

**§ 806.27**

**32 CFR Ch. VII (7-1-11 Edition)**

(h) Organizations which include air force elements:

(1) Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES): HQ AAFES/GC-E, P.O. Box 660202, Dallas, TX 75266-0202.

(2) National Guard Bureau (NGB)/Air National Guard: NGB-AD, 2500 Army Pentagon, Washington, DC 20310-2500. (FOIA requests concerning Air National Guard IG records should be sent to 11 CS/SCSR (FOIA), 1000 Air Force Pentagon, Washington, DC 20330-1000)

**§ 806.27 Samples of Air Force FOIA processing documents.**

(a) This section includes suggested language in paragraph format that tracks Air Force and DoD FOIA guidance. The rest of the body of letters and memorandums should comply with Air Force administrative guidance. Each MAJCOM may elect to prepare their own verbiage to meet their specific needs, so long as FOIA processing actions are consistent with guidance in DoD 5400.7-R and this part. In this section, language in parentheses is for explanatory purposes only. Do not include any of the parenthetical language of this section in your FOIA correspondence. When optional language must be selected, the optional language will be presented within parentheses. Use only the portions that apply to the specific request or response.

(b) Initial receipt of Freedom of Information Act request.

We received your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated ## Month year, for (summarize the request) on ## Month year (date received). We will provide you our release determination by (enter date that is 20 workdays from date you received the request). (Based on our initial review, we believe we cannot process your request within 20 workdays.) (If "cannot" is used, add appropriate explanation; examples follow.) Please contact (name and commercial telephone number) if you have any questions and refer to case number #####.

(c) Interim response:

Your request will be delayed because: all or part of the responsive records are not located at this installation; (and/or) Processing this FOIA request will require us to collect and review a substantial number of records (and/or) Other Air Force activities or other agencies (if applicable) to include the submitter of the information, need to be involved in deciding whether or not to release the respon-

sive records. We expect to reply to your request not later than (give a date that is not more than 30 workdays from the initial receipt of the request); (or) If processing the FOIA request will take more than the allowed time limits to respond. We find we are unable to meet the time limits imposed by the FOIA in this instance because (tell the requester the reason for the delay) (example: the records are classified and must be reviewed for possible declassification by other activities or agencies). We anticipate completing your request by (date).

(When charging fees is appropriate.) The FOIA provides for the collection of fees based on the costs of processing a FOIA request and your fee category. Based on the information in your request, we have determined your fee category is (commercial/educational or noncommercial scientific institution or news media/all others). As a result, you (if commercial category) are required to pay all document search, review and duplication costs over \$15.00. (or) As a result, you (if educational or noncommercial scientific institution or news media) will be provided the first 100 pages free of charge; you are required to pay any duplication costs over and above those amounts. (or) As a result, you will be provided the first 2 hours of search time and the first 100 pages free of charge; you are required to pay any search and duplication costs over and above those amounts.

(d) Request for a more specific description:

Your request does not sufficiently describe the desired records. The FOIA applies to existing Air Force records; without more specific information from you, we cannot identify what documents might be responsive to your request. Please give us whatever additional details you may have on the Air Force records you want. Can you tell us when the records were created, and what Air Force element may have created the records? If this request involves an Air Force contract, do you know the contract number and dates it covered? Our address is (include name and complete mailing address), our fax number is (give fax number), our e-mail address is (optional—give complete e-mail address). Based on the original request you sent us, we are unable to respond.

(e) Single letter acknowledging receipt of request and giving final response. (If you can complete a FOIA request within the statutory 20-workday processing period, Air Force elements may elect to send a single letter to the requester, along with responsive records which are released to the requester in full).

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We received your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated ## Month year, for (summarize the request) on ## Month year (date received). A copy (or) Copies of (describe the record(s) being released) (is/are) releasable and (is/are) attached.

### (f) Collection of fees:

The FOIA provides for the collection of fees based on the costs of processing a FOIA request and your fee category. We have placed you in the (enter the fee category) fee category. In your case, we have assessed a charge of \$ \_\_\_ for processing your request. The fee was calculated in the following manner: (Give a detailed cost breakdown: for example, 15 pages of reproduction at \$0.15 per page; 5 minutes of computer search time at \$43.50 per minute, 2 hours of professional level search at \$25 per hour.) Please make your check payable to (appropriate payee) and send it to (give your complete mailing address) by (date 30 days after the letter is signed). (or) The FOIA provides for the collection of fees based on the costs of processing a FOIA request and your fee category. We have placed you in the (enter the fee category); however, in this case, we have waived collecting fees.

