

The Practicalities of Managing FOI Applications and FOI Knowledge

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Today:

- Technologies available to edit documents
- Why consider the ways FOI information is kept?
- FOI file structure
- Why and how to record FOI decisions
- Storing FOI resources / information / legal advice

Editing Documents

White Tape / Black Marker

- Pro = Cost efficient & easy to use
- Con = Time consuming

Adobe Acrobat

- Pro = Not prohibitively expensive
- Con = Some limitations in the application

Rapid Redact

- Pro = Very easy to use & can produce both 'Audit' and 'Redacted' versions
- Con = Cost

FOI Information

Why keep FOI information?

- Annual FOI statistics are required by the Information Commissioner
- For use/reference when processing future applications
- To keep track of what documents your agency has released and in what format
- To assist your agency when requested / needed

Common FOI File Structure

1. Scope
2. Search
3. Documents
 - Originals
 - Edited
 - For Release (stamped)
4. Consultations
5. Decision

Recording FOI Decisions

- What system for capturing FOI information is right for your agency?
 - Consider:
 - Agency size
 - Agency resources
 - The number of FOI applications usually received
- What information do you want to capture?
 - Statistical information
 - Information that may be referenced when drafting future decisions

FOI Resources / Legal Advice

- Save for future reference
- Stored so as to be accessible (findable) when needed
- Consider what you may search for in the future
 - E.g. Clause 4(7) considerations for use when drafting future Notices of Decision
 - How would you search for this?
 - How / where should you save this information so as to be accessible when you need it?

Other Suggestions

- MS Outlook – see example
- Use your previous Notices of Decision
- Save your templates
- Office of the Information Commissioner website
 - Previous decisions
 - Information for agencies

Freedom of Information TASK/CHECKLIST			
Task	Done/In Progress	Date/Start	Comments/Notes
Application Scope			
Timeline:			
Task			
Applicant received			
Administrative letter sent to Applicant			
Data entered in FOI Database			
Full/Partial Transfer sent			
External appeal request sent (date XXXXX)			
Extension of time requested			
Search forms sent (date XXXXX)			
Review documents			
Scale and edit documents			
Consultations sent (date XXXXX)			
Consultations finished			
NCO drafted			
NCO sent to Applicant			
Reviewed (XXXX)			
EEB replies (XXXX)			
Data saved in records management system			
Internal Review request received (date XXXXX)			
IR Acknowledgment letter sent			
IR Decision sent			
IR file saved in records management system			
External Review request received			
ER documents provided to OIC			
ER Consultation Conference			
ER Submissions and Decision			
ER Finalized			
ER file saved in records management system			
Close File			

Share your Experience

Other suggestions as to ways of managing FOI applications and FOI knowledge?

Questions?