

Part I - Access to Information

Statistical Report -- Interpretation/Explanation

During fiscal year 1995-96, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade received 230 requests pursuant to the Access to Information Act. Sixty-one requests were carried over from the previous reporting year. Of these 291 requests, 252 were completed during the period under review and 39 were carried forward. Thus, although the number of requests received was down from last year, the number completed was only marginally less. One hundred and eighteen requests were completed in 30 days or less and a further 41 were completed in less than 60 days. The remainder (93) required more than 60 days to complete.

The disposition of the completed requests is as follows:

All disclosed	91
Disclosed in part	80
Nothing disclosed (exempt)	3
Nothing disclosed (excluded)	9
Transferred	6
Unable to process	38
Abandoned	21
Treated informally	4
TOTAL COMPLETED	252

The statistical reports do not reflect consultations, of which the department received 175 from other departments. Many of these continue to be large and complex, in particular bulky files from the National Archives.

In terms of percentages, the breakdown of requesters is not clearly indicative of end users since this must be inferred from information provided on the application. The breakdown is not significantly different from last year. The "Business" category has risen slightly, as has the "Organization" category, reflecting an increased use of Access by parliamentarians and NGOs. The other categories are down, especially "Media". The "Public" category may contain any of the other four categories if no appropriate identification has been provided. The "Academic" category is probably artificially low because of the unique informal access program for scholars maintained by the department's historical section.