



U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REPORT
OCTOBER 1, 2005 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2006**

FEBRUARY 1, 2007

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

The following information is submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (U.S.C. § 552(e)) (FOIA), as amended.

I. Basic Information Regarding Report

A. Name, Title, Address, and Telephone Number

The contact person for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management is:

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B. Electronic Address for report on the Internet

The electronic address for this report on OPM's World Wide Web site: www.opm.gov/efoia

C. How to obtain a copy in paper form

A paper copy of this report may be obtained from the address listed above.

II. How to Make a FOIA Request

Our *FOIA Reference Guide* (located at www.opm.gov/efoia/foiaguide.asp) includes information regarding how to make a FOIA request to OPM.

III. Definition of Terms and Acronyms Used in This Report

A. Agency-specific acronyms

1. OPM – Office of Personnel Management
2. CIS – Center for Information Services

B. Basic terms, expressed in common terminology

1. **FOIA/PA request** - Freedom of Information Act/Privacy Act request. A FOIA request is generally a request for access to records concerning a third party, an organization or a particular topic of interest. A Privacy Act request is a request for records concerning oneself; such requests are also treated as FOIA requests. **(All FOIA and Privacy Act requests for access to records, regardless of which law is cited by the requester, are included in this report.)**
2. **Initial request** - a request to a Federal agency for access to records under the Freedom of Information Act or the Privacy Act.
3. **Appeal** - a request to a Federal agency asking that it review at a higher administrative level a full denial or partial denial of access to records under FOIA/PA, or any other FOIA/PA determination such as a matter pertaining to fees.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

4. **Processed request or appeal** - a request or appeal for which an agency has taken a final action on the request or the appeal in all respects.
5. **Expedited processing** - an agency will process a FOIA/PA request on an expedited basis when a requester has shown an exceptional need or urgency for the records that warrants prioritization of his or her request over other requests that were made earlier.
6. **Grant** - an agency decision to disclose all records in full response to a FOIA/PA request.
7. **Partial grant** - an agency decision to disclose a record in part in response to a FOIA/PA request, deleting information determined to be exempt under one or more of the FOIA or PA exemptions; or a decision to disclose some records completely, but to withhold others in whole or in part.
8. **Denial** - an agency decision not to release any part of a record or records in response to a FOIA/PA request because all the information in the requested records is determined by the agency to be exempt under one or more of the FOIA or PA exemptions, or for some procedural reason (such as because no record is located in response to a FOIA/PA request).
9. **Time limits** - the time period in the FOIA for an agency to respond to a FOIA/PA request (ordinarily 20 working days from proper receipt of a perfected FOIA/PA request).
10. **Perfected request** - a FOIA/PA request for records that adequately describes the records sought, that has been received by the FOIA/PA office of each agency or agency component in possession of the records, and for which there is no remaining question about the payment of applicable fees.
11. **Exemption 3 statute** - an agency with separate statutory authority (other than FOIA/PA) that prohibits the disclosure of agency information under FOIA.
12. **Median number** - the middle, not average number. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the median number is 7.
13. **Average number** - the number obtained by dividing the sum of a group of numbers by the quantity of numbers in the group. For example, of 3, 7 and 14, the average number is 8.

IV. Exemption 3 Statutes

OPM did not rely on any Exemption 3 statutes during this reporting period.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

V. Initial FOIA/PA Access Requests

A. Number of Initial Complex Requests

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| 1. Pending at the end of FY 2005 | 4,664 |
| 2. Received during FY 2006 | 12,528 |
| 3. Processed during FY 2006 | 16,267 |
| 4. Pending at the end of FY 2006 | 925 |

B. Disposition of Initial Complex Requests

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| 1. Number of total grants | 10,856 |
| 2. Number of partial grants | 4,841 |
| 3. Number of denials | 67 |

