2012

ANNUAL FOIA REPORT

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

I. BASIC INFORMATION REGARDING REPORT

1. For information concerning this Report, please contact:

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- 2. This Report will be made available on the Commission's website, at <u>http://www.usccr.gov/foia/index.php</u>.
- 3. Paper copies of the Report can be requested from the person/address listed above.

II. MAKING A FOIA REQUEST

1. FOIA Requests are made to the Commission by mailing, faxing or emailing:

FOIA Officer U.S. Commission on Civil Rights 1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Suite 1150 Washington, DC 20425 Fax: (202) 376-1163 E-mail: foia@usccr.gov

2. Requests for records may not be granted: if the requested records are not maintained by or in the possession of the Commission; if the requested records contain pre-decisional information; if release of the records would cause harm to Commission decision-making processes; if portions of records contain personal and/or proprietary information; if records contain information compiled for law enforcement purposes; or if the requested

records contain information specifically prohibited from disclosure by FOIA and/or other statutes.

III. ACRONYMS, DEFINITIONS, AND EXEMPTIONS

- 1. In this Report the term "Commission" means the "United States Commission on Civil Rights."
- 2. Definitions of terms used in this Report:
 - a. **Administrative Appeal** a request to a federal agency asking that it review at a higher administrative level a FOIA determination made by the agency at the initial request level.
 - b. **Average Number** the number obtained by dividing the sum of a group of numbers by the quantity of numbers in the group. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the average number is 8.
 - c. **Backlog** the number of requests or administrative appeals that are pending at an agency at the end of the fiscal year that are beyond the statutory time period for a response.
 - d. **Component** for agencies that process requests on a decentralized basis, a "component" is an entity, also sometimes referred to as an Office, Division, Bureau, Center, or Directorate, within the agency that processes FOIA requests. The FOIA now requires that agencies include in their Annual FOIA Report data for both the agency overall and for each principal component of the agency. The Commission does not have any components.
 - e. **Consultation** the procedure whereby the agency responding to a FOIA request first forwards a record to another agency for its review because that other agency has an interest in the document. Once the agency in receipt of the consultation finishes its review of the record, it responds back to the agency that forwarded it. That agency, in turn, will then respond to the FOIA requester.
 - f. **Exemption 3 Statute** a federal statute that exempts information from disclosure and which the agency relies on to withhold information under subsection (b) (3) of the FOIA.
 - g. **FOIA Request** a FOIA request is generally a request to a federal agency for access to records concerning another person (i.e., a "third-party" request), or concerning an organization, or a particular topic of interest. FOIA requests also include requests made by requesters seeking records concerning themselves (i.e., "first-party" requests) when those requesters are not subject to the Privacy Act,

such as non-U.S. citizens. Moreover, because all first-party requesters should be afforded the benefit of both the access provisions of the FOIA as well as those of the Privacy Act, FOIA requests also include any first-party requests where an agency determines that it must search beyond its Privacy Act "systems of records" or where a Privacy Act exemption applies, and the agency looks to FOIA to afford the greatest possible access. All requests which require the agency to utilize the FOIA in responding to the requester are included in this Report.

Additionally, a FOIA request includes records referred to the agency for processing and direct response to the requester. It does not, however, include records for which the agency has received a consultation from another agency. (Consultations are reported separately in Section XII of this Report.)

- h. **Full Grant** an agency decision to disclose all records in full in response to a FOIA request.
- i. **Full Denial** an agency decision not to release any records in response to a FOIA request because the records are exempt in their entireties under one or more of the FOIA exemptions, or because of a procedural reason, such as when no records could be located.
- j. **Median Number** the middle, not average, number. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the median number is 7.
- Multi-Track Processing a system in which simple requests requiring relatively minimal review are placed in one processing track and more voluminous and complex requests are placed in one or more other tracks. Requests granted expedited processing are placed in yet another track. Requests in each track are processed on a first in/first out basis.
 - i. **Expedited Processing** an agency will process a FOIA request on an expedited basis when a requester satisfies the requirements for expedited processing as set forth in the statute and in agency regulations.
 - ii. **Simple Request** a FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in its fastest (nonexpedited) track based on the low volume and/or simplicity of the records requested.
 - iii. **Complex Request** a FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in a slower track

based on the high volume and/or complexity of the records requested.

