

Impact of a Reporting Change

From the time that FOIA performance reporting began in 1998, agencies have included as part of their annual reporting requests that were filed under the Privacy Act -- requests from people for information on themselves. That has distorted the reported results to a degree that varied from agency to agency, depending on how many Privacy Act requests each handled. Because Privacy Act requests are usually processed and approved quickly, it would have lowered overall backlogs and increased the grant rate. The chart below compares processing data as agencies reported them for 2007 (including Privacy Act requests) and 2008 (without Privacy Act requests).

Agency	Requests		Backlog		Grants	
	2007 w/ PA	2008 w/o PA	2007 w/ PA	2008 w/o PA	2007 w/ PA	2008 w/o PA
Agriculture	31,500	12,967	5%	13%	91%	81%
Commerce	1,852	1,936	11%	14%	60%	52%
Defense	86,299	71,228	33%	20%	64%	60%
Education	1,792	1,921	40%	15%	73%	75%
Energy	3,434	1,605	17%	18%	86%	59%
Homeland Security	108,416	108,952	62%	77%	56%	63%
HUD	3,484	2,999	10%	23%	38%	35%
Interior	4,891	4,810	16%	19%	65%	71%
Justice	52,560	59,615	14%	10%	53%	44%
Labor	27,944	20,798	5%	5%	70%	59%
State	5,078	5,909	85%	83%	29%	27%
Transport.	9,695	9,958	23%	17%	56%	81%
Treasury	27,927	20,843	11%	12%	63%	52%
CIA	2,911	1,935	26%	55%	48%	45%
CPSC	4,598	3,930	6%	10%	87%	81%
EEOC	14,602	14,460	10%	7%	70%	71%
EPA	11,820	11,492	14%	14%	43%	45%
GSA	1,354	1,460	6%	6%	78%	98%
NARA	12,185	14,075	42%	43%	10%	5%
NASA	1,416	1,316	25%	31%	59%	60%
NLRB	4,320	4,651	4%	33%	84%	80%
NRC	349	344	10%	5%	70%	61%
NSF	340	353	1%	1%	86%	83%
SEC	9,070	9,586	55%	6%	47%	13%
SBA	3,333	2,637	1%	1%	89%	90%
Subtotal	431,170	389,780	33%	33%	60%	55%
HHS	289,721	58,299	10%	29%	96%	71%
OPM	14,459	6,033	7%	1%	92%	96%
SSA	18,995,845	34,444	0%	3%	100%	97%
VA	2,008,589	99,333	2%	6%	96%	56%
Subtotal	31,500	198,109	0%	13%	100%	69%