Number of times each FOIA exemption was used

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| (1) Exemption 1 | 237 |
| (2) Exemption 2 | 114 |
| (3) Exemption 3 | 0 |
| (4) Exemption 4 | 6 |
| (5) Exemption 5 | 27 |
| (6) Exemption 6 | 2,211 |
| (7) Exemption 7(A) | 1 |
| (8) Exemption 7(B) | 1 |
| (9) Exemption 7(C) | 2,185 |
| (10) Exemption 7(D) | 9 |
| (11) Exemption 7(E) | 83 |
| (12) Exemption 7(F) | 0 |
| (13) Exemption 8 | 0 |
| (14) Exemption 9 | 0 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| 4. Other reasons for nondisclosure (total) | 503 |
| a. No records | 386 |
| b. Referrals | 51 |
| c. Request withdrawn | 26 |
| d. Fee-related reason | 7 |
| e. Records not reasonably described | 10 |
| f. Not a proper FOIA request for some other reason | 5 |

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

| | |
|---|----|
| g. Not an agency record | 1 |
| h. Duplicate request | 3 |
| i. Other (specify) OPM regulations 5 CFR 297.401 & 402 – third party privacy requests (2), Court Sealed Records (1), Denials to Amendments of Records (10), Merit Systems Protection Board denied petition for review of initial decision (1) | 14 |

VI. Appeals of Initial Denials of FOIA/PA Requests

A. Number of Appeals

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Number of appeals received during FY 2006 | 18 |
| 2. Number of appeals processed during FY 2006 | 18 |

B. Disposition of Appeals

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Number completely upheld | 10 |
| 2. Number partially reversed | 3 |
| 3. Number completely reversed | 0 |
| 4. Other reasons for nondisclosure | 5 |

Number of times each FOIA exemption used (counting each exemption once per appeal)

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| (1) Exemption 1 | 0 |
| (2) Exemption 2 | 1 |
| (3) Exemption 3 | 0 |
| (4) Exemption 4 | 0 |
| (5) Exemption 5 | 7 |
| (6) Exemption 6 | 4 |
| (7) Exemption 7(A) | 0 |
| (8) Exemption 7(B) | 0 |
| (9) Exemption 7(C) | 1 |
| (10) Exemption 7(D) | 0 |
| (11) Exemption 7(E) | 0 |
| (12) Exemption 7(F) | 0 |
| (13) Exemption 8 | 0 |
| (14) Exemption 9 | 0 |

| | |
|--|---|
| 4. Other reasons for nondisclosure (total) | 5 |
| a. No records | 2 |
| b. Referrals | 1 |
| c. Request withdrawn | 0 |
| d. Fee-related reason | 0 |
| e. Records not reasonably described | 0 |
| f. Not a proper FOIA request for some other reason | 1 |
| g. Not an agency record | 1 |
| h. Duplicate request | 0 |
| i. Other (specify) 5 USC 552a(j)(1) | 0 |

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

VII. Compliance with Time Limits/Status of Pending Requests

A. Median Processing Time for Complex Requests Processed During the Year

| | |
|--|--------|
| 1. a. Number of requests processed | 16,267 |
| b. Median number of days to process | 12.75 |
| 2. a. Requests approved for expedited processing | 0 |
| b. Median number of days to process | 0 |

B. Status of Pending Requests

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Number of requests pending at the end of FY 2006 (Enter the number from Section V, Part A, Line 4, above.) | 925 |
| 2. Median number of days that such requests were pending as of 9/30/2006 | 0 |

VIII. Comparisons with Previous Year

A. Comparison of Number of Complex Requests Received

| | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| <i>FY 2005</i> | 12,085 |
| <i>FY 2006</i> | 12,528 |
| <i>Percent of change</i> | +4% |

B. Comparison of Number of Complex Requests Processed

| | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| <i>FY 2005</i> | 10,900 |
| <i>FY 2006</i> | 16,267 |
| <i>Percent of change</i> | +49% |

