



Our reference: RQ21/02148
Agency reference: FOI 20/21-0851

Shirley

Sent by email: foi+request-7405-249bd8e5@righttoknow.org.au

Extension of time under s 15AB

Dear Shirley

On 9 August 2021, the National Disability Insurance Agency (the NDIA) applied for further time under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (the FOI Act) to make a decision on your 2 FOI requests made on 9 June 2021, which have been combined by the NDIA under reference FOI 20/21-0851. These are your requests titled:

1. The NDIA's COVID-19 risk assessment specific to the State of Victoria
2. The NDIA's COVID-19 risk assessment specific to the State of New South Wales

This application was made on the basis that the processing period is insufficient to deal adequately with your FOI requests because they are complex and voluminous.

The NDIA has advised the OAIC that you agreed to an extension of time to process the requests under s 15AA of the FOI Act to 9 August 2021 (OAIC reference RQ21/02158).

Contact with you

On 11 August 2021, I wrote to you to seek your view on the NDIA's application. I invited you to provide any comments by 13 August 2021. You responded to my inquiries and provided comments that I have taken into consideration.

Decision

As a delegate of the Information Commissioner, I am authorised to make decisions on applications for extensions of time under s 15AB of the FOI Act.

I have decided to grant the NDIA an extension of time under s 15AB(2) of the FOI Act **to 8 September 2021**. I am satisfied that the NDIA's application for an extension of time is justified, because the requests are complex and voluminous. My reasons and considerations follow:

- The NDIA has advised that:

- the requests are broadly scoped and cover both current and historical documents
- the requests seek access to documents of a highly sensitive and complex nature from multiple business areas
- the NDIA has combined requests where possible and is engaged in a significant amount of consultation with multiple stakeholders to ensure it has appropriately identified documents within scope, and determine whether it needs to further engage with you
- searches for historic material have been complex as ICT infrastructure has changed over time and other Commonwealth agencies hold the archived material, and
- - the NDIA is committed to issuing a decision as soon as possible.

Contact

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact me on (02) 9284 9783 or via email at rochelle.dunlop@oaic.gov.au. In all correspondence, please include the OAIC reference number at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely



Rochelle Dunlop

Review and Investigation Advisor
Freedom of Information
16 August 2021

Review rights

If you disagree with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner's (OAIC) decision you can apply to the Federal Court of Australia or the Federal Circuit Court for a review of a decision of the Information Commissioner if you think that a decision by the Information Commissioner to grant an extension of time is not legally correct. You can make this application under the *Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act 1977*.

The Court will not review the merits of your case but it may refer the matter back to the Information Commissioner for further consideration if it finds the decision was wrong in law or the Information Commissioner's powers were not exercised properly.

An application for review must be made to the Court within 28 days of the OAIC sending the decision to you. You may wish to seek legal advice as the process can involve fees and costs. Please contact the Federal Court registry in your state or territory for more information, or visit the Federal Court website at <http://www.fedcourt.gov.au/>.

Further information

Further information about how applications to extend the timeframe to process an FOI request are handled by the OAIC can be found published on our website:

For FOI applicants: [How to make an FOI request: Extensions of time](#)

For agencies and ministers: [Guidance and advice: Extension of time for processing requests](#)

The OAIC has the power to investigate complaints about an agency's actions under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (FOI Act). This is a separate process from asking for an Information Commissioner review following a decision made under the FOI Act. Complaints usually focus on how an agency has handled your FOI request or complied with other obligations under the FOI Act, rather than the decision itself.

In some cases, the Information Commissioner's investigation of a complaint may lead to the agency addressing the issues that you have complained about. In other cases, the Information Commissioner may make suggestions or recommendations that the agency should implement. The Information Commissioner can only make non-binding recommendations as a result of a complaint. You and the agency will be notified of the outcome of the investigation.

FOI complaints to the OAIC must be made in writing. Our preference is for you to use the [online FOI complaint form](#) if at all possible.

Further information about how to make a complaint can be found published on our website:
<https://www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/reviews-and-complaints/make-an-foi-complaint/>.