

Appendix 4:

Freedom of Information

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The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) gives the general public legal access to government documents.

Freedom of Information statistics

During 2008-09, the Commission received 13 initial requests for access to documents under the Freedom of Information Act. The Commission was also asked to conduct an internal review of one of those decisions.

Of the 13 initial requests for information, ten were brought by individuals or organisations seeking access to documents relating to themselves.

A total of ten applications and one internal review were processed in this financial year.

Categories of documents

Documents held by the Commission relate to:

- administration matters, including personnel, recruitment, accounts, purchasing, registers, registry, library records and indices
- complaint handling matters, including the investigation, clarification and resolution of complaints
- legal matters, including legal documents, opinion, advice and representations
- research matters, including research papers in relation to complaints, existing or proposed legislative practices, public education, national inquiries and other relevant issues
- policy matters, including minutes of Commission meetings, administrative and operational guidelines
- operational matters, including files on formal inquiries
- reference materials, including press clippings, survey and research materials, documents relating to conferences, seminars and those contained in the library.

Freedom of Information procedures

Initial inquiries about access to Commission documents should be directed to the Freedom of Information Officer by either telephoning (02) 9284 9600 or by writing to:

Freedom of Information Officer
Australian Human Rights Commission
GPO Box 5218
Sydney, NSW 2001

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Procedures for dealing with Freedom of Information requests are detailed in section 15 of the Freedom of Information Act. A valid request must:

- be in writing
- be accompanied by a \$30 application fee
- include the name and address of the person requesting the information
- specify the documents to which access is sought.