



29 May 2019

**In reply please quote:**

FOI Request: FA 19/04/00027  
File Number: OBJ2019/21003

**Freedom of Information (FOI) request - Access Decision**

On 29 March 2019, the Department of Home Affairs (the Department) received a request for access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act).

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with a decision on your request for access under the FOI Act.

**1 Scope of request**

You have requested access to the following documents:

*For each offering of the Migration Agents Capstone Exam since July 2018:*

- 1) *The total number of people who sat the exam and the total number of people who received a passing score on the exam. We are not seeking any information about the names of the people who sat the exam or their individual scores;*
- 2) *All available information regarding the assessors for the exam:*
  - *The requirements for qualifying as an assessor for the Migration Agents Capstone Exam (the "exam")*
  - *The names of the current assessors for the Exam*
  - *The name of the Subject Matter Expert chosen by the College of Law and/or OMARA to oversee the development and assessment of the exam*

**2 Authority to make decision**

I am an officer authorised under section 23 of the FOI Act to make decisions in respect of requests to access documents or to amend or annotate records.

### **3 Relevant material**

In reaching my decision I referred to the following:

- the terms of your request
- the documents relevant to the request
- the FOI Act
- Guidelines published by the Office of the Information Commissioner under section 93A of the FOI Act (the FOI Guidelines)
- advice from Departmental officers with responsibility for matters relating to the documents to which you sought access

### **4 Documents in scope of request**

The Department has identified 1 document as falling within the scope of your request. These documents were in the possession of the Department on 29 March 2019 when your request was received.

In addition, in accordance with section 17 of the FOI Act, the Department has used its computer system to produce 1 document that contains information that falls within the scope of your request. The data produced in the documents existed in the possession of the Department on 29 March 2019 when your FOI request was received.

**Attachment A** is a schedule which describes the relevant documents and sets out my decision in relation to each of them.

### **5 Decision**

The decision in relation to the documents in the possession of the Department which fall within the scope of your request is as follows:

- Release 1 document in full
- Release 1 document in part with deletions

### **6 Reasons for Decision**

Detailed reasons for my decision are set out below.

Where the schedule of documents indicates an exemption claim has been applied to a document or part of document, my findings of fact and reasons for deciding that the exemption provision applies to that information are set out below.

#### **6.1 Section 22 of the FOI Act – deletion of exempt material**

Section 22 of the FOI Act provides that if giving access to a document would disclose information that would reasonably be regarded as irrelevant to the request, it is possible for the Department to prepare an edited copy of the document, modified by deletions, ensuring that the edited copy would not disclose any information that would reasonably be regarded as irrelevant to the request.

On 01 April 2019, the Department advised you that its policy is to exclude the personal details of officers not in the Senior Executive Service (SES), as well as the mobile and work telephone numbers of SES staff contained in documents that fall within scope of an FOI request.

I have therefore decided that parts of document marked 's22(1)(a)(ii)' would disclose information that could reasonably be regarded as irrelevant to your request, and have therefore prepared an edited copy of the document, with the irrelevant material deleted pursuant to section 22(1)(a)(ii) of the FOI Act.

The remainder of the document has been considered for release to you as it is relevant to your request.

## **6.2 Section 47F of the FOI Act – Personal Privacy**

Section 47F of the FOI Act provides that a document is conditionally exempt if its disclosure under the FOI Act would involve the unreasonable disclosure of personal information of any person. 'Personal information' means information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable, whether the information or opinion is true or not, and whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not (see s 4 of the FOI Act and s 6 of the *Privacy Act 1988*).

I consider that disclosure of the information marked 's47F' in the documents would disclose personal information relating to a third party. The information within the documents would reasonably identify a person, either through names, positions or descriptions of their role or employment circumstance.

The FOI Act states that, when deciding whether the disclosure of the personal information would be 'unreasonable', I must have regard to four factors set out in s.47F(2) of the FOI Act. I have therefore considered each of these factors below:

- *the extent to which the information is well known;*
- *whether the person to whom the information relates is known to be (or to have been) associated with the matters dealt with in the document;*
- *the availability of the information from publicly available resources;*
- *any other matters that I consider relevant.*

The information relating to a third party is not well known and would only be known to a limited group of people with a business need to know. As this information is only known to a limited group of people, the individual(s) concerned is/are not generally known to be associated with the matters discussed in the document. This information is not available from publicly accessible sources.

I do not consider that the information relating specifically to the third party would be relevant to the broader scope of your request, as you are seeking access to specific information pertaining to the background and administration of the Capstone exam rather than information which wholly relates to other individuals.

I am satisfied that the disclosure of the information within the documents would involve an unreasonable disclosure of personal information about an individual or individuals.

I have decided that the information referred to above is conditionally exempt under section 47F of the FOI Act. Access to a conditionally exempt document must generally be given unless it would be contrary to the public interest to do so. I have turned my mind to whether disclosure of the information would be contrary to the public interest, and have included my reasoning in that regard below.

