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which event the person making the request will be informed by written notice of the delay, the reasons for the delay and the date on which a determination may be expected. In this context, the term ''unusual circumstances'' refers to the following situations:

(i) When there is a need to search for and collect the requested records from field facilities or other establishments that are separate from the office processing the request;

(ii) When there is a need to search for, collect, and appropriately examine a voluminous amount of separate and distinct records which are sought in a single request; or

(iii) When there is a need for consultation (which will be conducted with all practicable speed) with another agency having a substantial interest in the determination of the request or among two or more components of the Agency, each having substantial subject-matter interest therein.

(2) The maximum time in making a determination of availability, in the event of such unusual circumstances, will be twenty working days from receipt of the request. In the event that only part of the permissible ten working days extension is used, then USAID reserves the right, if necessary, to use any remainder of such time for the determination of an appeal, if one is made.

(c) If a request is made to USAID for material that is controlled or held by another agency, the person making the request will be immediately notified that USAID does not have or control the requested material and he/she will be advised of the name of the controlling agency and of the address from which the material may be requested, unless the other agency has, by public regulation, delegated the release authority to USAID. If release authority has been delegated, USAID will follow the procedures authorized by the delegation in determining whether to release the information. If a request for material is referred to USAID from another agency, the time period for determination of release of the information will not start until the request is received by the Chief, Office of Customer Outreach and Oversight Staff; and the person making the request will be immediately notified of the referral and of the date the request was received in USAID. USAID will not accept referral of requests unless and until the Chief, Customer Outreach and Oversight Staff, or his/her designee, determines that the material requested is actually within the scope and control of the release authority of USAID.

(d) If only a part of a record is exempt from disclosure, then any reasonably segregable portion of such record will be furnished after deletion of the portions which are exempt, provided that the segregable portion constitutes an intelligible record which is not distorted out of context or contradictory to the substance of the entire record before segregation.

§ 212.35 Schedule of fees and method of payment for services rendered.

(a) *Definitions*. (1) *Direct costs* means those expenditures which the Agency actually incurs in searching for and duplicating (and in the case of commercial requesters, reviewing) documents in order to respond to a FOIA request.

(2) *Search* includes all time spent looking for material that is responsive to a request, including page-by-page or line-by-line identification of material within documents. Line-by-line search will not be done when duplicating an entire document would prove the less expensive and quicker method of complying with a request. (''Search'' for this purpose is distinguished from ''review'' (see paragraph (a)(4) of this section).

(3) *Duplication* refers to the process of making a copy of a document available to the FOIA requester. Copies can take the form of paper copy, microfilm or audiovisual materials (among others) and will be in a form that is reasonably usable by requesters.

(4) *Review* refers to the process of examining documents located in response to a commercial use request (see paragraph (a)(5) of this section) to determine whether any portion of any document located is permitted to be withheld. It also includes processing any documents for disclosure, e.g., doing all

that is necessary to redact those documents of exempt material and otherwise preparing them for release. Review does not include time spent resolving general legal or policy issues regarding the application of exemptions.

(5) *Commercial use request* refers to a request from or on behalf of one who seeks information for a use or purpose that is related to commerce, trade, or the profit interest of the requester or of the person on whose behalf the request is made. In determining whether a requester properly belongs in this category, the Agency will determine the use to which a requester will put the documents requested. Where the Agency has reasonable cause to doubt the use to which a requester will put the records sought, or where that use is not clear from the request itself, the Agency may seek additional clarification before assigning the request to a specific category.

(6) *Educational institution* refers to a preschool, a public or private elementary or secondary school, an institution of graduate higher education, an institution of undergraduate higher education, an institution of professional education, or an institution of vocational education which operates a program or programs of scholarly research.

(7) *Non-commercial scientific institution* refers to an institution that is not operated on a ''commercial'' basis as that term is referenced in paragraph (a)(5) of this section and which is operated solely for the purpose of conducting scientific research, the results of which are not intended to promote any particular product or industry.

