives where the consumer has consented to publication about mortgages, bank accounts and services, credit cards, debt collection, credit reporting, and more. These consumer narratives provide a firsthand account of the consumer's experience and provide context to complaints, are easily searchable, and help spotlight specific trends. Additionally, the narratives can also help consumers to make more informed decisions as well as encourage companies to improve the overall quality of their products and services. Since the proactive posting of the consumer complaint narratives the CFPB FOIA Office has received less FOIA requests concerning consumer complaints. In August 2016, the CFPB FOIA reading room started posting frequently requested records, FOIA reports, and FOIA logs. Requests are posted frequently to save the public time and effort.
CEQ	CEQ monitors its FOIA logs to identify "frequently requested" material for posting and determines whether requests are likely to become the subject of subsequent requests for substantially the same records.	DG	No	Yes, CEQ engaged with the public and stakeholders on determining how and what to post and received public comment and feedback concerning proactive disclosures.
CSOSA	A majority of CSOSA's FOIA requests are first-party requests (approximately 99%), which are not required to be posted online; however, the database utilized to process CSOSA's FOIA requests does have a method of pulling up prior records for identical first-party requesters. In order to identify if other records are frequently requested, a keyword search is conducted in CSOSA's database within the file cabinet for document management.	Y	No	None.



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Agency	Process for Identifying Frequently Requested Records	System in Place to Identify Other Records for PD	Challenges to Posting Material Online	Other Steps Taken to Increase PDs
Ex-Im Bank	The FOIA Team reviews recent disclosure trends to identify requests or information that may be of interest to the public. When three or more requests are received for the same information, those records are flagged and then posted on the website. Also, the Bank continues to update the downloadable statistical data relating to Bank transactions and as required by the Bank's Charter, the Bank releases environmental and social documents. This information is available on the Ex-Im Bank website.	DG	No	None.
FCC	The agency processes relatively few FOIA requests for similar records each year and similar requests are processed using the same staff. Given this, it is often readily apparent to the staff that the same record has been frequently requested. More formally, the Commission uses metadata tagging in FOIAonline, its online FOIA portal, to track the subject matter of requested records. If it is suspected that a certain record has been requested multiple times, FOIA staff will search for the metadata tag in question, pull the records, confirm they have been requested three or more times, and post them to the Commission's FOIA reading room.	DG	No	It is the FCC's policy to post on its website any of its information that is of general interest to the public so long as there are no national security, law enforcement, legal, or privacy issues that prohibit its publication. The inventory of website content disclosed pursuant to this policy also is posted online at <a href="https://www.fcc.gov/general/website-inventory-priorities-and-schedules">https://www.fcc.gov/general/website-inventory-priorities-and-schedules</a> .
FDIC	When a FOIA request is received, the FDIC's FOIA Group uses its FOIA processing software to identify previous requests for the same or similar records. If it is determined that multiple requests for publicly releasable records under the FOIA have been received, those records are deemed "frequently requested" and are posted on the FDIC's website or otherwise made available for public inspection and copying.	DG	No	The FDIC continues to use its website, social media, webcasts, podcasts, and publications to proactively make information available to the general public. An email subscription service, RSS feeds, as well as the FDIC pages on Facebook and Twitter allow the public to receive many different alerts, including news releases, Financial Institution Letters, consumer updates, statistical publications and other information.
FEC	Many requests received by the FEC seek documents that are already proactively disclosed on the Agency's website consistent with the requirements of the Federal Election Campaign Act, FEC regulations, and Commission policies. Outside of these requests, the FEC generally does not receive many FOIA requests for the same documents. However, the Agency's FOIA Requester Service Center monitors its FOIA request log, and if frequently requested records are identified, they will be posted to the Commission's website.	DG	No	None.
FERC	Yes, reports from the FOIA tracker system are reviewed to identify frequently requested records.	DG	No	FERC will continue to pursue potential opportunities to increase proactive disclosures and implement them accordingly.



