



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI) REQUEST

I refer to your application under the *Freedom of Information Act 2016* (the Act) received by the Education Directorate (the Directorate on 24 August 2022, in which you sought access to:

- Records relating to the Swimming and Water Park Aquatic Activities policy requirement that all schools must use RLSS 5 star approved facilities, specifically*
- 1. responses from the Phillip pool lessee to advice of the changes, and*
 - 2. incentives and assistance offered to private operators to support compliance.*

I am an Information Officer appointed by the Director-General under section 18 of the Act to deal with access applications made under Part 5 of the Act.

As previously advised, my decision on your access application was required to be provided by 14 October 2022, in line with section 40(2)(a) of the Act.

Decision on access

Searches were completed for relevant records and two records were identified that fall within the scope of your request. In summary, I have decided to grant partial access to these records with deletions applied.

Included as Attachment A to this decision is the schedule of relevant records. This provides a description of each record that falls within the scope of your request and the access decision for each of those records. The records released to you are provided at Attachment B.

My access decision is detailed further in the following statement of reasons.

Material considered

In reaching my access decision, I have taken the following into account:

- the Act, particularly sections 16, 17 and 50, and schedule 2;
- the content of the records that fall within the scope of your request;
- the *Human Rights Act 2004*; and
- the views received from relevant third parties that were consulted in line with section 38.

Reasons for decision

I have considered the records that are relevant to your request in accordance with the requirements of the FOI Act, particularly section 6(a) which provides for a right of access to government information unless access would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest. Contrary to the public interest information is defined at section 16 of the FOI Act as information that is taken to be contrary to the public interest to disclose under Schedule 1; or the disclosure of which would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under the test set out in section 17.

Section 50 of the FOI Act provides for records to be partially released with deletions applied where they contain contrary to the public interest information that can be removed, enabling the remainder of the record to be released. This provision has been applied where appropriate.

Information taken to be contrary to the public interest to disclose

None of the records within the scope of your request contain information that is taken to be contrary to the public interest to disclose.

Information, the disclosure of which would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest

The public interest test requires the identification of factors favouring disclosure and non-disclosure, the balancing of those factors, and a decision whether, on balance, disclosure of the information would be contrary to the public interest.

I have decided that the applicable factors favouring disclosure, as listed at Schedule 2.1 of the Act, are that the released information could reasonably be expected to:

- *promote open discussion of public affairs and enhance government's accountability* (Schedule 2.1(a)(i));
- *contribute to positive and informed debate on important issues or matters of public interest* (Schedule 2.1(a)(ii));
- *inform the community of the government's operations, including the policies, guidelines and codes of conduct followed by the government in its dealings with members of the community* (Schedule 2.1(a)(iii)); and
- *reveal the reason for a government decision and any background or contextual information that informed the decision* (Schedule 2.1(a)(viii)).

I have decided that the applicable factors favouring non-disclosure in the public interest, as listed at Schedule 2.2 of the Act, is that the information could reasonably be expected to:

- *prejudice the protection of an individual's right to privacy or any other right under the Human Rights Act 2004 (Schedule 2.2(a)(ii));*
- *prejudice trade secrets, business affairs or research of an agency or person (Schedule 2.2(a)(xi)).*

I have considered the factors favouring disclosure and the factor favouring non-disclosure.

I acknowledge the positive contribution of informed debate on important issues and transparency of government processes.

I place significant weight on the right to privacy of individuals and their right to have their personal information protected. I have decided that their right to privacy in relation to their personal information has a higher standing of public interest not to disclose, than the public interest in disclosing this information. Accordingly, the signatures of government employees and names of employees of other organisations have been deleted from the information being provided to you.

Similarly, I place significant weight on information relating to the business affairs of persons or organisations and I have decided that they have a right to have their business information protected, particularly in relation to the specific prices for their services and their banking information for payment of invoices. Accordingly, information relating to the business affairs of persons or organisations has been deleted from the records being provided to you.

In addition, information that is outside the scope of your request has been removed, including whole pages of information in some instances.

Charges

There is no charge associated with this request because the number of pages of information related to you does not exceed the threshold of 50 specified at section 104 of the Act.

Online publishing – disclosure log

Under section 28 of the Act, the Directorate maintains an online record of access applications called a disclosure log. Information about your request, my decision and the records released to you in response to your access application will be published in the Directorate's disclosure log between three and 10 working days after a decision on access has been provided to you. Your personal information will not be published.

You may view the Directorate's disclosure log at https://www.education.act.gov.au/about-us/freedom_of_information/disclosure-log.

Ombudsman review

My decision on your access request is a reviewable decision as identified in Schedule 3 of the Act. You have the right to seek Ombudsman review of this outcome under section 73 of the Act within 20 working days from the day that my decision is published in the Directorate's disclosure log, or a longer period allowed by the Ombudsman.

If you wish to request a review of my decision you may write to the Ombudsman at:

The ACT Ombudsman
GPO Box 442
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Email: actfoi@ombudsman.gov.au

ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT) review

Under section 84 of the Act, if a decision is made under section 82(1) on an Ombudsman review, you may apply to the ACAT for review of the Ombudsman decision.

Further information may be obtained from the ACAT at:

ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal
Level 4, 1 Moore St
GPO Box 370
Canberra City ACT 2601

Telephone: (02) 6207 1740
<http://www.acat.act.gov.au/>

If you have any queries concerning the Directorate's processing of your request, or would like further information, please contact the Directorate's FOI team on 02 6205 0720 or email EducationFOI@act.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Paula Murray
Information Officer

14 October 2022