



Australian Government
Department of Defence

Reference: OCA/OUT/2019/BQ3346059

FOI 310/18/19 STATEMENT OF REASONS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

1. I refer to the application by [REDACTED] under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act), for access to:

Documents, specifically reports, briefing and attachments, internal correspondence (please limit to the Director-General in relation to internal correspondence), relating to the air drop to flood-affected Queensland farmers/livestock in Northern Queensland. Please exclude duplicates, documents that have already been publicly released, media releases /reports/articles and correspondence with media. If emails are captured, please limit to the final thread of the conversation. If there are multiple briefing notes on the same topic, please limit to the most recent, along with any attachments. Timeframe: since 1 February, 2019.

In relation to internal correspondence and briefings, please limit searches to:

- *Chief of Army*
- *Vice Chief of Army*
- *the Secretary*

Personal email addresses, signatures, PMKeys numbers and mobile telephone numbers contained in documents that fall within the scope of the FOI request and duplicates of documents are excluded from this request.

FOI decision maker

2. I am the authorised officer pursuant to section 23 of the FOI Act to make a decision on this FOI request.

Documents identified

3. I identified seven documents, totalling 31 pages, as matching the scope of this request.

4. The decision in relation to each document is detailed in a schedule of documents.

5. I have added an FOI reference number and Item number to each of the documents, which corresponds with the schedule.

Decision

6. I have decided to partially release seven documents in accordance with section 22 [access to edited copies with exempt or irrelevant matter deleted] of the FOI Act, on the grounds that the deleted material is considered exempt under section 22(1)(b)(ii) of the FOI Act.

Material taken into account

7. In making my decision, I had regard to:
 - a. the terms of the request
 - b. the content of the identified documents in issue
 - c. relevant provisions in the FOI Act
 - d. the Guidelines published by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner under section 93A of the FOI Act (the Guidelines)
 - e. consultation with third parties.

Reasons for decision

Section 22 – Edited copies with exempt or irrelevant matter deleted

8. Section 22 of the FOI Act provides that if an agency or Minister decides to:
 - (i) *refuse access to an exempt document; or*
 - (ii) *that to give access to a document would disclose information that would reasonably be regarded as irrelevant to the request for access*

and it is reasonably practicable to prepare a copy of the document modified by deletions, the agency or Minister must give the applicant access to the edited copy.
9. The documents identified as meeting the scope of this request contain information on many aspects of Defence's support to the 2019 Queensland floods. The request specifically seeks information on air drops to flood-affected Queensland farmers/livestock in Northern Queensland. I consider that information on other aspects of OP Queensland Flood Assist 19 are therefore out of scope of this request.
10. Considering all of the above, I decided that it was reasonably practicable to remove the material that did not fall within scope of this request and release the documents in that form.

carla.watts  Digitally signed by carla.watts
Date: 2019.04.29 16:29:46 +10'00'

CN Watts
COL
Accredited Decision Maker
Army