C. Other Significant Statistics - Processing Costs

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| <i>FY 2005 (est.)</i> | \$805,286.00 |
| <i>FY 2006 (est.)</i> | \$2,005,292.00 |
| <i>Percent of change</i> | +149% |

D. Other Significant Statistics – Requests for Expedited Processing

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| <i>FY 2006 received</i> | 0 |
| <i>FY 2006 granted</i> | 0 |

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

IX. Costs/FOIA Staffing

A. Staffing levels

| | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Number of full-time FOIA personnel | 15.58 |
| 2. Number of personnel with part-time or occasional FOIA duties (est. in total work-years) | 4.57 |
| 3. Total number of personnel (in work years) | 20.15 |

B. Total Costs

| | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. FOIA processing (including appeals) | \$2,005,292.00 |
| 2. Litigation-related activities (estimated) | \$24,514.00 |
| 3. Total costs | \$2,029,806.00 |

X. Fees

| | |
|---|--------------|
| A. Total amount of fees collected by agency for processing requests | \$2,042.80 |
| B. Percentage of total costs | Less than 1% |

XI. FOIA Regulations (Including Fee Schedule)

OPM's regulations (5 CFR 294) are available through www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html. Our fee schedule is explained in our FOIA reference guide at www.opm.gov/efoia.

XII. Report on FOIA Executive Order Implementation

A. Description of supplementation/modification of agency improvement plan (if applicable) –
Not applicable.

B. Report on agency implementation of its plan, including its performance in meeting milestones, with respect to each improvement area:

| Name of improvement area | Brief statement of goal(s)/ objective(s) | Distinct steps planned to be taken | Time milestones | Means of measurement of success | Status |
|--|---|--|-----------------|---|--|
| *1. Affirmative disclosure under subsection (a)(2) of the FOIA | Increase the amount of information disclosed on the OPM web | Increase the disclosure of frequently requested OPM records on the | 12/31/2006 | Verify that frequently requested OPM records such as policy statements, | Completed. The agency's web site has been reorganized and the information posted |

*Denotes improvement area derived from the Executive Order itself

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

| Name of improvement area | Brief statement of goal(s)/ objective(s) | Distinct steps planned to be taken | Time milestones | Means of measurement of success | Status |
|--------------------------|---|--|-----------------|---|---|
| | site: www.opm.gov/ | agency's web site such as policy statements, staff manuals and instructions to staff, and final agency opinions. | | staff manuals and instructions, and final agency opinions have been disclosed on the agency's web site. | is more easily accessible to the public. 5,500 files of information were posted to OPM's web site during calendar year 2006. The files include policy statements such as a new web site about pandemic influenza policy for federal agencies www.opm.gov/pandemic ; staff manuals and instructions to staff such as the Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework Systems, Standards, and Metrics; and final agency opinions such as Benefits Administration Letter 06-304: Fiscal Year 2006 Factors for Calculating Imputed Costs. In addition, the agency posted other information of interest to the public such as the 2006 President's Quality Assessment Program Criteria and Application Information; Updating Career Patterns Website; 2006-2010 Strategic Plan; 2006 |

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

| Name of improvement area | Brief statement of goal(s)/ objective(s) | Distinct steps planned to be taken | Time milestones | Means of measurement of success | Status |
|---|---|--|-------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | | | Performance & Accountability Report; FY-2007 OPM Congressional Budget Justification; and Human Resources Flexibilities Available to Assist Federal Employees Affected by Severe Weather Emergencies and Natural Disasters. |
| *2. Proactive disclosure of information | Strengthen OPM's FOIA processes for posting the most frequently requested records in OPM's electronic Reading Room. | Increase the amount of information in OPM's electronic Reading Room to include the records most frequently requested under FOIA in the preceding fiscal year (FY). | Annually beginning 12/31/2006 | Verify that the records most frequently requested under FOIA in the preceding fiscal year have been posted. | Completed. The agency has a standard email that is distributed to all site content owners requesting their three most frequently requested documents. We posted frequently requested information about forms and U.S. government services to the electronic Reading Room. |
| *5. Automated tracking capabilities | Improve workflow of FOIA requests. | Replace outdated FOIA Tracking System with streamlined FOIA Tracking System for use by the OPM Program Office FOIA contacts and the FOIA Requester Service Center. | 12/31/2006 | Verify that the streamlined FOIA Tracking System is operating. | System completed. Data migration is in progress. In addition, we: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • designated a single point of contact for FOIA submissions in order to streamline the FOIA request process; • automated the |