- 1. **Partial Grant/Partial Denial** in response to a FOIA request, an agency decision to disclose portions of the records and to withhold other portions that are exempt under the FOIA, or to otherwise deny a portion of the request for a procedural reason.
- m. **Pending Request or Pending Administrative Appeal** a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has not taken final action in all respects.
- n. **Perfected Request** a request for records which reasonably describes such records and is made in accordance with published rules stating the time, place, fees (if any) and procedures to be followed.
- o. **Processed Request or Processed Administrative Appeal** a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has taken final action in all respects.
- p. **Range in Number of Days** the lowest and highest number of days to process requests or administrative appeals.
- q. **Time Limits** the time period in the statute for an agency to respond to a FOIA request (ordinarily twenty working days from receipt of a perfected FOIA request).
- 3. There are nine FOIA exemptions:
 - a. **Exemption 1**: classified national defense and foreign relations information
 - b. **Exemption 2**: internal agency personnel rules and practices
 - c. **Exemption 3**: information that is prohibited from disclosure by another federal law
 - d. **Exemption 4**: trade secrets and other confidential business information
 - e. **Exemption 5**: inter-agency or intra-agency communications that are protected by legal privileges
 - f. **Exemption 6**: information involving matters of personal privacy

- g. **Exemption 7**: records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, to the extent that the production of those records (A) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings, (B) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication, (C) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, (D) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, (E) would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or (F) could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual
- h. **Exemption 8**: information relating to the supervision of financial institutions
- i. **Exemption 9**: geological information on wells

IV. EXEMPTION 3 STATUTES

A. Exemption 3 Statutes Relied upon by the Commission During the Current Fiscal Year:

Statute	Type of Information Withheld	Case Citation	Number of Times Relied upon per Component	Total Number of Times Relied upon by Agency
N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0

V. FOIA REQUESTS

A. Received, Processed and Pending FOIA Requests

	Number of Requests Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Received in Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Processed in Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Pending as of End of Fiscal Year
COMMISSION	1	20	21	0
AGENCY OVERALL	1	20	21	0

B. (1) Disposition of FOIA Requests – All Processed Requests

	Number of Full Grants	Number of Partial Grants/ Partial Denials	Number of Full Denials Based on Exemptions		Number of Full Denials Based on Reasons Other than Exemptions								
				No Records	All Records Referred to Another Component or Agency	Request With- drawn	Fee- Related Reason	Records not Reasonably Described	Improper FOIA Request for Other Reason	Not Agency Record	Duplicate Request	Other *Explain in chart below	TOTAL
COMMISS ION	4	6	0	2	0	1	0	0	6	2	0	0	21
AGENCY OVERALL	4	6	0	2	0	1	0	0	6	2	0	0	21

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

	Description of "Other" Reasons for Denials from Chart B(1) & Number of Times Those Reasons Were Relied upon	TOTAL
COMMISSION	N/A	0
AGENCY OVERALL	N/A	0

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

	Ex. 1	Ex. 2	Ex. 3	Ex. 4	Ex. 5	Ex. 6	Ex. 7(A)	Ex. 7(B)	Ex. 7(C)	Ex. 7(D)	Ex. 7(E)	Ex. 7(F)	Ex. 8	Ex. 9
COMMISSI ON	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS OF INITIAL DETERMINATIONS OF FOIA REQUESTS

A. Received, Processed and Pending Administrative Appeals

Number of Appeals Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Received in Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Processed in Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Pending as of End of Fiscal Year
0	0	0	0

