

## 10. FOI TRACKING SYSTEM

Under the FOI Act, there are requirements on the Department to respond to requests for information within specified timescales and put in place processes for internal reviews and appeals. There are also monitoring requirements, whereby statistics must be returned to the Department of Constitutional Affairs (DCA).

The FOI tracking system is a workflow application that allows for the capture of tracking information for each FOI request.

### Overview of the System

The system will be used by all NICS Departments but will allow each Department to operate independently and with different business rules. Its purpose is to assist in managing requests for information and appeals (both internal reviews and appeals to the Information Commissioner or the Information Tribunal) and thereby:

- help ensure that requests and appeals are processed within the timescales set out in the legislation; and
- provide the statistical information required by the DCA.

The system will generate reminders when requests get close to deadlines or when events do not happen within defined timescales. It contains a number of standard letters and will automatically generate the most common correspondence to applicants. As well as providing a standard DCA report that generates statistics from the information held on the system, it provides for ad-hoc reporting and extract facilities so that requests can be analysed. It also allows for the identification of round-robin and mosaic requests.

### Users of the System

Within the Department, the Information Management Unit (IMU) will be the tracking system administrator. Business Area Information Managers (BAIMs) are responsible for ensuring that the system is updated regularly and accurately and for the quality of the information placed on it. A small number of staff in each business area have been nominated as users and, as such, will be able to carry out one or more of the activities below:

- logging requests;
- working on requests;
- monitoring requests
- recording decisions to release or withhold information;
- logging appeals;
- recording decisions on internal reviews and appeals to the Information Commissioner and Information tribunal.

The system defines a set of roles and privileges that control what activities users can perform and these can be confirmed by the system administrator.

## FOI Tracking Application User Manual

The tracking system is a workflow based application which means that, to complete a request, users must work through an ordered series of steps - each step must be completed before starting the next one.

The user manual takes users through the steps from logging requests through to its completion. To ensure the tracking system works effectively, all users must follow the steps set out in the user manual carefully at all times.

To view the Tracking System User Manual, click [here](#).

To assist users, two leaflets have also been produced, FOI Tracking System – Short Guide and FOI Tracking System – Do's and Don'ts. To access these leaflets, please click [here](#)