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Agency	Process for Identifying Frequently Requested Records	System in Place to Identify Other Records for PD	Challenges to Posting Material Online	Other Steps Taken to Increase PDs
FHFA	FHFA-HQ regularly reviews its FOIA log to determine if there are multiple requests for the same records. In those instances where there are multiple requests, FHFA identifies them as “frequently requested” and makes a determination to post to the FOIA reading room. FHFA-OIG uses a commercial-off-the-shelf FOIA software system that facilitates the identification of frequently requested records. Requests are monitored to determine whether they seek similar records. When records are identified as being requested frequently, OIG posts such records on its website in the Electronic Reading Room.	DG	No	None.
FLRA	The Chief FOIA Officer works closely with top-level agency officials to ensure that any agency publications or materials that would be subject to the FOIA are available to the public and posted to the agency’s “electronic reading room” and its website pages dedicated to the agency’s decisions, manuals, and other appropriate materials. Currently, there is a process in place to automatically include certain records to the publicly-accessible areas.	DG	No	As the agency “refreshed” its website this past reporting period, the Chief FOIA Officer and FOIA staff reviewed the agency’s FOIA web pages and worked with key agency personnel to determine if there were additional materials beyond those covered by FOIA requests that are appropriate for posting.
FMCS	The Chief FOIA Officer periodically reviews the FOIA log to determine whether any “frequently requested” records can be identified for the purpose of creating a proactive disclosure. No more formal system is required in view of the relatively few (about 55) requests received annually.	DG	No	None.
FMSHRC	FMSHRC’s FOIA officers monitor our FOIA log to classify frequently requested material. When material is detected, it is brought to the attention of our General Counsel and Office of the Chairman who are charged with identifying records for proactive disclosure. The General Counsel and Chairman’s offices also consult with FOIA officers to identify records that may be of general interest to the public for the purpose of posting on the agency’s website.	DG	No	FMSHRC is currently constructing a new section of the agency’s website that will allow the public to conduct status checks of its cases via an online database.
GSA	GSA, through use of the FOIAonline system, makes available online all released FOIA request responses (so long as they don’t involve an individual’s private personnel records), regardless if they are “frequently requested” records or not.	DG	No	GSA engages requesters in determining the types of information to post, as well as data sets and webpages linked to government-wide data analytics at data.gov. GSA has solicited information for groups of media requesters and business segments that have an interest in the types of products and services that GSA is managing acquisitions across the Federal government. These data sets are often prepared and proactively posted to the various sites such as those listed in question 5 above.



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LSC	Because many of the records identified for proactive disclosures are either generated by or must be reviewed by the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA), the FOIA professionals, most of whom are staff members in OLA, are able to routinely post such records on the LSC website without delay. The FOIA Analyst also routinely reviews the FOIA electronic reading room to see when new postings of proactive disclosure documents are made by individual offices and includes this information in the weekly FOIA report to management. In addition, LSC has emphasized the importance of proactively disclosing records and the categories of proactive disclosures under FOIA to its employees by highlighting the types of records to be proactively disclosed in LSC's annual FOIA guidance and training. LSC is also conducting an internal review of its records to ensure that it is proactively disclosing all relevant documents.	DG	No	LSC has a webpage dedicated exclusively to FOIA. The new FOIA page has a user-friendly interface and contains the following categories of information: (1) FOIA Handbook; (2) FOIA Reports; (3) FOIA Public Reading Room; (4) FOIA Appeal Letters; (5) Status of FOIA Requests; (6) Status of FOIA Request Archives. LSC continues to convert information from PDF to HTML format so it is searchable and its website contents are mobile friendly to ensure the public has access to LSC's information and records from tablets and smartphones. Lastly, LSC increased the use of social media tools such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter to highlight and disseminate information about LSC and its grant recipients.
MSPB	We use the FOIAonline system to identify frequently requested records. For example, we received numerous requests for a series of identical or related records, and we were able to locate the records using FOIAonline and post them on our website.	DG	Yes	As awareness of FOIA grows among MSPB program staff, there has been a willingness to consider whether the public would benefit from proactively disclosing a record before requests are received for the document. For example, a program office proactively identified a dataset used by its staff that would likely be the subject of multiple FOIA requests and initiated discussions with the FOIA office on how best to proactively post it.
NASA	NASA offices post material that is of current public interest on the FOIA and mission websites. Typically, FOIA offices post all contract documents that have been requested under the FOIA. In general, the FOIA offices post material that has been the subject of public interest or is anticipated to be of public interest regardless of the number of FOIA requests for the documents. The FOIA offices also work with the mission/program offices to identify documents that should be posted on both websites.	DG	Yes	NASA uses webmetrics to determine what the public is seeking and then works with the program offices to ensure information is posted about these topics.
NCUA	When a record is requested multiple times, FOIA staff identifies the record and informs the Chief FOIA Officer that it should be posted online. The FOIA staff then send the record to the agency webmaster to post it at <a href="https://www.ncua.gov/services/Pages/freedom-of-information-act/requested-information.aspx">https://www.ncua.gov/services/Pages/freedom-of-information-act/requested-information.aspx</a> .	DG	No	The agency continues to proactively disclose information to increase the public's awareness of its mission and role through releases to the public, including postings on its open government page at <a href="https://www.ncua.gov/About/Pages/open-government.aspx">https://www.ncua.gov/About/Pages/open-government.aspx</a> . The agency solicits comments and suggestions for improving its website at <a href="mailto:plainwriting@ncua.gov">plainwriting@ncua.gov</a> . The agency does not use web analytics to inform proactive disclosures.
NEA	The NEA FOIA Officer processes all FOIA request and reviews records upon initial review. The FOIA Officer is familiar with the topics of interest at the agency that tend to generate frequently requested records and ensures that these records are posted online.	DG	No	Not at this time.