(g) Multitrack processing letters to FOIA requesters. (When using the multitrack FOIA processing system, determine which of the following paragraphs to include in your letters to the requester. To the extent it may apply, include language from paragraph 2 of the sample. If a requester asks for expedited processing, answer carefully if you decide not to provide expedited processing, because requesters may appeal denial of their request for expedited processing. Advise requesters placed into the complex track in writing how they can simplify their request to qualify for the simple track.)

We received your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated ## Month year, for (summarize the request) on ## Month year (date received). Because our organization has a significant number of pending FOIA requests, which prevents us from making a response determination within 20 workdays, we have instituted multitrack processing of requests. Based on the information you provided, we have placed your request in the (simple or complex) track. We have assigned number ##### to identify your request; should you need to contact us about your request, please write or call (name and telephone) and use this number to assist us in responding more promptly.

Based on our current backlog, we expect to respond to your request not later than (give

an estimated date). Our policy is to process requests within their respective tracks in the order in which we receive them. We do process each FOIA request as quickly as we can.

(h) If the request is placed in the complex track:

In your case, processing your request is complex because (give basic reasons this is a complex case: request was vague or complicated; the records sought are voluminous; multiple organizations will have to work on this request; records are classified; responsive records came from another command/another service/a nongovernment source; responsive records were part of the Air Force's decision-making process, and the prerelease review will require policy determinations from different Air Force elements; records describe law enforcement activities; records involve foreign policy issues; due to the nature of your request and/or the nature of our computer system, responding to your request or providing a response in the electronic format you requested will be technically complex, etc.). Simplifying your request might permit quicker processing in the following ways: (describe ways the search could be narrowed to fewer records, or ways policy issues could be avoided, etc.) Can you tell us when the records were created, and what Air Force element may have created the records? If this request involves an Air Force contract, do you know the contract number? Please give us whatever additional details you may have on the Air Force records you are seeking, so we can attempt to streamline the processing of your request. Our address is (give complete mailing address), our fax number is (give fax number), our e-mail address is (optional—give complete e-mail address).

(i) If the requester asks that you expedite their request:

Because individuals receiving expedited processing may receive a response before other earlier requesters, there are administrative requirements you must meet before we can expedite a request. In your request, you asked that we expedite processing. In order for us to expedite a request, the requester must provide a statement certifying the reasons supporting their request are true and correct to the best of their knowledge.

In the second category, "urgently needed" means the information itself has a particular value that it will lose if it is not disseminated quickly. Ordinarily this means the information concerns a breaking news story of general public interest. Historic information, or information sought for litigation or commercial activities usually would not

qualify for expedited processing in the second category. Also, the fact that a news organization has an internal broadcast or publication deadline, so long as the deadline was unrelated to the nature of the information itself (for example, the information was not a breaking news story of general public interest) would not make the information “urgently needed.”

In this case, we have determined your FOIA request (will/will not) receive expedited processing. We came to this conclusion because you (did/did not) demonstrate you need the information because failure to obtain the records on an expedited basis (could or could not) reasonably expect to pose an imminent threat to life or physical safety of an individual (or) the information (is or is not) urgently needed in order to inform the public about actual or alleged Federal Government activity (or) failure to obtain the records on an expedited basis (could or could not) reasonably expect to lead to an imminent loss of substantial due process rights, (or) release (would or would not) serve a humanitarian need by promoting the welfare and interests of mankind (and/or) your request for expedited processing did not meet the statutory requirements of the FOIA; you did not provide enough information to make a determination of compelling need for the information you requested (and/or) you did not properly certify your request.

(j) If you deny a request for expedited processing:

If you consider our decision not to expedite your request incorrect, you may appeal our decision. Include in your appeal letter the reasons for reconsidering your request for expedited processing, and attach a copy of this letter. Address your appeal to Secretary of the Air Force through (address of MAJCOM FOIA office). In the meantime, we will continue to process your request in the (simple/complex) processing track.

(k) Certification, computer systems manager (electronic records or format requested).

