II DEPARTMENTAL POLICY

Taking account of the above provisions and in the light of experience to date, the departmental policy relating to the charging, collection and refund of fees has been established as follows:

Application Fees:

1.   The $5.00 application fee must be received before processing of a request begins. Refund of the application fee will be considered if the applicant withdraws the request before processing begins or if the information sought is already in the public domain.

Estimate of Cost:

2.   If the estimated cost of search and preparation of documents is less than $100.00, the applicant will be informed and will normally be required to pay the amount in full before processing of the request begins. If the applicant has indicated that he wishes to receive copies of the releasable documents, the photocopying costs and any other outstanding charges must be paid before access is given. The applicant will be reminded that photocopying costs at 25¢ a page can be reduced or eliminated if he only wishes to examine the releasable documents and does not require copies.

3.   Some requests involve a large volume of documents and the costs of search and preparation of these documents can be high (as much as $2,000.00 in our experience to date). In such cases, a deposit of approximately 50 per cent should be requested before processing begins.

4.   As a rule, applicants should be requested to submit certified cheques or money orders payable to the Receiver General for Canada.

5.   If the estimated cost exceeds the actual cost, a refund of the portion paid in excess will be made. In calculating costs, the five hours of free time permitted should be taken into consideration and only the remaining time calculated at $10.00 per hour ($2.50 per quarter hour).

Transfer of Request to Another Government Institution Having a Greater Interest:

6.   The transfer of a request to another government institution must take place within 15 days of receipt. Consultation with, and agreement of, the other institution are necessary in order to transfer a request. In such