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

| Name of improvement area | Brief statement of goal(s)/ objective(s) | Distinct steps planned to be taken | Time milestones | Means of measurement of success | Status |
|---|---|---|------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | | | <p>internal transmission of FOIA requests by scanning all FOIA requests and distributing them electronically;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased the use of email to communicate with program offices about the status of their FOIA requests; and • trained OPM Program Office FOIA Contacts to use the new streamlined FOIA Tracking System. |
| *6. Electronic FOIA -- automated processing | Develop the capability to produce electronic versions of mailed and faxed FOIA requests. | Purchase a document scanner for use by the FOIA Requester Service Center. Begin using it to convert paper FOIA requests to electronic form. | 12/31/2006 | Verify that the scanner is installed and is being used to convert paper FOIA requests to electronic form. | Completed. Effective June 12, 2006, installed a scanner and began internal electronic dissemination of FOIA requests. |
| *11. Expedited processing | Document handling procedures for expedited processing of FOIA requests in FOIA Reference Guide. | Remind Program Office FOIA contacts about requirements of expedited FOIA processing by sharing the updated FOIA Reference Guide with them. Implement updated | 12/31/2007 12/31/2006 | Verify that the FOIA Reference Guide is updated and shared with Program Office FOIA contacts. | Completed. Developed a FOIA Reference Guide on September 30, 2006, and included procedures for expedited processing. Shared the guide with all Program Offices. System completed. |

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

| Name of improvement area | Brief statement of goal(s)/ objective(s) | Distinct steps planned to be taken | Time milestones | Means of measurement of success | Status |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|------------------------------|---|--|
| | | FOIA Tracking System with built-in expedited request alert reminders. | | | Data migration is in progress. |
| *12. Backlog Reduction/ Elimination | Eliminate present FOIA backlog. | Distribute lists of outstanding FOIA requests to Program Office FOIA contacts for reconciliation of backlog. Implement updated FOIA Tracking System. | 12/31/2006 12/31/2006 | Record percentage of requests completed on time and monitor trends. | Completed. The median number of days to process FOIA and Privacy Act requests in FY 2006 was 12.75. In FY 2005 the median number was 13.5. Therefore, the median number of days to process FOIA and Privacy Act requests decreased by 6% in FY 2006. System completed. Data migration is in progress. |
| *13. Politeness/ courtesy | Improve politeness and courtesy to FOIA requesters. | Recommend customer service training for Program Office FOIA contacts. | 12/31/2006 | Record the number of complaints received in the FOIA Requester Service Center about politeness of OPM staff and monitor trends. | Completed. During FY06, no complaints were received in the FOIA Requester Service Center although the agency processed 16,262 FOIA and Privacy Act requests. |

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

| Name of improvement area | Brief statement of goal(s)/ objective(s) | Distinct steps planned to be taken | Time milestones | Means of measurement of success | Status |
|---|---|---|-----------------|---|--|
| 15. Acknowledgment letters | Send acknowledgment letters to all requesters regardless of method of receipt of FOIA requests. | Respond via email or mail to requesters who mail or fax their requests. | 12/31/2006 | Verify that the OPM Service Center has begun sending acknowledgement emails or letters to all requesters. | Completed. Acknowledgement letters and emails have been consistently sent to all FOIA requesters immediately following the submission of requests into the FOIA Tracking System. |
| 22. Increased staffing (where applicable) | Increase FOIA Requester Service Center staff. | Recruit specialist to evaluate and support FOIA processes. | 12/31/06 | Verify that employee is hired. | In progress. Third recruitment is underway due to not finding qualified candidate in first two attempts. |
| 29. Improved internal communications within OPM about FOIA responsibilities | Send semi-annual FOIA status report to OPM office heads. | Develop report format. Create reports and send them. | 12/31/2006 | Verify that report format has been developed and reports have been sent. | Completed. Semi-annual report format has been developed and reports have been sent to Program Offices. |