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Agency	Process for Identifying Frequently Requested Records	System in Place to Identify Other Records for PD	Challenges to Posting Material Online	Other Steps Taken to Increase PDs
NEH	Prior to Fiscal Year, 2016, our FOIA professionals regularly reviewed the NEH FOIA log and automatically evaluated any record that had been requested twice as a potential "frequently requested" record. In Fiscal Year 2016, NEH revised its process for identifying "frequently requested records" and began reviewing all responsive documents for posting to the NEH FOIA Library. With the exception of documents responsive to first-party requests or those involving OIG investigations into an individual, the NEH posted almost all responsive documents to the NEH FOIA Library in Fiscal Year 2016.	DG	No	Please see previous answers.
NSF	The NSF FOIA Officer processes all FOIA requests received by NSF and reviews records for proactive disclosure on a case-by-case basis. The majority of the requests NSF receives are for research proposals. While, NSF rarely receives a request for the same research proposal more than once, the NSF FOIA Officer maintains all requested proposals in a central electronic file by proposal number and the requester last name to facilitate easy identification of frequently requested records.	DG	No	NSF engages with the public through various social media outlets and in-person events such as grants conferences. Based in part on these interactions, NSF continues to update the information on its website that is of public interest.
NTSB	FOIA logs are monitored for "frequently requested" records.	DG	No	None.
USNRC	The agency's FOIA processing system links similar or duplicate requests and identifies frequently requested records.	DG	Yes	Effective June 15, 2015, the staff discontinued the practice of presumptively withholding documents containing fire protection or emergency preparedness information from public release. Since then, the staff has been proactively applying the NRC's policies on protecting sensitive information to the review, release, and withholding of such documents.
OSHRC	Consistent with the recent FOIA amendments, any record requested (or anticipated to be requested) three or more times is flagged by our FOIA professionals and posted online in our e-FOIA Reading Room.	DG	No	The Chief FOIA Officer works to maintain open lines of communication between the FOIA Requester Service Center and key agency personnel. The inclusion of OIP's FOIA infographic in the agency's handbook for new employees reminds them of their role in identifying records suitable for proactive disclosure.
OGE	OGE has included a distinct step in its FOIA processing procedures that directs FOIA professionals to determine whether a record has been subject to previous FOIA requests, and, if so, to flag that record for proactive disclosure in OGE's FOIA log.	DG	No	OGE's FOIA processing procedures direct FOIA professionals to identify records of interest to the public on an ongoing basis and to systematically post such records, whether or not they are responsive to a specific FOIA request.



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Agency	Process for Identifying Frequently Requested Records	System in Place to Identify Other Records for PD	Challenges to Posting Material Online	Other Steps Taken to Increase PDs
OMB	Both "frequently requested" and proactive disclosures are identified through the agency's FOIA processing system. As described in prior years' annual Chief FOIA Officer report, as OMB completes a response to a FOIA request, staff in the relevant program office, the Office of General Counsel (OGC), and the Management and Operations Division (MOD) review those records to determine whether it would be helpful to post any material provided to the requester on OMB's various websites, including examining whether the material is subject to frequent requests.	DG	No	None.
ONHIR	Our process is that if any material has been requested over 3 times we will evaluate it for posting it online. This has not happened yet.	R	No	None.
OSTP	OSTP is a small agency and does not frequently receive multiple requests for the same or similar records. Should records become "frequently requested," the FOIA professionals will post these records online. Additionally, as described below, OSTP endeavors to proactively disclose records whenever possible.	DG	Yes	OSTP has expanded its efforts to proactively provide the public with information about Administration initiatives through robust use of the OSTP website. OSTP's website now includes descriptions and links for much of OSTP's current work, including timely information about current initiatives. OSTP continues to proactively post more information to its website and does so in ways that will be most useful to the public, as described further in Section IV.
OSC	When OSC receives a request that appears similar to one we have already received, the FOIA Team searches our electronic tracking system for similar requests to discuss at weekly meetings.	DG	Yes	OSC will continue to review and post its FOIA Logs and other releasable materials in 2017.
ODNI	Whenever a direct response is made to a requester under FOIA, those documents are posted to our website. Additionally, based on public interest or world event that are high profile, we may identify records that should be posted.	DG	No	None.
USTR	USTR maintains a centralized tracking system that is sortable by subject matter. Upon receipt of three requests for the same or similar records, the FOIA staff contacts the IT staff to upload the records to www.ustr.gov.	DG	Yes	USTR participated in several interagency Open Government joint stakeholder sessions with civil society where participants were encouraged to provide feedback on the types of information they wanted from USTR. In addition, USTR continues to use social media like Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube as a key medium to publicize information and to engage the public in discussion and awareness of free trade agreement issues.
PC	If we receive three requests asking for the same information, that information is considered for posting by the FOIA Officer.	DG	No	None.
USRRB	We routinely continue to review, analyze and improve our release of "frequently requested" records consulting with agency administration, program, and operation bureaus with an emphasis on routine/recurring requests and website content identified through monitoring our agency FOIA logs and website.	DG	No	None.