(When answering a request for electronic records, based on the configuration of your hardware and/or software, certain factors may make a particular request complex. Have your computer system manager advise you whether or not they can create the new record/format on a “business as usual” basis. If producing the record/format would entail a significant expenditure of resources in time and manpower that would cause significant interference with the operation of the information system and adversely affect mission accomplishment, you do not need to process the request. The FOIA office needs to get a certification from the computer systems manager to document this determination to

support their response. Possible language for this certification is provided below.)

I, (rank/grade and name) am the computer systems manager for (organization with electronic records responsive to FOIA request). In consultation with (FOIA office), I have considered the FOIA request of (requester’s name), our ##### (FOIA identifier), which asked for (describe electronic record or format). We (do/do not) have electronic records that are responsive to this request (or) data that we (can/cannot) configure into the requested format. (If there are electronic records) The existing electronic records (do/do not) contain nonreleasable data that we (can/cannot) remove from the electronic record. Because of the way our (computer system/database/software) (use all that apply, specify hardware and/or software nomenclature if possible; for example, IBM ###, Microsoft Excel) is configured, creating the electronic record (or) modifying the existing record/format would entail a significant expenditure of resources in time and manpower that would cause significant interference with the operation of the information system and adversely affect mission accomplishment (describe how responding would interfere and time/manpower resources required, give estimated reprogramming time, if possible). I have applied the DoD “standard of reasonableness” in considering this request. I understand that when the capability exists to respond to a FOIA request that would require only a “business as usual” approach to electronically extract the data and compile an electronic record or reformat data to satisfy a FOIA request, then creation of the electronic record or reformatting the data would be appropriate. In this case, a significant expenditure of resources and manpower would be required to compile the electronic record (or) reformat existing data. This activity would cause a significant interference with the operation of our automated information system. I certify creation of the electronic record (or) reformatting existing data in order to respond to this request would not be reasonable, under the circumstances.

Signature

(Date Signed) (Signature Block)

(NOTE: Some electronic data requests may include a request for software. You may have to release government-developed software that is not otherwise exempt, if requested under the FOIA. Exemptions 1—classified software, 2—testing, evaluation, or similar software, 3—exempt by statute, 5—deliberative process/privileged software, and 7—law enforcement operations software may apply, based on the nature of the requested software. If the software is commercial off-the-shelf software, as opposed to software developed by the government, the software may

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qualify to be withheld from release under FOIA exemption 4.

(1) "No (paper or electronic) records" or "requested format not available" letters.

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated ## Month year, for (summarize the request) on ## Month year (date received), our number #####.

A thorough search by (identify the unit(s) that tried to locate responsive records) did not locate any records responsive to your request. (If the requester asked questions, and there are no responsive records that would provide the answers to those questions): The FOIA applies to existing Air Force records; the Air Force need not create a record in order to respond to a request.

(or) A thorough assessment by the OPR and the computer systems manager has determined we cannot provide the (electronic record data) in the format you requested. (If this can be done on a "business as usual basis):" (Paper copies American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) files) of the data you requested are attached.

If you interpret this "o records" response as an adverse action, you may appeal it in writing to the Secretary of the Air Force. Your appeal should be postmarked no later than 60 calendar days from the date of this letter. Address your letter as follows: Secretary of the Air Force, Thru: (MAJCOM FOIA Office), (mailing address).

The FOIA provides for the collection of fees based on the costs of processing a FOIA request and your fee category. We have placed you in the (enter category) fee category; however, in this case, we have waived fees. (If paper copies or ASCII files are provided: ) The FOIA provides for the collection of fees based on the costs of processing a FOIA request and your fee category. In your case, as a requester in the fee category of (add appropriate category), we have assessed a charge of \$ \_\_\_ for processing your request. The fee was calculated in the following manner: (Give a detailed cost breakdown: for example, 15 pages of reproduction at \$0.15 per page; 5 minutes of computer search time at \$43.50 per minute, 2 hours of professional level search at \$25 per hour.) Please make your check payable to (appropriate payee) and send it to (give your complete mailing address) by (date 30 days after the letter is signed).

(m) Referral or coordination letters. (These letters are to tell the requester all or part of the request was referred to another Air Force organization, to refer or coordinate the request to another federal government organization, and to advise a nongovernment sub-

mitter a FOIA request was received for information they submitted.)G56

(1) Letter to requester.