C. Identification and discussion of any deficiency in meeting plan milestones (if applicable)

D. Additional narrative statement regarding other executive order-related activities (optional)

E. Concise descriptions of FOIA exemptions

1. Classified information for national defense or foreign policy: Exemption 1 was used 237 times in FY 2006.
2. Internal personnel rules and practices: Exemption 2 was used 114 times in FY 2006.
3. Information that is exempt under other laws: Exemption 3 was used 0 times in FY 2006.
4. Trade secrets and confidential business information: Exemption 4 was used 6 times in FY 2006.
5. Inter-agency or intra-agency memoranda or letters that are protected by legal privileges: Exemption 5 was used 27 times in FY 2006.
6. Personnel and medical files: Exemption 6 was used 2,211 times in FY 2006.
7. Law enforcement records or information: Exemption 7 was used 2,279 times in FY 2006.
8. Information concerning bank supervision: Exemption 8 was used 0 times in FY 2006.
9. Geological and geophysical information: Exemption 9 was used 0 times in FY 2006.

F. Additional statistics:

1. **Time range of requests pending by date of request (or, where applicable, by date of referral from another agency).** The following data has been extracted from our outdated FOIA

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

Tracking System. We anticipate closing a large number of pending requests by scouring our data prior to its migration into the new streamlined FOIA Tracking System.

FY 1999 – 63 requests pending
FY 2000 – 121 requests pending
FY 2001 – 224 requests pending
FY 2002 – 224 requests pending
FY 2003 – 184 requests pending
FY 2004 – 185 requests pending
FY 2005 – 198 requests pending
FY 2006 – 320 requests pending

2. Time range of consultations pending with other agencies, by date of initial interagency communication – Not applicable.

G. Attachment: Agency improvement plan (in current form)

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006



June 2006

*UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT*

**IMPROVEMENT PLAN UNDER
EXECUTIVE ORDER 13392:
IMPROVING AGENCY
DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION**

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT



U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

Revision History

| Revision Number | Revision Date | Revision Summary | Authoring Office |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1.1 | May 12, 2006 | Initial Draft Release | MSD/CIS/PPG |
| 1.2 | May 16, 2006 | Revised Draft Release | MSD/CIS/PPG |
| 1.3 | May 18, 2006 | Revised Draft Release | MSD/CIS/PPG |
| 1.4 | May 18, 2006 | Revised Draft Release | MSD/CIS/PPG |
| 1.5 | May 19, 2006 | Revised Draft Release | MSD/CIS/PPG |
| 1.6 | May 23, 2006 | Final | MSD/CIS/PPG |

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

Table of Contents

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| A. Nature of U.S. Office of Personnel Management’s FOIA operations | 4 |
| B. Areas selected for review | 4 |
| C. Summary of review results | 5 |
| D. Improvement areas for agency plan | 6 |
| E. Improvement areas..... | 6 |
| F. Action plan:..... | 10 |
| 1. Areas anticipated to be completed by December 31, 2006 | 10 |
| 2. Areas anticipated to be completed by December 31, 2007 | 10 |
| 3. Areas anticipated to be completed after December 31, 2007 | 11 |

**U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Improvement Plan Under Executive Order 13392: Improving Agency Disclosure of
Information**

In accordance with Executive Order 13392: Improving Agency Disclosure of Information and related guidance from the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has performed a review of its Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) operations and provides the following information and action plan.