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SBA	The FOIA team reviews the agency's quarterly FOIA activity numbers for each program office to identify program offices with the highest numbers of FOIA requests. The FOIA team has worked with the program offices with high numbers of FOIA requests to identify the most frequently requested records that should be proactively disclosed on the agency's website.	DG	Yes	None.
STB	If an item is requested three times, or if the Board anticipates that a record might be frequently requested (based upon staff's experience or its review of the Board's FOIA logs), the Board posts that record on its website.	DG	No	The Board's FOIA staff has worked with the Board offices that often develop data to make proactive disclosures in the past. We have also worked to inform these offices of the objective of proactive disclosures under FOIA.
TVA	The FOIA Officer closely monitors information requested under FOIA to identify records that meet the requirement for online posting.	DG	No	We review web analytics from the TVA website to determine stakeholders' primary areas of interest and work to continually improve the content and usability of the information available. We have had no feedback from FOIA requesters indicating an interest in having records they receive in response to FOIA requests posted online.
USAID	USAID has a robust open data program and proactively posts much of its program and project information online. To further its commitment to open data, USAID has included mandatory language in all of its acquisition and assistance awards to indicate that any dataset created during the implementation of the award be submitted and added to USAID's Development Data Library ( <a href="http://www.usaid.gov/data">www.usaid.gov/data</a> ), which is a public repository for Agency-funded, machine readable data. More pointedly, with regard to FOIA, the FOIA Registrar reviews all incoming FOIA requests and scans the database to identify any similar information requests. If more than two (2) similar requests are identified, the responsive documents are reviewed to consider if the information is appropriate for proactive disclosure by virtue of posting online.	DG	Yes	USAID is continually improving proactive disclosures and is doing so by investing in data quality improvements and looking into ways to make data more useable. For example, USAID is undertaking pilot work to see if its International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) data can be automatically mapped to developing countries' AID Information Management Systems. USAID is also examining a theory of change around open data to advance transparency and openness more generally in government. The Agency is launching a connect stream of work to develop guidelines for the responsible use of data by governments to ensure openness and transparency does not infringe on the rights of citizens.
USCPSC	"Frequently requested" records are determined by the Commission's FOIA professionals, based on the subject matter of FOIA requests received by the FOIA office. For example, if the FOIA office receives multiple requests for the same information, and if appropriate requirements have been satisfied, we post the material online. Similarly, documents relating to subjects that have garnered significant public interest routinely are posted online.	DG	Yes	We post information proactively on the Commission's website. Requesters are continuously made aware of the Commission's publicly available website, <a href="http://www.SaferProducts.gov">www.SaferProducts.gov</a> which provides information that was previously only available through FOIA requests.



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Section IV -- Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology			
Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	Examples of Improvements	Posted All FY 2015 Quarterly Reports
NRPC	DG	Amtrak's Instagram, Facebook, Google, Twitter accounts, Blog (Amtrak Blog) and mobile applications allows interaction with the public. Since Amtrak's website is also customer/passenger oriented, Amtrak teamed up with Google to create an interactive train locator map, which is located on <a href="http://www.amtrak.com">www.amtrak.com</a> .	DG
FRB	DG	The Board's Data Download Program (DDP) has significantly improved the transparency and accessibility of Federal Reserve statistical data. The DDP allows users to download datasets in a variety of electronic formats (Excel, CSV, and XML), either as preformatted or customizable data packages (including charts and graphs), for easy publication or distribution. In addition, the Board has improved the usefulness of information by, for example: creating new charts and redesigning the Financial Accounts of the United States - Z.1 release; adding a new data series in FEDS Notes: Recession Risk and the Excess Bond Premium; and adding the following new data as part of the Enhanced Financial Accounts initiative: Funding Agreement-Backed Securities, and Rest of the World: International Portfolio Investment Holdings of Long-term Securities by Country.	DG
CFTC	DG	The agency website was completely redesigned in 2016 and features easy access to important information and events at the agency, efficient site navigation, and dynamic dropdown menus for primary and secondary navigation, all of which provide greater transparency of agency actions. In addition to efficient website navigation, the agency has taken other steps to increase proactive disclosure. For example, the agency's program offices routinely provide updated market data ( <a href="http://www.cftc.gov/MarketReports/index.htm">http://www.cftc.gov/MarketReports/index.htm</a> ), industry filings and information about new regulatory developments ( <a href="http://www.cftc.gov/IndustryOversight/IndustryFilings/index.htm">http://www.cftc.gov/IndustryOversight/IndustryFilings/index.htm</a> ). For instance, the Dodd-Frank Act created new entities, Swap Data Repositories ("SDRs"), to provide central facilities for swap data reporting and recordkeeping. The agency's website includes a page on these entities, including FAQs and instructions on how to apply for SDR status ( <a href="http://www.cftc.gov/IndustryOversight/DataRepositories/index.htm">http://www.cftc.gov/IndustryOversight/DataRepositories/index.htm</a> ). The agency allows anyone in the world to sign up on the agency's website to receive updates on specific or all information that is posted on the website. For example, more than 25,000 people receive the agency's press releases, 24,000 received federal register notices and 16,000 received any letter the agency posts to the website. Further, all of the agency's releases are instantly tweeted and posted on Facebook. To date, the agency has over 12,000 Facebook followers and over 16,000 Twitter followers.	DG
CFPB	DG	In the posted CFPB FOIA Logs, we hyperlink the frequently requested records so they can be viewed without searching the CFPB Reading Room.	LG
CEQ	DG	CEQ took steps to ensure that information posted to its website was compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.	DG
CSOSA	Y	CSOSA's FOIA reference guide will be updated to be more useful to the public.	R
Ex-Im Bank	DG	Ex-Im Bank continuously updates its website and FOIA page to make information easily accessible to the public and more user friendly. Content on the website is provided either in HTML, PDF, XML and CSV formats. Electronic forms are provided to allow requesters or users to apply for services online. Also, the Bank continues to update the downloadable statistical data relating to Bank transactions.	DG





