



**SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR IRAQ
RECONSTRUCTION**

CHIEF FOIA OFFICER REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2010

March 1, 2011

BACKGROUND

The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) is mandated with the oversight responsibility of the use, and potential misuse, of all obligations, expenditures, and revenues associated with reconstruction and rehabilitation activities in Iraq. SIGIR conducts comprehensive audits, inspections and investigations and provides advice and recommendations on policies to promote economy, efficiency and effectiveness via quarterly and semi-annual reports directly to the U.S. Congress and the Secretaries of State and Defense. SIGIR is a very small agency with a staff of less than 100. It receives few FOIA requests. Most of SIGIR's work products are made available to the public on its Website, www.sigir.mil.

I. Steps Taken to Ensure the Presumption of Openness

1. *Describe the steps your agency has taken to ensure that the presumption of openness is being applied to all decisions involving the FOIA.*

a. *Describe how the President's FOIA Memorandum and the Attorney General's FOIA Guidelines have been publicized throughout your agency.*

The President's FOIA Memorandum and the Attorney General's FOIA Guidelines are reflected in SIGIR's FOIA Policy, which states that SIGIR will "make the maximum amount of information on its operations and activities open to the public" and lays out specific steps to further this goal including: making as many records as possible available on the public Website, promptly answering requests for information, and making discretionary disclosures wherever possible. The policy is publicized on SIGIR's employee Website.

b. *What training has been attended and/or conducted on the new FOIA Guidelines?*

The FOIA program is centrally managed at the agency level by the Chief FOIA Officer in consultation with the General Counsel. The Chief FOIA Officer attended training in January 2011.

c. *How has your agency created or modified your internal guidance to reflect the presumption of openness?*

See 1. a.

d. *To what extent has your agency made discretionary releases of otherwise exempt information?*

SIGIR did not make any discretionary disclosures in FY 2010.

e. *What exemptions would have covered the information that was released as a matter of discretion?*

N/A. See 1.d.

f. How does your agency review records to determine whether discretionary releases are possible?

The Chief FOIA reviews all recommendations for exemptions in consultation with the General Counsel to determine if discretionary release is possible.

g. Describe any other initiatives undertaken by your agency to ensure that the presumption of openness is being applied.

Given the very small number of FOIA requests received by the agency the approach described in 1.f. is felt to be adequate.

2. Report the extent to which the numbers of requests where records have been released in full and the numbers of requests where records have been released in part has changed from those numbers as reported in your previous year's Annual FOIA Report.

In FY 2010, in response to 16 FOIA requests, SIGIR released records in full to five requesters. SIGIR released in part and withheld in part in response to five requesters. Two requests were denied in full. There were three 'no record' responses, and one request was withdrawn. In FY 2009, in response to 12 FOIA requests, SIGIR released records in full to six requesters and released in part and denied in part to one requester. Two requests were denied in full. There were three 'no record' responses.

II. Steps Taken to Ensure that the Agency's System for Responding to FOIA Requests is Effective and Efficient

SIGIR established a formal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Program in 2009. There is an internal policy, which outlines procedures for responding to FOIA requests and processing appeals. A Chief FOIA Officer (CFO) is appointed and has attended formal training. The CFO is accountable for recording, assigning, and tracking all FOIA requests from receipt through final disposition. Technology support is provided by the SIGIR IT department. A customized FOIA Tracking System is housed on a shared drive to facilitate tracking the timeliness of responses.

1. Describe here the steps your agency has taken to ensure that your system for responding to requests is effective and efficient.

a. Do FOIA professionals within your agency have sufficient IT support?

The Chief FOIA Officer, the only FOIA professional at SIGIR, receives full support from the IT Department.

b. Describe how your agency's FOIA professionals interact with your Open Government Team.

The Chief FOIA Officer works directly with the General Counsel who monitors compliance with Open Government Directives.

c. Describe the steps your agency has taken to assess whether adequate staffing is being devoted to responding to FOIA requests.

The Chief FOIA Officer reports directly to the Deputy of the agency who monitors program performance.

d. Describe any other steps your agency has undertaken to ensure that your FOIA system operates efficiently and effectively.

