checklist: high level official
information act requests

A checklist for the Correspondence, Reviews and Ministerial Servicing Team (CRaMS) to use alongside the process guidelines.

Keep the CRaMS Manager informed if it looks like timeframes won’t be met or the business unit is having difficulty with the response.

If an OIA is received at 11:59pm, it is still counted as being received on that date. Use the Ombudsman’s online calculator to ensure the correct due date is entered in the spreadsheet.

#### Process

Acknowledge receipt to requester.

Set up a commissioning meeting if required – to discuss scope, potential documents, if an extension is needed and the general approach. Invite CRaMS Manager, the Business Unit contact, Communications and Media (Comms) Manager if media **or** high risk, and Legal or other agencies if necessary.

Enter it into the CRaMS Excel spreadsheet and CITS tracking system. Plan the timeframes carefully.

Put it in the Minister’s Weekly Report if it is from the media, FYI website, lobby groups, MPs, or hot topics.

Have the commissioning meeting, or send it out to the Business Unit. Be clear about what is needed by when, give the Business Unit a clear timeframe.

When information comes back from the Business Unit, check that it has been QA’ed (if it’s the reporting team or finance) or signed out by a manager (for other Business Units).

Prepare the response and the documents with any redactions if appropriate, clarify anything with the business unit, consult with Legal and other agencies if required.

Have it QA’ed by someone else in CRaMS.

Send it to the CRaMS Manager for one day sign out, or set up a time in their calendar.

Send it to the relevant Group Manager or Deputy Chief Executive for two days sign out and the Comms Manager if media related. If urgent, book an appointment in their calendar via Outlook or through their EA to review and sign off the OIA. Be clear in the email or calendar invite that it’s “For approval – OIA – name. Deadline [for them, not the final deadline].”

Update the calendar invite with the most recent OIA documents for the managers to approve. Be clear who has previously signed it out. For example, update the invite for the DCE to say “this has been reviewed by the Comms Manager, and their changes are incorporated into this version. [Name of manager/contact person from that Business Unit] has provided input into this response. Legal has been consulted.”

After sign out, send it to the Minister’s office for five working days under the ‘no surprises’ notification policy or ‘consultation’ if required.

If it’s a media OIA, give the Comms Manager a hard copy of the final (report, letter, attachments).

Prepare the response for proactive release, redacting the requestors name and contact details, and the signatories signed signature. Email it to the Senior Channels Advisor, Channels, for proactive release.

Update the CRaMS Excel spreadsheet and CITS tracking system.