(8) *Representative of the news media* refers to any person actively gathering news for an entity that is organized and operated to publish or broadcast news to the public. The term ''news'' means information that is about current events or that would be of current interest to the public. Examples of news media entities include television or radio stations broadcasting to the public at large, and publishers of periodicals (but only in those instances when they can qualify as disseminators of ''news'' who make their products available for purchase or subscription by the general public). These examples are not intended to be all-inclusive. Moreover, as traditional methods of news delivery evolve (e.g., electronic dissemination of newspapers through telecommunications services), such alternative media would be included in this category. In the case of ''freelance'' journalists, they may be regarded as working for a news organization if they can demonstrate a sound basis for expecting publication through such an organization, even though not actually employed by it. A publication contract would be the clearest evidence, but the Agency may also look to the past publication record of the requester in making this determination.

(b) *Fees to be charged*. The following specific fees shall be applicable with respect to services rendered to members of the public under this part:

(1) *Commercial use requesters*. Fees are intended to cover the full estimated direct costs of researching for, reviewing for release, and duplicating the records requested. *Search costs* are computed based on the following formula: hours spent by Agency personnel, whatever their grade and location, and rounded up to the nearest full hour, and including locality pay for Washington-based personnel only, at the basic annual rate then payable to U.S. Government employees at the GS–9/Step 4 level, times 1.17 (to factor in related benefits) and divided by 2080 (hours per work year). *Review costs* are computed based on the same formula but, instead, using the rate then payable to employees at the GS–13/Step 4 level. *Duplicating costs* are $0.20 per page. Search costs will be assessed even though no records may be found or even if, after review, there is no disclosure of records.

(2) *Educational and non-commercial scientific institution requester*. The Agency will provide documents to requesters in this category for the cost of duplication alone ($0.20 per page), excluding charges for the first 100 pages. To be eligible for inclusion in this category, requesters must show that a request is being made under the auspices of a qualifying institution and that the records are sought in furtherance of scholarly research, if the request is

from an educational institution or scientific research, if the request is from a non-commercial scientific institution. Requesters eligible for free search must (as with all FOIA requesters) reasonably describe the records sought.

(3) *Requesters who are representatives of the news media.* The Agency will provide documents to requesters in this category for the cost of reproduction alone ($0.20 per page), excluding charges for the first 100 pages. To be eligible for inclusion in this category a requester must meet the criteria in paragraph (a)(8) of this section, and his/her request must not be made for commercial use. In reference to this class of requesters, a request for records supporting the news dissemination function of the requester shall not be considered to be a request that is for a commercial use. Requesters eligible for free search must also reasonably describe the records sought.

(4) *All other requesters.* The Agency will charge requesters who do not fit into any of the categories in paragraphs (b) (1), (2), and (3) of this section fees which recover the full direct cost of search, and for reproducing records that are responsive to the request, except that the first 100 pages and the first two hours of search time shall be furnished without charge. The hourly rates outlined in paragraph (b)(1) of this section will prevail. Requesters must reasonably describe the records sought. Moreover, requests from subjects for records filed in the Agency's Privacy Act System of Records will continue to be treated under the fee provisions of the Privacy Act of 1975 except that the first 100 pages of reproduction will be furnished without charge.

(c) *Non-payment of fees.* (1) The Agency will begin assessing interest charges on the thirty-first day following the day on which the requester is advised of the fee charge. Interest will be at the rate prescribed in 31 U.S.C. 3717.

(2) Where a requester has previously failed to copy a fee charged in a timely fashion (*i.e.*, within thirty days of the billing date), the Agency will require the requester to pay the full amount owed plus any applicable interest as provided in paragraph (c)(1) of this section, and to make an advance payment of the full amount of the remaining estimated fee before the Agency begins to process a new request or continues processing a then-pending request from the requester.

(3) When the Agency acts under paragraph (c) (1) or (2) of this section the administrative time limits prescribed in subsection (a)(6) of the FOIA (*i.e.*, ten working days from receipt of initial request and twenty working days from receipt of appeals from initial denial plus permissible extensions of these time limits) will begin only after the Agency has received fee payments described in this section.

(d) *Advance payments or confirmation.* Where USAID estimates or determines that allowable charges to a requester are likely to exceed $250, USAID will require a requester to make an advance payment of the entire estimated charges before continuing to process the request. Where the estimated charges are in the $25–$250 range, then USAID in its discretion, before processing the request, may require either—

(1) An advance deposit of the entire estimated charges or (2) Written confirmation of the requester's willingness, when billed, to pay such charges.

