Office of Government Information Services (OGIS)

Annual Open Meeting
Fiscal Year 2016 in Review

• FOIA Improvement Act of 2016
• OGIS Activities
  • Outreach and Collaboration
  • Dispute Resolution
  • Compliance
  • Recommendations
• A Look Ahead
Outreach and Collaboration

- Open Government

- US National Action Plan 3.0
  - Develop educational resources to teach students about FOIA
  - Integrated into DOCSTeach
  - Collaborate with Office of Information Policy to improve FOIA webpages
  - Ongoing

The Impact of Bloody Sunday in Selma

WHAT IS THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT?
The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requires federal agencies to make specific records available on their websites and gives the public the right to request agency records. Federal courts, Congress, and many offices within the White House are not subject to FOIA.

WHO FILES FOIA REQUESTS?
Anyone can file a FOIA request. Some people who use FOIA are journalists, researchers, genealogists, students, corporations, and nonprofit organizations.

WHY WOULD I FILE A FOIA REQUEST?
The purpose of FOIA is to help the public better understand the government's actions. The law is also frequently used to learn more about family history or to request copies of records people need for immigration-related processes or to apply for certain government benefits.

HOW DO I FILE A FOIA REQUEST?
Most agencies require that FOIA requests be made in writing. To find out how to submit a FOIA request to a particular agency, visit FOIA.gov.

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE A RESPONSE TO MY FOIA REQUEST?
The law provides agencies 30 working days to respond to your request; however, responses can take a significantly longer time especially if the agency has lots of records that might be responsive to your request or if it has to search several offices for responsive records. Before you file a FOIA request, be sure to look at the agency's website to see if the information you need is already public.

WHAT WILL AGENCIES RELEASE UNDER FOIA?
Agencies are required to release records that are responsive to your request, which may include information that is protected under the law (FOIA includes nine exemptions that allow agencies to withhold categories of records, including some law enforcement records, national security information, and some geological or geophysical information).
Outreach and Collaboration

• Sunshine Week 2016
Dispute Resolution

Cases Opened by Fiscal Year (FY) Quarter

Cases Opened in FY 2015 and FY 2016

NATIONAL ARCHIVES / AGENCY SERVICES
Who Can Help You Through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before You File a FOIA Request</th>
<th>Agency FOIA Public Liaison</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides an estimated date of completion</td>
<td>Expects agency records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discusses how to reformulate requests to address fees and processing time</td>
<td>Suggests offices that might have responsive records</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establishes communication between the requester and the agency</td>
<td>Expects the FOIA process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts as a liaison</td>
<td>Suggests appropriate agencies to contact</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>During the FOIA Process</th>
<th>Office of Government Information Services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides an estimated date of completion</td>
<td>Expects agency actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discusses how to reformulate requests to address fees and processing time</td>
<td>Resolves disputes and narrow issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establishes communication between the requester and the agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts as a liaison</td>
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Dispute Resolution

• Training for FOIA Professionals
Compliance

• Agency Assessments
  • Management
  • Technology
  • Communication
• “Still Interested” Assessment
## Compliance

### Status of Compliance Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Management</th>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Customer Service</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response Received FY 2016</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal Emergency Management Agency</td>
<td>✔️ ✔️ ✔️ ✔️</td>
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<td>United States Coast Guard</td>
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<td>Transportation Security Administration</td>
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<td>Customs and Border Protection</td>
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<td><strong>Response Due FY 2017</strong></td>
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Recommendations

• FOIA Advisory Committee
What is Ahead?

• Physical office move – beginning May 5, 2017

• Website Changes – May 15, 2017

• Chief FOIA Officers Council Meeting – Summer 2017
Public Comment

• Please submit any written comments to OGIS@nara.gov