A customized FOIA Tracking System is housed on a shared drive to facilitate tracking the timeliness of responses.

III. Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures

The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) makes proactive disclosures to the maximum extent possible providing the public with information on its operations and activities. In furtherance of this goal, SIGIR makes all audit and inspection reports, quarterly and semi-annual reports, lessons learned papers and congressional testimonies available on its public Website, www.sigir.mil.

1. Describe here the steps your agency has taken to increase the amount of material that is available on your agency website, including providing examples of proactive disclosures that have been made since issuance of the new FOIA Guidelines.

a. Has your agency added new material to your agency website since last year?

Yes.

b. What types of records have been posted?

In 2010 the following material was added to the public Website: *January 2010 Quarterly and Semiannual Report; April 2010 Quarterly Report; July 2010 Quarterly and Semiannual Report; October 2010 Quarterly Report; Applying Hard Lessons*, a paper addressing who should be accountable for planning, managing, and executing stabilization and reconstruction operations; 23 audit reports; six inspections reports; and six Congressional testimonies.

c. Give examples of the types of records your agency now posts that used to be available only by making a FOIA request for them.

N/A. It has always been SIGIR's policy to make its work products available.

d. What system do you have in place to routinely identify records that are appropriate for posting?

As a matter of policy all of SIGIR's audit reports, inspection reports, lessons learned reports and

reports to Congress are proactively released.

e. How do you utilize social media in disseminating information?

SIGIR uses its public Website to disseminate information. It does not use other forms of social media.

f. Describe any other steps taken to increase proactive disclosures at your agency.

SIGIR posts Arabic translations of its quarterly and semiannual reports to Congress.

IV. Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology

1. Electronic receipt of FOIA requests:

a. What proportion of the components within your agency, which receive FOIA requests have the capability to receive such requests electronically?

N/A. SIGIR does not have components.

b. To what extent have you increased the number of components doing so since the filing of your last Chief FOIA Officer Report?

N/A. SIGIR does not have components.

c. What methods does your agency use to receive requests electronically?

The SIGIR Website provides an electronic submission form. Requesters may also e-mail their requests to the agency Chief FOIA Officer.

2. Electronic tracking of FOIA requests:

a. What proportion of components within your agency which receive FOIA requests have the capability to track such requests electronically?

SIGIR does not have components. FOIA requests are managed at the agency level and all requests are tracked electronically.

b. To what extent have you increased the number of components doing so since the filing of your last Chief FOIA Officer Report?

N/A. SIGIR does not have components.

c. What methods does your agency use to track requests electronically?

A customized, FOIA Tracking System is housed on a shared drive.

3. *Electronic processing of FOIA requests:*

a. *What proportion of components within your agency, which receive FOIA requests have the capability to process such requests electronically?*

N/A. SIGIR does not have components.

b. *To what extent have you increased the number of components doing so since the filing of your last Chief FOIA Officer Report?*

N/A. SIGIR does not have components.

c. *What methods does your agency use to process requests electronically?*

SIGIR uses generic data/word processing software to process requests.

4. *Electronic preparation of your Annual FOIA Report:*

a. *What type of technology does your agency use to prepare your agency Annual FOIA Report?*

The Annual FOIA Report is prepared using generic data/word processing systems.

b. *If you are not satisfied with your existing system to prepare your Annual FOIA Report, describe the steps you have taken to increase your use of technology for next year.*

N/A. The current technology is satisfactory.

V. Steps Taken to Reduce Backlogs and Increase Responsiveness

1. *If your agency has a backlog, report here whether that backlog is decreasing.*

SIGIR has no FOIA response backlogs.

2. *If there has not been a reduction in the backlog as measured by either of these metrics, describe why that has occurred.*

N/A

3. *Describe the steps your agency is taking to reduce any backlogs and to improve timeliness in responding to requests and administrative appeals. .*

SIGIR has no FOIA response backlogs. The Chief FOIA Officer monitors the FOIA caseload and the processing of requests and reports progress to SIGIR's General Counsel and Deputy Inspector General. SIGIR has adequate FOIA staffing and IT support to process its caseload in a timely manner. No changes in IT support or FOIA staffing levels were made in 2010.