(e) *Waiving or reducing fee.* In accordance with section (4)(A)(ii) of the FOIA, the Agency will furnish documents without charge or at reduced charges if disclosure of the information is ''in the public interest'' in that such disclosure is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the Government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. A requester may at any time, up to a period not to exceed thirty days from the final USAID decision concerning his/her request, request such waiver or reduction of fee by letter addressed to the Chief, Customer Outreach and Oversight Staff; such request shall address the above criteria for waiver. Such request will initially be decided by the Chief, Customer Outreach and Oversight Staff, or his/her designee; such decision will normally be made, and the requester so advised, within ten working days of its receipt. The requester, if dissatisfied

with that decision, may appeal pursuant to the same procedures as apply under § 212.36 and § 212.37 of this part.

(f) *Restrictions on assessing fees.* With the exception of requesters seeking documents for a commercial use, Section (4)(A)(iv) of the FOIA, as amended, requires agencies to provide the first 100 pages of duplication and the first two hours of search time without charge. Moreover, this section prohibits agencies from charging fees to any requester, including commercial use requesters, if the cost of collecting a fee would be equal to or greater than the fee itself. These provisions work together so that, except for commercial use requesters, the Agency will not begin to assess fees until it has provided such free search and reproduction. For example, for a request that involved two hours and ten minutes of search time and resulted in 105 pages of documents, the Agency will determine the cost of only ten minutes of search time and only five pages of reproduction. If this cost is equal to or less than the cost of processing the payment instrument—a figure which the Agency will from time to time review and determine—then there will be no charge to the requester.

(g) *Other provisions*—(1) *Charges for unsuccessful search.* The Agency will assess charges for time spent searching even if the Agency fails to locate the records or if records located are determined to be exempt from disclosure.

(2) *Aggregating requesters.* When the Agency reasonably believes that a requester or group of requesters is attempting to break a request down into a series of requests for the purpose of evading the assessment of fees, the Agency will aggregate any such requesters and charge accordingly.

(3) *Effect of the Debt Collection Act of 1982* (Public Law 97–365). The Agency will use the authorities of the Debt Collection Act, including disclosure to consumer reporting agencies and use of collection agencies, where appropriate, to encourage repayment.

(4) *Remittances.* (i) Remittances will be in U.S. Dollars in the form of either a personal check or bank draft drawn on a bank in the United States or a money order.

(ii) Remittances shall be made payable to the order of the U.S. Treasury and mailed to the Chief, Customer Outreach and Oversight Staff, at the address set forth in § 212.33(a) of this part.

§ 212.36 Denial of request for access to records.

(a) If it is determined that the Agency cannot comply with all or part of a request for records, the person making the request shall be immediately notified of the determination, the reasons for the determination, the name and title of each officer responsible for the denial, and the right of the person to appeal the adverse determination.

(b) The denial of a request for records may be made, initially, only by the Chief, Customer Outreach and Oversight Staff, or his/her designee.

(c)(1) Any person who has been denied access to records pursuant to this section may appeal the relevant decision not later than thirty days after the date of the notification of denial or, in the case of a partial denial, not later than thirty days after the date the releasable documents are actually furnished to the person making the request, whichever is later. The appeal shall be in writing addressed to the Agency's FOIA Appeals Officer, who is:

The Director, Office of Administrative Services, Bureau for Management, Room 803, SA–2, Agency for International Development, 21st and Virginia Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., 20523–0217.

(2) In order for the Agency to make a timely response to the appeal, both the text of the appeal and its envelope must be plainly marked ''FOIA Appeal''. The appeal must contain a reasonable description of the record sought and withheld, a copy of the initial decision to deny access and any other information that will enable the Appeals Officer to make the final decision.

§ 212.37 Procedures for agency consideration of appeals.

(a) Upon receipt of the appeal by the Appeals Officer, a maximum of twenty working days will normally be taken to decide the appeal. In unusual circumstances, as defined in § 212.34, the twenty working days may be extended by ten working days or by the number