(If all or part of a request has been referred, write to the requester:) Your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated ## Month year, for (summarize the request) received on ## Month year (date received), our number #####, was referred (or) must be coordinated with (give mailing address of the FOIA office to which you are referring all or part of the request, the identity of the federal government organization you are either coordinating with or are referring all or part of the request to, or that you must coordinate with the nongovernment submitter of responsive information). (On referrals:) That office will process (all/part) of your request (describe which part is being referred if the entire request is not being referred) and they will respond directly to you. (On coordinations:) That organization has a significant interest in the records (or) created the records that may answer to your request. (Before notifying a requester of a referral to another DoD component or federal agency, consult with them to determine if their association with the material is exempt. If so, protect the association and any exempt information without revealing the identity of the protected activity.) (When a nongovernment submitter is involved:) The nongovernment submitter of information that may answer your request needs time to respond to the possible release of information under the FOIA.

Because we must refer (or) coordinate your request outside our organization, your request will be delayed. We will determine whether any records are available; as soon as is practicable, a decision will be made whether to release or to withhold from disclosure any responsive records under the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. 552. Your request will be processed as expeditiously as circumstances permit.

(2) Letter to another government agency.

(If all or part of a request was referred or requires coordination, write to the government entity): On ## Month year (date received), our organization received a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request from (identity of requester), Attachment 1, dated ## Month year, for (summarize the request). Based on our assessment of that request, our number #####, we need to (refer/coordinate) (all/part) of that request to you (describe which part is being referred or coordinated, if it was not the entire request). (Name and phone number of person who agreed to the referral or coordination) accepted this referral (or) coordination action was on (date).

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We notified the requester of this action (see § 806.31).

We (do/do not) hold records responsive to this request. (If do hold is used:) Copies of responsive records located in our files are included at Attachment 3 to assist you in making your assessment on the releasability of (our/your) related records. If you need to contact us, our phone number and address is (give name, phone and complete mailing address), our fax number is (give fax number), our e-mail address is (give complete e-mail address).

(3) Letter to submitter of contract-related information.

(If contractor-submitted information is involved, write to the submitter:) On ## Month year (date received), our organization received a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request from (identity of requester), our number #####, dated ## Month year, for (summarize the request). Information you submitted to the Air Force was identified as responsive to this request, see copies attached.

To determine the releasability of the information contained in these documents and to give you the maximum protection under the law, please review the attached documents and give us the information outlined in § 806.31. If you feel the information is privileged or confidential, consists of proprietary commercial or financial information, and otherwise meets the statutory requirements for withholding the information from release under FOIA exemption 4, 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4), respond to us in writing not later than ## working days from the date of this letter (usually 30 calendar days). If you object to release of this information under the FOIA, identify the items, lines, columns or portions you believe we should withhold from release.

You will also need to provide a written explanation of how release would adversely impact or cause harm to your competitive position, your commercial standing, or other legally protected interests. An assertion that “we should deny because all of the information was submitted in confidence” or “deny because all of the information was marked as proprietary in nature” would not justify withholding of the requested information under the FOIA. If you need to contact us, call or write (give name), phone number is (give commercial number), our address is (give complete mailing address), our fax number is (give fax number), our e-mail address is (give complete e-mail address).

(4) Letter requesting State Department coordination. (If the State Department is involved in coordinating on a request, fax or e-mail 11 CS/SCSR so they can inform SAF/IA if appropriate).

On ## Month year (date received), our organization received a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request from (identity of requester), our number #####, dated ## Month year, for (summarize the request). Because of the nature of this request, we were advised by (note the individual and organization who told you to coordinate the request with the State Department; this may be a MAJCOM or Combatant Command—give telephone and facsimile numbers if known) we need to coordinate this request with the Department of State. In accordance with DoD 5400.7-R, Air Force Supplement, we are informing you of their involvement in this FOIA request. (Provide any specifics available.) Air Force records are involved in this action. If you need to contact us, our phone number is (give commercial and DSN numbers), our address is (give complete mailing address), our fax number is (give fax number), our e-mail address is (give complete e-mail address).

(n) Certification of initial classification or declassification authority (When denying a FOIA request, in whole or in part, because the information requested is classified, the initial classification authority, his or her successor, or a declassification authority, needs to determine if the records are “properly and currently classified,” and therefore must be withheld from release under FOIA exemption (b)(1); also, you need to determine that you cannot release any reasonably segregable additional portions. Language that certifies such a determination was made on a FOIA request involving classified records follows).