A. Nature of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's FOIA operations

OPM receives and processes a significant number of FOIA requests each year. The largest number of FOIA requests are related to OPM contracts, civilian employment statistics, and personnel actions. In FY 2005, OPM received 4,594 FOIA requests, processed 4,518 within the statutory time limit, and has a backlog of 107 requests from FY 2005 which the agency is addressing.

OPM's FOIA Requester Service Center has one full-time FOIA coordinator working with 19 decentralized Program Office FOIA contacts who perform FOIA functions as a collateral duty. The FOIA coordinator manages the agency's new and outstanding FOIA requests and coordinates improvement plans for OPM's FOIA operations with the agency's Chief FOIA Officer and the 19 Program Office FOIA contacts throughout the agency. This arrangement is considered to be high-risk with regard to customer response times. Actions to address this risk are included in the following action plan.

B. Areas selected for review

OPM selected all 27 areas recommended for review by the Department of Justice and added two improvement areas for developing this plan, as follows:

1. Affirmative disclosure under section (a)(2) of the FOIA
2. Proactive disclosure of information
3. Overall FOIA Web site improvement
4. Improvement of agency's FOIA Reference Guide
5. Automated tracking capabilities
6. Electronic FOIA – automated processing
7. Electronic FOIA – receiving/responding to requests electronically.
8. Multi-track processing
9. Troubleshooting of any existing problems (even minor ones) with existing request tracking

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

10. Case-by-case problem identification
11. Expedited processing
12. Backlog reduction/elimination
13. Politeness/courtesy
14. Forms of communication with requesters
15. Acknowledgement letters
16. System of handling referrals
17. System of handling consultations
18. Process by which necessary cooperation is obtained from agency "program personnel"
19. Improvement ideas from field office personnel (where applicable)
20. Additional training needed (formal and/or on-the-job)
21. In-house training on "safeguarding label"/FOIA exemption distinctions
22. Increased staffing (where applicable)
23. Changes to personnel practices (job series, grades, etc.) needed
24. Contracting out/hiring of contract employees
25. Purchase of new equipment needed
26. Centralization/decentralization
27. Recycling of improvement information gleaned from FOIA Requester Service Centers
28. Updating OPM FOIA regulations
29. Improved internal communication within OPM about FOIA responsibilities

C. Summary of review results

OPM's initial review of the improvement areas mentioned above showed a need for improvement in 18 areas. The highest priority areas for improvement are:

- Affirmative disclosure under section (a)(2)
- Proactive disclosure of information
- Automated tracking capabilities
- Electronic FOIA – automated processing
- Expedited processing
- Backlog reduction/elimination
- Politeness/courtesy
- Acknowledgement letters
- Increased staffing
- Improved internal communications within OPM about FOIA responsibilities

The agency's action plan for improving these areas is provided in Section E, below, and includes such actions as increasing information on the OPM web site, improving the agency's outdated FOIA tracking system, increasing training for all Program Office FOIA contacts, and improving workflow for processing FOIA requests.

OPM was one of the first federal agencies to implement electronic FOIA processing which it initiated in 1999. Since then the agency has received 1,000 FOIA requests electronically. OPM plans to build on its success in processing FOIA requests electronically by adding the capability to scan incoming paper requests as noted in the action plan below.

D. Improvement areas chosen for agency plan

OPM selected the following areas for improvement after conducting a review of the agency's FOIA processes. The list below reflects the Department of Justice Executive Order 13392 Implementation Guide numbering scheme and includes the two additional improvement areas mentioned above that have been identified by OPM.

