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Sent: Tuesday, September 09, 2014 8:07 AM

To: Hogan, James P CIV OSD ODCMO (US)

Subject: Proper Redactions

To DoD FOIA Officers and Attorneys,

Recently, our office has noticed a trend that we would like to correct.

When redacting documents, most personnel electronically "black-out" the information that is being redacted. However, if you choose to "white-out" the information instead (either electronically or manually), you must indicate the information that is being redacted with brackets, i.e. "[]". This must be done to meet the requirement of the Act; "In denying a request for records, in whole or in part, an agency shall make a reasonable effort to estimate the volume of any requested matter the provision of which is denied, and shall provide any such estimate to the person making the request,..." 5 USC 552(a)(6)(F).

To explain this, let's say that half a page of a released/redacted document is white, with "b6" in the middle of this half page. It could be the case that either 1) the entire half page was redacted, or 2) only a quarter of the page was redacted, and the other quarter was blank. In this instance, applying brackets around the redacted information would eliminate this ambiguity, thereby meeting the requirement of making "a reasonable effort to estimate the volume" of redacted information.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Jim Hogan