



OFFICE of GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES

May 12, 2016—Sent via U.S. mail

Mr. Edward T. Keable
Deputy Solicitor-General Law
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U.S. Department of the Interior
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Dear Mr. Keable:

I write to seek assistance with a number of Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) cases related to pending Department of the Interior (DOI) Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) appeals.

As you are aware, Congress created OGIS to complement existing FOIA practice and procedure; we strive to work in conjunction with the existing request and appeal process. The goal is for OGIS to allow, whenever practical, the requester to exhaust his or her remedies within the agency, including the appeal process. OGIS has no investigatory or enforcement power, nor can we compel an agency to release documents. OGIS serves as the Federal FOIA Ombudsman and our jurisdiction is limited to assisting with the FOIA process.

As you may know, FOIA requesters frequently contact OGIS for assistance with delayed FOIA requests and appeals. In working these cases, OGIS contacts the agency for information about the status of requests or appeals and provides that information to the requester.

OGIS currently has six (6) requests for status of appeals pending at DOI. Over the last few months, OGIS has contacted the DOI Office of the Solicitor (SOL) seeking information about the status—including a tracking number—for these appeals, but we have received no substantive response to these inquiries. These cases are:

- [REDACTED] appealed request No. [REDACTED] in February 2015. OGIS staff contacted SOL staff twice seeking the status of this appeal but received no response.
- [REDACTED] appealed request No. [REDACTED] in March, 2015. OGIS staff contacted SOL staff five times between December 2015 and April 2016 but received no substantive information about the status of this appeal.



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- [REDACTED] appealed request No. [REDACTED] in July, 2015. OGIS staff contacted SOL staff three times seeking the status of this appeal but received no substantive response.
- [REDACTED] appealed request No. [REDACTED] in October, 2015 [REDACTED] and OGIS staff contacted SOL staff twice seeking the status of this appeal but received no response.
- [REDACTED] appealed request No. [REDACTED] in January, 2016. OGIS staff contacted SOL staff three times seeking the status of this appeal but received no substantive response.
- [REDACTED] appealed request No. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in March, 2016. OGIS staff contacted SOL staff three times seeking the status of this appeal but received no substantive response.

I would appreciate any assistance you can provide in obtaining appeal tracking numbers and status information for each of the appeals listed above. Please provide the requested information to my Deputy Nikki Gramian. Nikki can be reached at (202) 741-5772 or via email at: Nikki.Gramian@NARA.gov.

Thank you for your courteous assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,



JAMES V.M.L. HOLZER
Director