1. Affirmative disclosure under section (a)(2) of the FOIA
2. Proactive disclosure of information
3. Overall FOIA Web site improvement
4. Improvement of agency's FOIA Reference Guide
5. Automated tracking capabilities
6. Electronic FOIA – automated processing
9. Troubleshooting of any existing problems (even minor ones) with existing request tracking
11. Expedited processing
12. Backlog reduction/elimination
13. Politeness/courtesy
14. Forms of communication with requesters
15. Acknowledgement letters
19. Improvement ideas from field office personnel (where applicable)
20. Additional training needed (formal and/or on-the-job)
21. In-house training on "safeguarding label"/FOIA exemption distinctions
22. Increased staffing (where applicable)
27. Recycling of improvement information gleaned from FOIA Requester Service Centers
28. Development of OPM FOIA regulations
29. Improved internal communications within OPM about FOIA responsibilities

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

E. Improvement areas and improvement plan:

| Name of improvement area | Brief statement of goal(s)/ objective(s) | Distinct steps planned to be taken | Time milestones | Means of measurement of success |
|--|--|--|-------------------------------|---|
| *1. Affirmative disclosure under subsection (a)(2) of the FOIA | Increase the amount of information disclosed on the OPM web site: www.opm.gov | Increase the disclosure of frequently requested OPM records on the agency's web site such as policy statements, staff manuals and instructions to staff, and final agency opinions | 12/31/2006 | Verify that frequently requested OPM records such as policy statements, staff manuals and instructions, and final agency opinions have been disclosed on the agency's web site. |
| *2. Proactive disclosure of information | Strengthen OPM's FOIA processes for posting the most frequently requested records in OPM's electronic Reading Room | Increase the amount of information in OPM's electronic Reading Room to include the records most frequently requested under FOIA in the preceding fiscal year (FY) | Annually beginning 12/31/2006 | Verify that the records most frequently requested under FOIA in the preceding fiscal year have been posted |
| 3. Overall FOIA Web site improvement | Publish OPM's updated FOIA Reference Guide on the agency's FOIA website | Revise OPM's FOIA web pages to include the updated FOIA Reference Guide | 12/31/2008 | Verify that the updated FOIA Reference Guide has been published on the agency's FOIA website |
| *4. Improvement of the agency's FOIA Reference Guide | Annually review and update OPM's FOIA Reference Guide as needed | Update OPM's FOIA Reference Guide which includes instructions for submitting FOIA and Privacy Act requests and information about | 12/31/2007 | Verify that the FOIA Reference Guide has been reviewed and updated |

*Denotes improvement area derived from the Executive Order itself

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

| Name of improvement area | Brief statement of goal(s)/ objective(s) | Distinct steps planned to be taken | Time milestones | Means of measurement of success |
|---|--|--|------------------------------|---|
| | | contacting the FOIA Requester Service Center for status | | |
| *5. Automated tracking capabilities | Improve workflow of FOIA requests | Replace outdated FOIA Tracking System with streamlined FOIA Tracking System for use by the OPM Program Office FOIA contacts and the FOIA Requester Service Center | 12/31/2006 | Verify that the streamlined FOIA Tracking System is operating |
| *6. Electronic FOIA -- automated processing | Develop the capability to produce electronic versions of mailed and faxed FOIA requests | Purchase a document scanner for use by the FOIA Requester Service Center. Begin using it to convert paper FOIA requests to electronic form. | 12/31/2006 | Verify that the scanner is installed and is being used to convert paper FOIA requests to electronic form. |
| *9. Troubleshooting of any existing problems (even minor ones) with existing request tracking | Improve the security of the FOIA requests received at OPM | Develop a proposed solution for linking secure faxes to the FOIA email system | 12/31/2008 | Verify that alternative solutions have been evaluated and submitted for budget consideration |
| *11. Expedited processing | Document handling procedures for expedited processing of FOIA requests in FOIA Reference Guide | Remind Program Office FOIA contacts about requirements of expedited FOIA processing by sharing the updated FOIA Reference Guide with them. Implement updated FOIA | 12/31/2007 12/31/2006 | Verify that the FOIA Reference Guide is updated and shared with Program Office FOIA contacts. |

