

U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

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

FEBRUARY 1, 2007

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
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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/foiagide.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
 - 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.

- 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.

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

g. Not an agency record	1
h. Duplicate request	3
i. Other (specify) OPM regulations 5 CFR 297.401 & 402 – third party	14
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)	

VI. Appeals of Initial Denials of FOIA/PA Requests

A. Number of Appeals

Number of appeals received during FY 2006	18
Number of appeals processed during FY 2006	18

B. Disposition of Appeals

Number completely upheld	10
Number partially reversed	3
Number completely reversed	0
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

VII. Compliance with Time Limits/Status of Pending Requests

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

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	925	
Section V, Part A, Line 4, above.)		
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

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FY 2005	12,085
FY 2006	12,528
Percent of change	+4%

B. Comparison of Number of Complex Requests Processed

FY 2005	10,900
FY 2006	16,267
Percent of change	+49%

C. Other Significant Statistics - Processing Costs

or other organically orallowed in recogning t	
FY 2005 (est.)	\$805,286.00
FY 2006 (est.)	\$2,005,292.00
Percent of change	+149%

D. Other Significant Statistics – Requests for Expedited Processing

FY 2006 received	0
FY 2006 granted	0

IX. Costs/FOIA Staffing

A. Staffing levels

Number of full-time FOIA personnel	15.58
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

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	Increase the	Increase the	12/31/2006	Verify that	Completed. The
disclosure under	amount of	disclosure of		frequently	agency's web site
subsection (a)(2)	information	frequently		requested OPM	has been
of the FOIA	disclosed on	requested OPM		records such as	reorganized and the
	the OPM web	records on the		policy statements,	information posted

^{*}Denotes improvement area derived from the Executive Order itself

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/pand emic; 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

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
*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.	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. 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: • designated a single point of contact for FOIA submissions in order to streamline the FOIA request process; • automated the

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
					internal transmission of FOIA requests by scanning all FOIA requests and distributing them electronically; • 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.	12/31/2007	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.

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.	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.
		Implement updated FOIA Tracking System.	12/31/2006		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.

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 acknowledgem ent 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

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.

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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
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- 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)



UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

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



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

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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

- 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
- 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

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

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^{*}Denotes improvement area derived from the Executive Order itself

Name of	Brief statement of goal(s)/	Distinct steps planned to be	Time	Means of measurement of
improvement area	objective(s)	taken	milestones	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.	12/31/2007	Verify that the FOIA Reference Guide is updated and shared with Program Office FOIA contacts.
		Implement updated FOIA	12/31/2006	

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	12/31/2006	Record percentage of requests completed on time and monitor trends
		Implement updated FOIA Tracking System	12/31/2006	
*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

Name of improvement area	Brief statement of goal(s)/ objective(s)	Distinct steps planned to be taken	Time milestones	Means of measurement of success
20. Additional training needed (formal and/or on-the-job)	Increase FOIA and Privacy Act knowledge of the OPM Program Office FOIA contacts	Recommend to Program Office managers to send employees involved in FOIA operations to a training course available from the Department of Justice or the American Society of Access Professionals	12/31/2007	Count the number of people who attend FOIA training courses and monitor trends
		Require proof of attendance from Program Office FOIA contacts by their submission of copies of training certificates	12/31/2007	
21. In-house training on "safeguarding label"/FOIA exemption distinctions	Include safeguarding and labeling procedures for FOIA information in OPM's policy on Safeguarding Sensitive But Unclassified Information and include them in the FOIA Reference Guide	Update the FOIA Reference Guide to include the procedures	12/31/2008	Verify that the updated FOIA Reference Guide includes the procedures and is published

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

- 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
- 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