



## OFFICE of GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES

November 28, 2016—sent via email

Ms. Kim Campbell  
Chief, Liaison Division  
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Dear Ms. Campbell:

We thank you again for the United States Secret Service (USSS) participating in a compliance assessment of the agency's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) program by the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS).

As noted in our transmittal letter and in our report, OGIS follows up with agencies 120 days after the assessment report is published. The goal of following up with you is to understand what actions the agency took to address our recommendations for improving the office's administration of FOIA.

Attached for your review and response is a form listing OGIS recommendations to the USSS. Please provide us with your response within 60 business days from the date of this letter. The response will be posted on the OGIS website.

We are, of course, available to discuss the follow-up questions and we welcome your comments.

We hope our recommendations and follow-up questions will assist USSS in implementing its FOIA responsibilities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Kirsten Mitchell at 202-741-5775 or at [kirsten.mitchell@nara.gov](mailto:kirsten.mitchell@nara.gov).

Sincerely,

NIKKI GRAMIAN  
Acting Director

cc: Jonathan Cantor, Chief FOIA Officer, Department of Homeland Security (DHS)  
James Holzer, Deputy Chief FOIA Officer, DHS  
Latita Payne, Disclosure/Privacy Officer, USSS  
Emily Patten, Audit Liaison, Office of Professional Responsibility, USSS

Enclosure





Follow-up to Compliance Assessment of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) program at the  
United States Secret Service Department of Homeland Security

Date: November 28, 2016

Date Report Issued: July 26, 2016

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), which established the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), codified at 5 U.S.C. § 552(h), mandates the office with reviewing agencies' FOIA policies, procedures and compliance. We assessed the FOIA program at United States Secret Service (USSS) and issued a report on July 26, 2016. As part of our assessment program, we follow up with agencies 120 days later to understand what actions the agency took to address our recommendations for improving the administration of FOIA.

**Finding 1: Leadership Support, Insufficient Management Controls to Reduce Backlog**

*Recommendation: Adopt management controls and continue working towards using metrics in employee performance goals.*

**Agency Response:**

*Recommendation: Create a formal data-driven backlog reduction plan.*

**Agency Response:**

*Recommendation: Direct appeals staff to include information about mediation services offered by the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) in its final appeal response letters.*

**Agency Response:**

*Recommendation: Continue to work with the Office of Chief Counsel to improve the quality of initial searches.*

**Agency Response:**

*Recommendation: Update USSS Standard Operating Procedures to reflect process for responding to first-party requests with no responsive records.*

**Agency Response:**

**Finding 2: Investing in Improvements to Technology, Not Fully Operational**

*Recommendation: Ensure the FOIA branch has sufficient IT support.*

**Agency Response:**

*Recommendation: Improve ability to check the status of requests by updating the FOIA web page to direct requesters to the Requester Service Center to track requests and discussing how to regularly and securely provide data about the status of USSS FOIA requests to the DHS Privacy Office.*

**Agency Response:**

**Finding 3: Delay in Communicating with Requesters, Additional Information Needed in Responses**

*Recommendation: Discuss improving the efficiency of referrals from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to USSS.*

**Agency Response:**

*Recommendation: Regularly communicate with requesters about the status of requests, particularly regarding the oldest cases.*

**Agency Response:**

*Recommendation: Limit the use of "still interested" letters in accordance with Office of Information Policy guidance.*

**Agency Response:**

*Recommendation: Develop template letters that provide an explanation for why certain material is covered by an exemption.*

**Agency Response:**

*Recommendation: Include the total number of pages released in final responses once FOIA tracking and processing system is fully functional.*

**Agency Response:**