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

| Name of improvement area | Brief statement of goal(s)/ objective(s) | Distinct steps planned to be taken | Time milestones | Means of measurement of success |
|--|---|---|------------------------------|--|
| | | Tracking System with built-in expedited request alert reminders | | |
| *12. Backlog Reduction/Elimination | Eliminate present FOIA backlog | Distribute lists of outstanding FOIA requests to Program Office FOIA contacts for reconciliation of backlog Implement updated FOIA Tracking System | 12/31/2006 12/31/2006 | Record percentage of requests completed on time and monitor trends |
| *13. Politeness/courtesy | Improve politeness and courtesy to FOIA requesters | Recommend customer service training for Program Office FOIA contacts | 12/31/2006 | Record the number of complaints received in the FOIA Requester Service Center about politeness of OPM staff and monitor trends |
| *14. Forms of communication with requesters | Improve the quality of denial letters | Emphasize the need to include appeal rights in all full and partial denial letters to Program Office FOIA contacts | 12/31/2007 | Periodically review sample of denial letters for completeness and monitor trends |
| 15. Acknowledgment letters | Send acknowledgement letters to all requesters regardless of method of receipt of FOIA requests | Respond via email or mail to requesters who mail or fax their requests | 12/31/2006 | Verify that the OPM Service Center has begun sending acknowledgement emails or letters to all requesters |
| 19. Improvement ideas from field office personnel (where applicable) | Conduct annual meetings with Program Office FOIA contacts to discuss ideas and suggestions to improve FOIA processes. | Hold annual FOIA meetings with all Program Offices including field locations | 12/31/2008 | Verify that annual meeting has been held |

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

| Name of improvement area | Brief statement of goal(s)/ objective(s) | Distinct steps planned to be taken | Time milestones | Means of measurement of success |
|---|--|--|-----------------|--|
| 22. Increased staffing (where applicable) | Increase FOIA Service Center staff | Recruit specialist to evaluate and support FOIA processes | 12/31/06 | Verify that employee is hired |
| *27. Recycling of improvement information gleaned from FOIA Requester Service Centers | In annual meetings with Program Office FOIA contacts ask for suggestions for improving the agency's FOIA program | Hold annual FOIA meetings with all Program Offices and request suggestions | 12/31/2008 | Verify that minutes of the meetings include Program Office suggestions for improving the agency's FOIA program |
| 28. Development of OPM FOIA Regulations | Update OPM FOIA regulations | Address each requirement of the FOIA specifically in OPM regulations | 12/31/2007 | Verify that regulations are complete and have been published |
| 29. Improved internal communications within OPM about FOIA responsibilities | Send semi-annual FOIA status report to OPM office heads | Develop report format Create reports and send them | 12/31/2006 | Verify that report format has been developed and reports have been sent |

F. Action plan:

1. Areas anticipated to be completed by December 31, 2006

1. Affirmative disclosure under section (a)(2) of the FOIA
2. Proactive disclosure of information
5. Automated tracking capabilities
6. Electronic FOIA – automated processing
11. Expedited processing
12. Backlog reduction/elimination
13. Politeness/courtesy
15. Acknowledgement letters
22. Increased staffing
29. Improved internal communications within OPM about FOIA responsibilities

2. Areas anticipated to be completed by December 31, 2007

4. Improvement of agency's FOIA Reference Guide

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Annual Freedom of Information Act Report
FY 2006

- 14. Forms of communication with requesters
- 20. Additional training needed (formal and/or on-the-job)
- 28. Development of OPM FOIA regulations

3. Areas anticipated to be completed after December 31, 2007

- 3. Overall FOIA Web site improvement
- 9. Troubleshooting of any existing problems (even minor ones) with existing request tracking
- 19. Improvement ideas from field office personnel (where applicable)
- 21. In-house training on "safeguarding label"/FOIA exemption distinctions
- 27. Recycling of improvement information gleaned from FOIA Requester Service Centers