

Updated Status Report Regarding Implementation of Executive Order 13,392, "Improving Agency Disclosure of Information"

This Updated Status Report is due to the Chair of the President's Management Council, by August 1, 2008, regarding progress that the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled (Committee), an independent federal agency, has already made – and has committed to make – in remedying any deficiencies encountered in meeting a milestone in its agency FOIA Improvement Plan as reported in its 2007 Annual FOIA Report.

1. FOIA Improvement Plan area to which this deficient milestone relates.

Backlog Reduction/Elimination

2. Deficient milestone and the original target date from the FOIA Improvement Plan.

Backlog reduction of 100% by the original target completion date of 12/31/07 was not met due to unanticipated requests. Since they were unanticipated, the Committee had no reason to anticipate them when it set its original plan. This milestone was updated in the Committee's Annual FOIA Report to 6/1/08 but was not met due to the volume of the last two remaining requests. Therefore, the backlog reduction milestone is currently at 75% complete.

3. Steps taken to correct the deficiency and the dates by which the steps were completed.

The 25% and 50% milestones were met. In an effort to decrease the backlog to meet the 100% milestone, in November 2007-May 2008 the FOIA Administrator contacted requesters to determine their interest in pursuing their requests and discussed the scope of requests involving voluminous responsive records. In collaboration with the General Counsel and FOIA Public Liaison, the FOIA Administrator ensured responses were sent through the response approval process as expeditiously as possible.

The CY 2007 backlog has been reduced by 75%, such that only two FOIA requests from the CY 2007 backlog are now in backlog status. For the two September 6, 2007 requests, the FOIA Administrator released documents by June 1, 2008, thereby meeting the goal. The two backlogged FOIAs of August 10, 2007 are currently “in progress” – the FOIA Administrator has already begun the file search in the agency’s file room and had begun pulling the necessary files to cull through the papers to find the responsive documents.

To ensure that the Committee handles FOIA requests as efficiently as possible, the FOIA Administrator continues to bi-weekly update the Chief FOIA Officer, General Counsel, and FOIA Public Liaison regarding the status of the agency’s FOIA queue. This

communication vehicle continues to have positive results, yielding collaboration with senior management and realignment of job duty priorities for the FOIA Administrator, who has other job responsibilities in addition to FOIA ones.

Coincidentally, although the Committee has a backlog of two FOIA requests now for CY 2007, the Committee is fully on target in terms of its report it submitted to DoJ on November 1, 2007, *FOIA Backlog Reduction Goals for FY08, FY09, and FY10*, which was in response to DoJ's September 7, 2007 memorandum stating that any agency that has a request or appeal pending beyond the statutory time period as of the end of Fiscal Year 2007 is required to establish and publish these goals.

Accordingly, the Committee established the goals with respect to the numbers of FOIA requests and administrative appeals to be processed, and requests/appeals it expects to be pending beyond the statutory time during FY 2008. In the November report the Committee estimated it would have 10 pending requests at the beginning of FY 2008, which is coincidentally exactly the number the Committee had. The Committee is fully on target with the number of appeals outstanding, as well, with zero in the queue.

4. Future remedial steps and the dates by which the steps will be completed.

The Committee will process its last two FOIA requests by September 30, 2008. By that time, the Committee's backlog reduction milestone will be 100% complete.