(1) Sample certification format—all information remains classified.

I, (rank/grade and name) am the initial classification authority (or) the successor to the original initial classification authority (or) the declassification authority for (give an unclassified description of the records concerned). In consultation with (FOIA office), I have assessed the FOIA request of (requester's name), our ##### (FOIA identifier), for records that were properly classified at the time of their creation and currently remain properly classified in accordance with Executive Order (E.O.) 12958, National Security Information, (or) contain information that we have determined is classified in accordance with E.O. 12958 Section 1.5( ) (or) in accordance with E.O. 12958 Section 1.5( ) and is also exempt from declassification in accordance with Section 1.6( ) of the E. O. (or if the record is more than 25 years old) contain information that we have determined is exempt from declassification in accordance with E.O. 12958 Section

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3.4(b)( ). Unauthorized release could cause (for TOP SECRET, use exceptionally grave; for SECRET use serious; for CONFIDENTIAL do not add language; should read cause damage) damage to national security. There are no reasonably segregable portions that we can release. Consequently release of this information is denied pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(1).

Signature

(Date Signed) (Signature Block)

(2) Sample certification format—portions remain classified.

I, (rank/grade and name) am the initial classification authority (or) the successor to the original initial classification authority (or) the declassification authority for (give an unclassified description of the records concerned.) In consultation with (FOIA office), I have assessed the FOIA request of (requester's name), our ##### (FOIA identifier), that asked for records, (or) portions of which were properly classified at the time of their creation. Portions of the records currently remain properly classified in accordance with E.O. 12958. The bracketed information is currently and properly classified in accordance with Section 1.5 (add appropriate subparagraph), E.O. 12958, and is also exempt from declassification in accordance with Section 1.6( ) of the Executive Order (or if the record is more than 25 years old) contain information that we have determined is exempt from declassification in accordance with E.O. 12958 Section 3.4(b)( ). Unauthorized release could cause (for TOP SECRET use exceptionally grave; for SECRET use serious; for CONFIDENTIAL do not add language; should read cause damage) damage to national security. There are no other reasonably segregable portions that we can release. Consequently this information is denied pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(1).

Signature

(Date Signed) (Signature Block)

(o) Letter to a requester who has withdrawn their request or appeal. (If a FOIA requester has withdrawn a FOIA request or appeal, sending a final letter to the requester to close the file may be wise. Suggested language to the requester follows):

We received your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request (or) appeal dated ## Month year, on ## Month year (date received). After sending us your request (or) appeal, you indicated by (facsimile, letter) that you wished to withdraw your request (or) appeal. We have, therefore, closed your file without further action.

(p) Letter to a requester who has appealed after the 60-day deadline. (We

will not process FOIA appeals received after the 60-day time limit, unless the requester provides adequate justification for failing to comply. If you receive a late appeal, and it gives inadequate justification for failing to comply, the FOIA office will advise the requester their appeal was closed; suggested language for a letter to an untimely requester follows.)

We received your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) appeal dated ## Month year, on ## Month year (date received). You did not appeal within 60 days of the postmarked date of our denial letter as outlined in our agency regulation. Therefore, we are closing our file.

(q) Letter to a requester who has appealed. (There are occasions when, on reconsideration, an IDA grants all or part of an appeal. When sending their appeal to higher headquarters, notify the requester. Suggested language to a requester who has appealed follows):

We received your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) appeal, our number #####, dated ## Month year, on ## Month year (date received). We considered the issues raised in your appeal carefully. We have decided to grant (or) partially grant your appeal.

(If you grant all or part of the appeal): Upon reconsideration, we are releasing the requested records (or) granting your request. (If the appeal is only partially granted, describe what portions remain in dispute). (If applicable): We are releasing and attaching all or portions of the responsive records. (If applicable): We will continue processing your appeal for the remaining withheld (records/information).

§ 806.28 Records with special disclosure procedures.

Certain records have special administrative procedures to follow before disclosure. Selected publications that contain such guidance are listed below.

(a) AFI 16-701, Special Access Programs.

(b) AFI 31-206, Security Police Investigations.

(c) AFI 31-501, Personnel Security Program Management.

(d) AFI 31-601, Industrial Security Program Management.

(e) AFI 36-2603, Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records.

(f) AFI 36-2706, Military Equal Opportunity and Treatment Program.