

Updated Status Report
From the Central Intelligence Agency
Concerning Reported Deficiencies in
Implementing Executive Order 13,392,
"Improving Agency Disclosure of Information"
1 August 2007

This report updates the progress the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has made implementing its Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) improvement plan required by Executive Order 13,392, "Improving Agency Disclosure of Information." The report conforms to the template the Department of Justice provided online in "Guidance on Submitting Updated Status Reports to the President's Management Council."

In response to the Executive Order, CIA identified six areas for improving its FOIA process:

- Automated electronic FOIA tracking and documentation system,
- Overall website improvement to enhance access and user-friendliness,
- Proactive disclosure of information by putting more released documents on its public FOIA website,
- Reducing the backlog,
- Forms of communication with requesters, and
- Tracking the progress of cases.

In June 2007, the Department of Justice assessed that CIA met its goals for overall website improvement and proactive disclosure of information, but gave the Agency a "yellow" rating for the other four areas. "Yellow" means progress, but not success, in meeting a milestone.

1. FOIA Improvement Plan Area: Automated electronic FOIA tracking and documentation system.
2. Deficient Milestone: Deploy a new electronic data tracking and documentation system by December, 2006 to replace the current system.
3. Specific Steps Taken to Correct the Deficiency: CIA's improvement plan called for the deployment of a follow-on

electronic data tracking and documentation system, CIA Automated Declassification and Release Environment (CADRE), by the fourth quarter of calendar year 2006. Technical development issues, however, have delayed deployment of the system until the fourth quarter of calendar year 2007.

4. Additional Steps CIA Will Take: CIA continues to pursue aggressively the additional capability CADRE represents, and is working to deploy the system to FOIA case managers by 31 December 2007. That goal is entirely dependent on technical issues.

1. FOIA Improvement Plan Area: Reducing the overall backlog of FOIA cases.

2. Deficient Milestone: Reduce the overall backlog of FOIA cases 10 percent by 1 October 2006, and reduce the backlog of oldest cases 25 percent by 1 October 2006.

3. Specific Steps Taken to Correct the Deficiency: For both Fiscal Years 2006 and 2007, CIA set a goal of reducing the overall FOIA backlog by 10 percent. In Fiscal Year 2006 the Agency achieved an 8 percent overall reduction, but reduced the backlog of its oldest cases 40 percent because it formed a special team devoted just to closing these cases. This team was not operational for the entire fiscal year, having been formed after the year began.

4. Additional Steps CIA Will Take: To date in Fiscal Year 2007, CIA has received several hundred more FOIA requests than last year, and this increased case load, over which the Agency has no control, is adversely affecting CIA's ability to reach its self-imposed goal of reducing its overall backlog by 10 percent. The Agency must also devote a significant portion of its declassification review resources to demanding non-FOIA litigation and competing declassification requirements like the systematic declassification review Executive Order 12958 mandates.

The Agency has, however, paid special attention to reducing its backlog of cases five years old or older, and has succeeded in reducing this backlog by 60 percent—well exceeding its goal of 25 percent.

Our Annual FOIA report for Fiscal Year 2006 raised the possibility of resource reallocation, but in June 2007 CIA decided that the people assigned to reducing the backlog of

oldest cases have developed efficiencies and expertise that make their impact greatest if they remain focused on their current task. The benefit is the closing of the Agency's oldest, most difficult and complex cases.

1. FOIA Improvement Plan Area: Forms of communication with requesters.
2. Deficient Milestone: Revise all correspondence templates by 31 December 2006 to make responses easier to understand.
3. Specific Steps Taken to Correct the Deficiency: In June 2006 CIA began revising the thousands of individual correspondence paragraph templates it has, but soon recognized that it did not need to do so because it does not use every template in every instance. A more efficient use of resources dictated that CIA identify the forms of correspondence it uses most often with most requesters, and revise those. That process began in March 2007 and continues.
4. Additional Steps CIA Will Take: To date, CIA has revised approximately half of these commonly used correspondence templates, and will finish the remainder by 31 December 2007.

1. FOIA Improvement Plan Area: Tracking the progress of cases.
2. Deficient Milestone: By 30 August 2006, institute more intensive monitoring of the status of each FOIA case by implementing new procedures and technologies.
3. Specific Steps Taken to Correct the Deficiency: CIA substantially cured this deficiency in June 2006 when it implemented a mandatory "tickler" system for case managers coupled with frequent reports to management on the status of cases. The Agency received a "yellow" rating simply because CADRE, the technological part of the solution, is not yet available to improve case tracking.

Independent of CADRE, however, in May and June 2007 the Agency developed new production and tracking metrics that provide increased accountability, case management information that is updated daily, and an improved ability to monitor requests it must send to other government agencies for coordination.

4. Additional Steps CIA Will Take: Not applicable.