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Section IV -- Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology			
Agency	Agency is Taking Steps to Make Online Info. More Useful	Examples of Improvements	Posted All FY 2015 Quarterly Reports
FCC	DG	The FCC's policy on open data is showcased in a webpage providing further links, including: 1) FCC Open Data, enabling public innovation by publishing data underlying FCC regulatory proceedings with a focus on improving quality, openness, accessibility and utility; 2) FCC Developers Page, promoting the innovative application of FCC data by connecting developers with the tools they need to unlock government data; 3) FCC Digital Strategy, the agency's participating in federal cross-agency initiatives to increase data usability and consumption; 4) FCC Data and Information Officers, a roster of FCC staff members dedicated to providing data and information; and 5) FCC blog posts on open government. The webpage may be accessed at <a href="https://www.fcc.gov/general/open-government-fcc">https://www.fcc.gov/general/open-government-fcc</a> .	DG
FDIC	DG	The FDIC continues to utilize YouTube to make information available to the public. For example, during the reporting period it posted several presentations on YouTube to assist bank employees to understand FDIC deposit insurance rules. The FDIC also posted a video on community bank corporate governance to assist community bank directors and officers in the development of a sound corporate governance framework.	DG
FEC	DG	During Fiscal Year 2016, the FEC continued work on its website improvement initiative in partnership with 18F, a digital services delivery team in the General Services Administration, with the goal of enhancing the public's access to and the delivery of campaign finance data. The FEC introduced its betaFEC website, which provides members of the public with a first look at a redesign that will bring easier access to the agency's rich data, during the first quarter of FY 2016. The new website is anticipated to go "live" in March 2017.	DG
FERC	DG	FERC received feedback from users of FERC elibrary expressing their concerns and frustrations on inconsistencies with search and retrieve functionality. As a result FERC has taken measures enhance the FERC elibrary by reducing slowness or downtime and automating frequent checks on eLibrary. These efforts have increased the ability of users to identify material that they may have believed required the submission of a FOIA request.	R
FHFA	DG	FHFA-HQ revised its public facing website to make it more user-friendly as well as easier to locate/search for information about FHFA. FHFA-OIG revised its FOIA webpage with more user-friendly information to help requesters understand the FOIA process.	DG
FLRA	DG	The agency continues to place the most recent decisions, training, and news announcements on the home page of the website. For example, the website has been updated to provide the public information on key agency staff employees and upcoming agency trainings. This is done to provide the public easier access to key agency information. Additionally, during this past reporting period, all of the FOIA pages were updated to make them more user friendly.	DG
FMCS	DG	In addition to steadily increasing the use of email to correspond with requesters during the processing of requests, FMCS has greatly expanded the use of email to provide a final response with the documents sought as attachments. This has cut some three (3) days from the average response time utilizing the U.S. mail.	DG



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FMSHRC	DG	In FY 2015 FMSHRC re-designed its website to make it more user-friendly. The site is easier to navigate as the material is more clearly laid out and organized in simpler categories. All documents are accessible in plain text and PDF format. The site now contains enhanced search capabilities for FMSHRC decisions. In addition, the site contains a PDF version of each volume of the agency's official reporter publishing all substantive agency decisions and orders. In 2016, FMSHRC continued to devise new ways to improve the website experience for our visitors. In the meantime, we do our best to keep the website updated and running smoothly for its visitors.	DG
GSA	DG	In addition to posting the information and data sets to the web for public access, GSA provides several innovative features and websites to assist the public to access, view, and analyze provided information and data sets. Many of GSA's publicly available information is posted in a format that the user can perform analysis, view charts, graphs, tables and see historical trends either quarterly or annually as most appropriate. Some of the nationwide data has information broken out by region of the country, by metropolitan area including demographical information in many cases and include a background or instructions on what the information is covering and how to understand what is being presented. Many of the posted information pages solicit feedback, including surveys on the usefulness of the information and provide the opportunity for the user of the information to suggest ways that the information can be presented differently in any way that may be more useable. In general, GSA websites that host this information have just undergone a major upgrade to increase compatibility with mobile devices and social media interaction.	DG
LSC	DG	LSC's website includes a page dedicated exclusively to FOIA. The FOIA page has a user-friendly interface and contains the following categories of information: (1) FOIA Handbook; (2) FOIA Reports; (3) FOIA Public Reading Room; (4) FOIA Appeal Letters; (5) Status of FOIA Requests; (6) Status of FOIA Request Archives. LSC continues to convert information from PDF to HTML format so it is searchable and its website contents are mobile friendly to ensure the public has access to LSC's information and records from tablets and smartphones. LSC increased the use of social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter to highlight and disseminate information about LSC and its grant recipients. Lastly, LSC added a FOIA feedback form on the FOIA page.	DG
MSPB	DG	In March 2016, we made substantial revisions to our FOIA Requester Service Center page to make it more user-friendly. We continue to evaluate the usefulness of that information and have made additional changes to the page, as appropriate. All FOIA materials, including our annual reports, FY 2016 raw data report, and e-FOIA Reading Room, are available from this page. Our FOIA Requester Service Center page summarizes the categories of records available elsewhere on the MSPB website and includes hyperlinks to allow requesters to easily access those records. In addition, the MSPB website is organized so that records for new and relevant topics—most likely to be of interest to the public—are highlighted and easily accessible from the home page. We continue to use Twitter to inform the public when new information or records are available on our website, including new press releases, reports, and newsletters.	Y
NASA	DG	The websites are continually updated with the most current information as events occur. The Public Inquiries site updates and posts links to information that is timely, for example the John Glenn, Hidden Figures and Eugene Cernan information.	DG