B. Disposition of Administrative Appeals – All Processed Appeals

Number Affirmed on Appeal	Number Partially Affirmed & Partially Reversed/ Remanded on Appeal	Number Completely Reversed/ Remanded on Appeal	Number of Appeals Closed for Other Reasons	TOTAL
0	0	0	0	0

C. (1) Reasons for Denial on Appeal – Number of Times Exemptions Applied

Ex.	Ex.	Ex.	Ex.	Ex.	Ex.	Ex.	Ex.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7(A)	7(B)	7(C)	7(D)	7(E)	7(F)	8	9
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D. (2) Reasons for Denial on Appeal – Reasons Other than Exemptions

No Records	Records Referred at Initial Request Level	Request Withdrawn	Fee- Related Reason	Records not Reasonably Described	Improper Request for Other Reasons	Not Agency Record	Duplicate Request or Appeal	Request in Litigation	Appeal Based Solely on Denial of Request for Expedited Processing	Other *Explain in chart below
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

E. (3) Reasons for Denial on Appeal – "Other" Reasons from Section VI, C (2) Chart

Description of "Other" Reasons for Denial on Appeal from Chart C (2) & Number of Times Those Reasons Were Relied upon	TOTAL
N/A	0

F. (4) Response Time for Administrative Appeals

Median Number of	Average Number of	Lowest Number of	Highest Number of
Days	Days	Days	Days
0	0	0	0

G. (5) Ten Oldest Pending Administrative Appeals

		10 th Oldest Appeal	9 th	8 th	$7^{ m th}$	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	Oldest Appeal
Agency Overall	Date of Receipt of Ten Oldest Appeals	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number of Days Pending	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

FOIA REQUESTS: RESPONSE TIME FOR PROCESSED AND PENDING REQUESTS¹ VII.

	SIMPLE					COM	PLEX		EXPEDITED PROCESSING			
	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
COMMISSION	1	7	1	6	10	22	3	63	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AGENCY OVERALL	1	7	1	6	10	22	3	63	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Processed Requests – Response Time for All Processed Perfected Requests² A.

Processed Requests – Response Time for Perfected Requests in Which Information Was Granted³ B.

	SIMPLE					COM	PLEX		EXPEDITED PROCESSING			
	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
COMMISSION	1	1	1	2	10	22	3	63	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AGENCY OVERALL	1	1	1	2	10	22	3	63	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

¹ It is significant to note that not all FOIA requests processed in FY2012 were categorized as either simple or complex. Some requests were neither, and were listed in the category "N/A" when describing complexity in our agency's FOIA log.

² All numbers rounded to units. ³ *Id*.

C. Requests – Response Time in Day Increments

Simple Requests

	1-20 Days	21-40 Days	41-60 Days	61-80 Days	81- 100 Days	101- 120 Days	121- 140 Days	141- 160 Days	161- 180 Days	181- 200 Days	201- 300 Days	301- 400 Days	401+ Days	TOTAL
COMMISSION	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
AGENCY OVERALL	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7

Complex Requests

	1-20 Days	21-40 Days	41-60 Days	61-80 Days	81- 100 Days	101- 120 Days	121- 140 Days	141- 160 Days	161- 180 Days	181- 200 Days	201- 300 Days	301- 400 Days	401+ Days	TOTAL
COMMISSION	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
AGENCY OVERALL	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6

Requests	Granted	Expedited	Processing
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	1-20 Days	21-40 Days	41-60 Days	61-80 Days	81- 100 Days	101- 120 Days	121- 140 Days	141- 160 Days	161- 180 Days	181- 200 Days	201- 300 Days	301- 400 Days	401+ Days	TOTAL
COMMISSION	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

SIMPLE COMPLEX EXPEDITED PROCESSING

D. Pending Requests – All Pending Perfected Requests

	Number Pending	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Number Pending	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Number Pending	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days
COMMISSION	0	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A
AGENCY OVERALL	0	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A