### **6.3 *The public interest – section 11A of the FOI Act***

As I have decided that parts of the documents are conditionally exempt, I am now required to consider whether access to the conditionally exempt information would be contrary to the public interest (section 11A of the FOI Act).

A part of a document which is conditionally exempt must also meet the public interest test in section 11A(5) before an exemption may be claimed in respect of that part.

In summary, the test is whether access to the conditionally exempt part of the document would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

In applying this test, I have noted the objects of the FOI Act and the importance of the other factors listed in section 11B(3) of the FOI Act, being whether access to the document would do any of the following:

- (a) promote the objects of this Act (including all the matters set out in sections 3 and 3A);
- (b) inform debate on a matter of public importance;
- (c) promote effective oversight of public expenditure;
- (d) allow a person to access his or her own personal information.

Having regard to the above:

- I am satisfied that access to the documents would promote the objects of the FOI Act.
- I consider that the subject matter of the documents does not seem to have the character of public importance. The matter has a very limited scope and, in my view, would be of interest to a very narrow section of the public.
- I consider that no insights into public expenditure will be provided through examination of the documents.
- I am satisfied that you do not require access to the documents in order to access your own personal information.

I have also considered the following factors that weigh against the release of the conditionally exempt information in the documents:

- I consider that the disclosure of names of assessors and/or writers of the Capstone exam may present a risk to the welfare of those persons. Though these individuals have not been consulted in this decision, the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority (OMARA) advises of the existence of online migration industry forums where discussion of Capstone has at times

taken a negative tone, and where these individuals may be the subject of adverse / negative discussion. I give great weight to OMARA's advice and consider therefore that there is no public interest in disclosing these names where it can reasonably be expected that these individuals would be discussed in a negative way in online forums.

I have also had regard to section 11B(4) which sets out the factors which are irrelevant to my decision, which are:

- a) access to the document could result in embarrassment to the Commonwealth Government, or cause a loss of confidence in the Commonwealth Government;
- b) access to the document could result in any person misinterpreting or misunderstanding the document;
- c) the author of the document was (or is) of high seniority in the agency to which the request for access to the document was made;
- d) access to the document could result in confusion or unnecessary debate.

I have not taken into account any of those factors in this decision.

Upon balancing all of the above relevant public interest considerations, I have concluded that the disclosure of the conditionally exempt information in the documents would be contrary to the public interest and it is therefore exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act.

## **7 Legislation**

A copy of the FOI Act is available at <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A02562>. If you are unable to access the legislation through this website, please contact our office for a copy.

## **8 Your Review Rights**

### Internal Review

If you disagree with this decision, you have the right to apply for an internal review by the Department of this decision. Any request for internal review must be provided to the Department within 30 days of you being notified of the decision. Where possible please attach reasons why you believe a review of the decision is necessary. The internal review will be carried out by an officer other than the original decision maker and the Department must make a review decision within 30 days.

Applications for review should be sent to:

By email to: [foi.reviews@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:foi.reviews@homeaffairs.gov.au)

OR

By mail to:  
Freedom of Information Section  
Department of Home Affairs  
PO Box 25  
BELCONNEN ACT 2617

Review by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

You may apply directly to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) for a review of this decision. You must apply in writing within 60 days of this notice. For further information about review rights and how to submit a request for a review to the OAIC, please see Fact Sheet 12 "Freedom of information – Your review rights", available online at <https://www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/foi-review-process>.

**9 Making a Complaint**

You may complain to the Australian Information Commissioner about action taken by the Department in relation to your request.

Your enquiries to the Australian Information Commissioner can be directed to:


Phone 1300 363 992 (local call charge)

Email [enquiries@oaic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@oaic.gov.au)

There is no particular form required to make a complaint to the Australian Information Commissioner. The request should be in writing and should set out the grounds on which it is considered that the action taken in relation to the request should be investigated and identify the Department of Home Affairs as the relevant agency.

**10 Contacting the FOI Section**

Should you wish to discuss this decision, please do not hesitate to contact the FOI Section at [foi@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:foi@homeaffairs.gov.au).

  
Authorised Decision Maker | Freedom of Information Section  
FOI and Records Management Branch  
Productivity and Compliance Division | Corporate and Enabling Group  
Department of Home Affairs

**ATTACHMENT A**

**SCHEDULE OF DOCUMENTS  
REQUEST UNDER *FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1982***

**FOI Request:** FA 19/04/00027

**File Number:** OBJ2019/21003

No.	Date of document	No. of pages	Description	Decision on release	
1.	12/12/18	6	Memorandum to the Office of the Migration Agent's Registration Authority concerning the appointment of assessor's for the Capstone exam, and assessor's credentials	Partial	22(1)(a)(ii) 47F(1)
2.	-	1	Information concerning numbers of candidates who have undertaken Capstone since July 2018	Full	