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NCUA	DG	The agency has implemented its website featuring improved navigation and a mobile-responsive design that adapts to facilitate its viewing on various platforms, including smartphones, tablets, laptops, and desktops. Other website features and improvements include: a "Small Credit Union Learning Center" featuring training videos and materials; an online newsroom and social media hub where stakeholders can get the latest news, read articles from The NCUA Report and download graphics and photos; an "I'm a..." search function that allows users to self-identify and quickly access the agency's most frequently requested content; and a consumer section that links to the agency's consumer protection resources, consumer assistance center, share insurance information, and financial literacy materials.	DG
NEA	DG	NEA is already making its posted information in a useful format.	DG
NEH	DG	NEH maintains a search results interface which allows users to sort results by various fields. During the reporting period, NEH has increased the accessibility of materials on its website by increasing the amount of alt-text (descriptive text that is inserted or attached to an image and which can be read by machine readers). Also, NEH has improved video accessibility has through the increased use of captions.	DG
NSF	DG	To facilitate information reaching a broad segment of the public, NSF posts information on different social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. These activities allow the public to interact with NSF and access information in many different ways.	DG
NTSB	DG	The NTSB is currently revising its website to increase the transparency of information and to optimize usability. The new website will better highlight investigation information of interest to the public, and better integrate investigative documentation for public consumption.	DG
USNRC	DG	The agency has a single, unified public site, available at <a href="http://www.nrc.gov">http://www.nrc.gov</a> , for public users to perform full-text searches of all NRC public records, Web pages, and files. A search can be conducted by a specific topic. The site also has an advanced search feature for all NRC public records with full access to metadata attributes. After a review of the NRC FOIA Web site, a new search field was added to shorten the time spent by the public searching for records that have been provided to requesters in FOIA responses. The addition of the search field box makes the public repository of FOIA responses more user-friendly because it enables the public to more effectively wade through thousands of pages of FOIA responses and find what they may be looking for; which reduces the need for making a FOIA request.	DG
OSHRC	DG	Decisions issued by both levels of adjudication at OSHRC, which are of particular interest to the regulated community, are easily accessed on the agency's website via a dropdown menu that organizes the decisions by year. The website's search function allows any individual to research a topic of interest using natural word searches. Also, records that OSHRC posts on its dedicated FOIA webpage and in its comprehensive e-FOIA Reading Room are posted in the most useful format (both PDF and/or HTML file types). Records are also posted in the same format on the website's Open Government page. Additionally, FOIA professionals are trained to provide any voluntary feedback received from requesters to the Chief FOIA Officer for review and evaluation.	DG



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OGE	DG	OGE continues to use highlighted features on its website homepage and its Twitter account to provide public-friendly explanations of OGE's mission and direct individuals to newly posted information.	LG
OMB	Y	OMB is the process of updating its websites. As the agency transitions to new websites, OMB continues to look for ways to make more information available to the public and easy to use. This can include allowing the public to provide feedback, ratings, and access machine-readable datasets on a variety of topics.	DG
ONHIR	R	No.	R
OSTP	DG	OSTP uses its website to offer the public a variety of information that might otherwise be requested through FOIA. As described above, the agency has placed various documents, memoranda, testimony, federal charters, and R&D budgets on its website for the public to view at its convenience, as well as its Open Government Plan. OSTP maintains a blog, Twitter account, and a virtual Press Room, each of which offers the public a window into the different initiatives and activities spearheaded by the agency. Through these new media outlets, OSTP can reach a larger audience than is possible through a FOIA request or through posting in OSTP's FOIA library online. OSTP also provides materials to the public to improve ease of use. For instance, OSTP has posted helpful documents for the public related to its FOIA process, including a handbook that compiled existing FOIA information into a single, handy reference document. This FOIA Reference Guide includes pertinent information such as the President's FOIA Memorandum, the Attorney General's FOIA Guidelines, the Chief of Staff's FOIA Memorandum, OSTP's FOIA regulations, and a link to the Department of Justice, Office of Information Policy's guidelines. These documents aid the staff and the public and provide additional information on Federal activities and FOIA policies.	DG
OSC	DG	OSC will continue to index its publicly-posted materials.	DG
ODNI	DG	ODNI is currently making information available in its most useful format on our website to include sub-categorizing common reports, policies, and documents for easy retrieval purposes. The ODNI allows keyword searches on our website for the general public to pursue documents that most interests their needs.	DG
USTR	DG	In FY2015, USTR updated its website to improve significantly the readability and usability of the information, and to embrace more modern design paradigms to match the expectations of Internet users. USTR continues to post information in easily consumable formats both on the website itself and through highly popular social media platforms such as Twitter and Medium.	O
PC	DG	The agency is taking steps toward expanding the Open Government component (and there is a public input form on the website soliciting ideas).	R
USRRB	DG	In FY 2016, the RRB digitized, indexed, and catalogued 258 binders of Legal Opinions maintained in the Board's Office of General Counsel so they are electronically retrievable through www.rrb.gov by Board staff and the public, including attorneys, claimants, railroad employers, etc.	R



