



Australian Government
Department of Health

Department Reference: FOI 1766 IR

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

NOTICE OF INTERNAL REVIEW DECISION

I refer to your application of 17 August 2020 requesting an internal review of the decision by the Department of Health (the department) in relation to your request for access under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) to the following documents:

1. *The documents showing the community's (the Australian people's) approval for the Australian donations outline below:*

a) *"Australia has this week committed \$352 million AUD to a European Union-led coronavirus vaccine research fund*

<https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/australia-pledges-over-350-million-covid-19/>

b) *"Australia has pledged \$460 million for Gavi to continue its vital work in providing access to vaccines for countries across the Indo-Pacific."*

<https://www.fbcnews.com.fj/news/covid-19/australia-ensures-fiji-can-access-a-future-covid-19-vaccine/>

2. *Please send me documents showing how and by whom these above two pledges were approved, who voted for them, and the steps that were taken to get approval for such large donations from tax payers' (or debt) money.*

You were advised on 12 August 2020 that, after all reasonable steps had been taken to locate documents relevant to your request, the decision maker was satisfied that the department does not hold any documents relevant to your FOI request.

In your application for internal review of 17 August 2020, you provided the following submissions in support of your request:

I would like to have an internal review carried out.

The Australian Government paid out over \$800 million, as outlined in my request above, and I am sure there must be documentation relating to who approved these donations, and what process the government went through to agree to paying out so much of our Australian tax money. The Australian government needs to be transparent with this information and I look forward to receiving the documents as per my request.

FOI Decision

I am authorised under subsection 23(1) of the FOI Act to make decisions in relation to Freedom of Information requests. I am writing to notify you of my decision in response to your request for internal review.

I have reviewed the initial decision and I have decided to affirm the decision. I am satisfied that all reasonable steps have been taken to locate documents that fall within the scope of your request and that the department does not hold any documents referred to in your request. Accordingly, the documents you have requested cannot be provided to you in response to your FOI request.

FOI Review rights

If you are dissatisfied with my decision, you may apply to the Australian Information Commissioner (Information Commissioner) under section 54L of the FOI Act to review my decision. An application for review to the Information Commissioner must be made in writing within 60 days of this notice.

The Australian Information Commissioner can be contacted by:

Email: enquiries@oaic.gov.au
Phone: 1300 363 992

More about the Information Commissioner review is available on the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) website at:

<http://www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/requesting-a-review>

You may also make a complaint to the Information Commissioner about action taken by the department in relation to your application. Further information can be obtained from the OAIC website.

FOI Act: Relevant provisions

The FOI Act, including the provisions referred to in this letter, can be accessed from the Federal Register of Legislation website:

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2020C00246>

Additional Information

While the department does not hold documents relevant to your FOI request, the following information, provided outside the FOI Act, may be of assistance to you.

Expenditure by the Australian Government does not require community approval. Expenditure or the commitment of public money requires the approval of the Australian Government. Where proposed expenditure relates to something other than the ordinary activities of government, it may require specific legislative approval.

Additional information regarding the commitment of money for Australian Government spending is set out in the following Department of Finance document: <https://www.finance.gov.au/publications/resource-management-guides/commitment-relevant-money-rmg-400#b-legislative-authority-to-enter-into-arrangements-involving-the-commitment-of-relevant-money>

Finally, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade webpage provides information about their grants programs, including grant schemes managed in other countries: <https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/grant-opportunities/Pages/grants-programs>

I trust this additional information is of assistance to you.

Contacts

If you require clarification of any of the matters discussed in this letter you should contact the Freedom of Information Unit on (02) 6289 1666 or at FOI@health.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Lisa Schofield
First Assistant Secretary
Office of Health Economics & Research Division

// September 2020