E. Pending Requests – Ten Oldest Pending Perfected Requests

		10 th Oldest Request	9 th	8 th	$7^{ m th}$	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	Oldest Request
COMMISSION	Date of Receipt of Ten Oldest Requests	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
COMMISSION	Number of Days Pending	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

| Agency | Date of
Receipt of
Ten Oldest
Requests | N/A |
|---------|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Overall | Number of
Days
Pending | N/A |

VIII. REQUESTS FOR EXPEDITED PROCESSING AND REQUESTS FOR FEE WAIVER

	Number Granted	Number Denied	Median Number of Days to Adjudicate	Average Number of Days to Adjudicate	Number Adjudicated Within Ten Calendar Days
COMMISSION	0	0	N/A	N/A	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	N/A	N/A	0

A. Requests for Expedited Processing

B. Requests for Fee Waiver

	Number Granted	Number Denied	Median Number of Days to Adjudicate	Average Number of Days to Adjudicate
COMMISSION	0	0	N/A	N/A
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	N/A	N/A

IX. FOIA PERSONNEL AND COSTS

		PERSONNEL		COSTS			
	Number of "Full-Time FOIA Employees"	Number of "Equivalent Full-Time FOIA Employees"	Total Number of "Full-Time FOIA Staff"	Processing Costs (At initial request and appeal levels)	Litigation- Related Costs	Total Costs	
COMMISSION	0	0.25	0.25	\$20,000	0	\$20,000	
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0.25	0.25	\$20,000	0	\$20,000	

X. FEES COLLECTED FOR PROCESSING REQUESTS

	Total Amount of Fees Collected	Percentage of Total Costs
COMMISSION	\$0.00	0.00%
AGENCY OVERALL	\$0.00	0.00%

XI. FOIA REGULATIONS

COMMISSION FOIA regulations are published at 45 C.F.R. Part 704, and are available electronically at

http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2012-title45-vol3/pdf/CFR-2012-title45-vol3-sec704-1.pdf

XII. BACKLOGS, CONSULTATIONS, AND COMPARISONS

A. Backlogs of FOIA Requests and Administrative Appe
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	Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of Fiscal Year	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Fiscal Year
COMMISSION	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0

B. Consultations on FOIA Requests – Received, Processed, and Pending Consultations

	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that Were <u>Pending</u> at the COMMISSION as of <u>Start</u> of the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations <u>Received</u> from Other Agencies During the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that Were <u>Processed</u> by the COMMISSION During the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that Were <u>Pending</u> at the COMMISSION as of <u>End</u> of the Fiscal Year
COMMISSION	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	0	0

C. Consultations on FOIA Requests – Ten Oldest Consultations Received from Other Agencies and Pending at the U.S.C.C.R.4

Agongy	10 th Oldest Consultation and Number of Days Pending	9 th	8 th	7 th	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	Oldest Consultation and Number of Days Pending
Agency Overall	Date	N/A								
	Number of Days	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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

⁴ There are no consultations pending.

	NUMBER OF REQU	ESTS <u>RECEIVED</u>	NUMBER OF REQUESTS <u>PROCESSED</u>		
	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	
Commission	50	20	63	21	
AGENCY OVERALL	50	20	63	21	

D.2 Comparison of Backlogged Requests from Previous and Current Annual Report

	Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of the Fiscal Year from Previous Annual Report	Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of the Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
COMMISSION	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0

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

	NUMBER OF API	PEALS <u>RECEIVED</u>	NUMBER OF APPEALS <u>PROCESSED</u>		
	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	
COMMISSION	0	0	0	0	
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	0	0	

E.2 Comparison of Backlogged Administrative Appeals from Previous and Current Annual Report

	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of the Fiscal Year from Previous Annual Report	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of the Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report		
COMMISSION	0	0		
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0		