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SBA	DG	In the last year, the agency has changed the visual appearance of the SBA.gov website. Larger font, easy-to-read white space v. lettering format, improved quality and relevancy of the SBA program content posted are all noticeable improvements. These improvements are a result of collaborative efforts by the Office of Communications and Public Liaison and the Office of the Chief Information Officer.	LG
STB	DG	In an effort to make our posted economic data more user-friendly, the Board posts many reports in both XML and searchable pdf (as it does with its annual FOIA reports). Additionally, the Board provides complicated programs that it uses in its cases and industry analysis (such as the Uniform Railroad Cost System; see <a href="https://www.stb.gov/stb/industry/urcs.html">https://www.stb.gov/stb/industry/urcs.html</a> ). This enables interested parties to independently follow and even evaluate the Board's work. The Board also posts to its website many of its worksheets as Excel spreadsheets.	DG
TVA	DG	In 2015, we executed a complete overhaul of TVA's web properties to enhance our ability to make information available to our users. The web redesign focused on streamlining available content, a mobile-first approach, improved usability, and an all-new search engine. TVA also has a Lake Info app, an easy-to-use resource for operating on and around reservoirs and dams in the TVA region. TVA has several feedback mechanisms in place for website visitors to comment on all aspects of information posted on its website and strives for continuous improvement.	LG
USAID	DG	<p>USAID established USAID Open—a front door function in Washington, DC—to respond to inquiries received from the general public. USAID Open, through its public email address (<a href="mailto:open@usaid.gov">open@usaid.gov</a>) and the public inquiries phone line (202-712-4810), responds to public inquiries by directing the public to information already available on the <a href="http://usaid.gov">usaid.gov</a> website, or forwarding queries to the appropriate bureau or independent office to obtain relevant information for an accurate response.</p> <p>Through the use of social media (e.g., Facebook and Twitter), USAID posts information for public consumption to these channels on a regular basis. These platforms provide a way for the public to engage with the agency on a variety of subjects. In addition, the public can sign-up for newsletters and other types of updates. USAID maintains a number of mailing lists you can join for updates on USAID activities (<a href="https://www.usaid.gov/stayconnected">https://www.usaid.gov/stayconnected</a>). Further, USAID's new captivating storytelling experience (<a href="https://stories.usaid.gov/">https://stories.usaid.gov/</a>) conveys the stories of individuals, families, and communities in transformation.</p> <p>Specific improvements include the following:</p> <p>In fiscal year 2016, USAID updated Dollars to Results (<a href="https://results.usaid.gov/">https://results.usaid.gov/</a>) with fiscal year 2015 data for the 44 countries listed on the website. Users can now view fiscal year 2015 financial data and high-level information at the country, sector, or subsector level with the results shown at the subsector level. Dollars to Results was presented at the International Open Data Conference in Madrid, Spain in October 2016. After the presentation, users filled out a survey on USAID's data portals—including the Dollars to Results site—so that</p>	DG



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USAID (cont'd)		<p>USAID can learn how to improve the site and raise awareness about its data portals.</p> <p>In Fiscal Year 2016, USAID implemented the first three (3) phases of the IATI cost management plan (<a href="https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1870/usaid/iati-cost-management-plan">https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1870/usaid/iati-cost-management-plan</a>), publishing a total of 17 new fields and making considerable progress delivering on its IATI commitments. As a result, USAID achieved a 19 percentage point increase between 2014 and 2016 in Publish What You Fund's Aid Transparency Index. USAID also developed the capability to report in XML, and streamlined its internal processes for removing sensitive information prior to public, including more clearly noting to the public when the Agency redacted information.</p> <p>Using its information technology expertise and the modern, agile development process, the Power Africa Tracking Tool (PATT) (<a href="https://www.usaid.gov/power-africa/newsletter/jan2016/powerafrica-trackingtool">https://www.usaid.gov/power-africa/newsletter/jan2016/powerafrica-trackingtool</a>) is a mobile application that makes data on electricity publicly available in Sub-Saharan Africa.</p>	
USCPSC	DG	<p>The CPSC regularly updates and redesigns its website to improve its usability, partly based on comments from the public and agency stakeholders. CPSC is in the process of making our website more compatible to consumers who access the Internet through mobile devices, which will improve the usefulness and availability of information found on CPSC.gov. The CPSC website directs the public to post their comments on regulatory matters on <a href="http://www.Regulations.gov">www.Regulations.gov</a>, which allows the public to review all comments on a given matter. The CPSC's technical staff also solicits comments from the public for statistical reports that are posted. The website also offers a way for consumers or businesses to contact the agency by email. The website also provides a quarterly listing of Letters of Advice (LOAs), which inform manufacturers and importers of violations of safety standards and notify them of the corrective action required.</p>	DG



