Australian Government — Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

Search minute template

The OAIC has developed this template to assist agencies and ministers in recording the steps taken in locating documents within the scope of an FOI request.

Read the agency resource [Processing FOI requests: taking all reasonable steps to find documents](https://www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/guidance-and-advice/processing-foi-requests-taking-all-reasonable-steps-to-find-documents/) for more information.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| FOI reference: |  |
| Date action due: |  |
| FOI applicant: |  |
| Search minute completed by: |  |
| Reasons why you were nominated to complete the search minute (e.g. you are the responsible case officer; you have particular knowledge of the business practices of the agency): |  |

|  |
| --- |
| Scope of FOI request: |
|  |

The FOI Guidelines at [[3.89]](https://www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/foi-guidelines/part-3-processing-and-deciding-on-requests-for-access/) provide that agencies and ministers should undertake reasonable search on a flexible and common-sense interpretation of the terms of the request. What constitutes a reasonable search will depend on the circumstances of each request and will be influenced by normal business practices in the agency’s operating environment or the minister’s office.

Searches undertaken:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Completed | Location | Description of search undertaken / search terms used | Outcome / relevance |
|  | Case Management Systems: (names of systems) |  |  |
|  | Records Management Systems: (names of systems) |  |  |
|  | Electronic documents saved on computers, electronic devices including iPads or tablets, smartphones and apps (for example emails, text messages etc) |  |  |
|  | Electronic documents saved on portable media devices |  |  |
|  | Hardcopy files (for example documents stored in safes, compactus, tambours, desk drawers, records warehouses) |  |  |
|  | If applicable, backup systems |  |  |
|  | Other: (please specify) |  |  |

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| Additional comments (e.g. interpretation of the scope of the FOI request, additional details of searches conducted, an explanation as to why no documents found): |
|  |

Records of the above searches have been created and retained.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Time spent for search and retrieval: |  |
| Completed by: |  |
| Position title: |  |
| Date completed: |  |