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Agency	Simple Track				Agency Backlog Decreased		Percentage of Backlog to # of Req./App. Received in FY 2015				Agency Closed Ten Oldest Req., Appeals (App.) & Consultations (Consults.). If not, # closed in FY 2015						
	Has a Simple Track?	Score	Avg. No. of Days to Process	% of Req. In Simple Track	Req.	App.	Req. Score	Req. %	App. Score	App. %	Req.	If no, # closed	# closed as "Req. Withdrawn"	App.	If no, # closed	Consults.	If no, # closed
NRPC	Yes	LG	20.98	42%	R	R	O	32%	R	250%	R	5/10	2	R	3/8	DG	N/A
FRB	Yes	DG	9	53%	R	Y	DG	6%	LG	18%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
CFTC	Yes	R	77.64	60%	DG	DG	LG	13%	DG	0%	R	7/10	1	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
CFPB	Yes	DG	10.09	94%	Y	DG	DG	<1%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
CEQ	Yes	R	135	18%	R	DG	R	64%	DG	0%	R	9/10	2	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
CSOSA	Yes	Y	22.15	99%	DG	DG	DG	<1%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
Ex-Im Bank	Yes	R	26.3	53%	Y	DG	Y	27%	DG	0%	R	8/10	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
FCC	Yes	Y	22.57	93%	DG	Y	DG	1%	O	39%	DG	N/A	2	R	9/10	DG	N/A
FDIC	Yes	DG	14.11	55%	DG	DG	DG	<1%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
FEC	Yes	LG	21.3	72%	R	Y	O	36%	R	100%	R	0/10	0	R	0/4	DG	N/A
FERC	Yes	R	34	87%	DG	DG	DG	10%	DG	0%	R	7/10	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
FHFA	Yes	DG	8.48	81%	Y	DG	DG	7%	DG	0%	R	4/10	1	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
FLRA	Yes	DG	8	90%	DG	DG	DG	0%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
FMCS	Yes	R	41	90%	Y	DG	DG	3%	DG	0%	R	3/4	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
FMSHRC	Yes	DG	2.15	77%	DG	DG	DG	0%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	1	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
GSA	Yes	DG	9.97	53%	DG	R	DG	5%	LG	12%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
LSC	No	DG	10.7	N/A	DG	DG	DG	0%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
MSPB	Yes	R	53.7	89%	R	Y	O	33%	LG	18%	R	5/10	2	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
NASA	Yes	DG	10.34	61%	DG	Y	DG	<1%	LG	15%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
NCUA	Yes	DG	4.07	43%	DG	DG	DG	0%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	1	DG	N/A	DG	N/A



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	Has a Simple Track?	Score	Avg. No. of Days to Process	% of Req. In Simple Track	Req.	App.	Req. Score	Req. %	App. Score	App. %	Req.	If no, # closed	# closed as "Req. Withdrawn"	App.	If no, # closed	Consults.	If no, # closed
NEA	Yes	DG	12	95%	DG	DG	DG	0%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
NEH	Yes	DG	13.1	87%	DG	DG	DG	0%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
NSF	Yes	R	39	11%	R	DG	R	61%	DG	0%	R	9/10	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
NTSB	Yes	R	332.36	31%	DG	Y	R	128%	R	57%	DG	N/A	2	R	6/10	DG	N/A
USNRC	Yes	DG	8	81%	R	Y	DG	3%	DG	<1%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
OSHRC	Yes	DG	9.75	94%	DG	DG	DG	0%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
OGE	No	DG	12.6	N/A	DG	DG	DG	0%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
OMB	No	R	131	N/A	R	DG	O	39%	R	133%	R	5/10	0	R	3/5	DG	N/A
ONHIR	No	DG	1.58	N/A	DG	DG	DG	0%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
OSTP	Yes	DG	13.13	81%	R	DG	Y	24%	DG	0%	R	5/10	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
OSC	Yes	R	135.16	32%	DG	DG	R	124%	R	44%	R	3/10	1	R	7/10	R	2/3
ODNI	Yes	R	46.65	62%	R	DG	R	76%	R	62%	R	9/10	0	R	7/10	DG	N/A
USTR	Yes	O	24	38%	R	DG	LG	19%	DG	0%	R	7/10	1	DG	N/A	R	6/7
PC	Yes	R	65	81%	DG	DG	R	45%	DG	0%	R	6/10	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
USRRB	No	DG	12.85	N/A	Y	DG	LG	11%	DG	0%	R	5/10	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
SBA	No	DG	12.47	N/A	R	DG	DG	2%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
STB	No	DG	9.22	N/A	DG	DG	DG	0%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
TVA	Yes	DG	6	73%	Y	DG	DG	6%	DG	0%	DG	N/A	0	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
USAID	Yes	R	30.77	7%	R	Y	R	84%	O	35%	DG	N/A	1	DG	N/A	DG	N/A
USCPSC	Yes	R	28	22%	DG	DG	Y	24%	DG	0	R	8/10	5	DG	N/A	DG	N/A