



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

2021 Annual Statistics Report

Office of the Ombudsman

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Introduction

This report provides statistics on compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (2021 Revision) in the Cayman Islands Public Sector. It places the 2021 FOI outcomes and activities in the context of the trends and results since 2009, when the FOI Act came into effect.

The FOI Act promotes openness and accountability by creating a general right of access, balanced by exemptions for specific reasons, consistent with the system of constitutional democracy in the Cayman Islands.

Methodology

This report was compiled by the Office of the Ombudsman using aggregated statistics from the Cayman Islands Government's central tracking system known as JADE, which was recently upgraded. Where needed, these figures were augmented, verified and corrected against the compliance reports on FOI activity received from each individual public authority.

JADE is owned and maintained by the Cabinet Office, and we are grateful to the Information Rights Unit of the Cabinet Office, and to the many FOI Information Managers around the Public Sector who implement the FOI Act on a daily basis, for providing the raw data for this report.

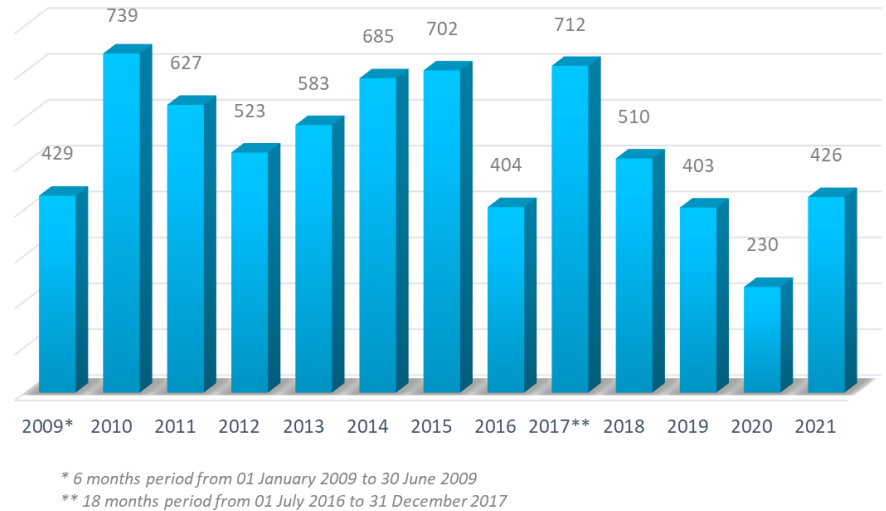
As in previous years, there are no reliable figures for internal reviews conducted during the year, as they continue to be under-reported in the tracking system. Therefore, we are unable to report on this item.

The number of appeals to the Ombudsman and their outcomes were reported in the 2021 Annual Report of the Office of the Ombudsman and have not been duplicated here.

FOI Statistics

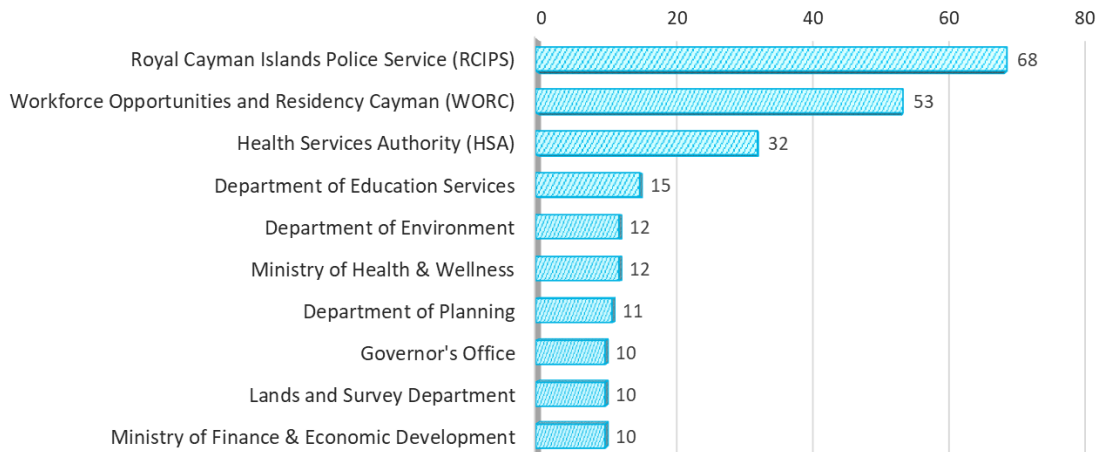
NUMBER OF FOI REQUESTS PER YEAR (2009-2021)

The overall number of requests answered under the FOI Act has recovered from the impact of the pandemic, with 426 requests tallied during the year. This total falls within the average of 400-700 requests per year, albeit on the low end of the range. Since the commencement of the FOI Act just under 7,000 requests have been processed.



SPREAD OF FOI REQUESTS ACROSS THE PUBLIC SECTOR (2021)

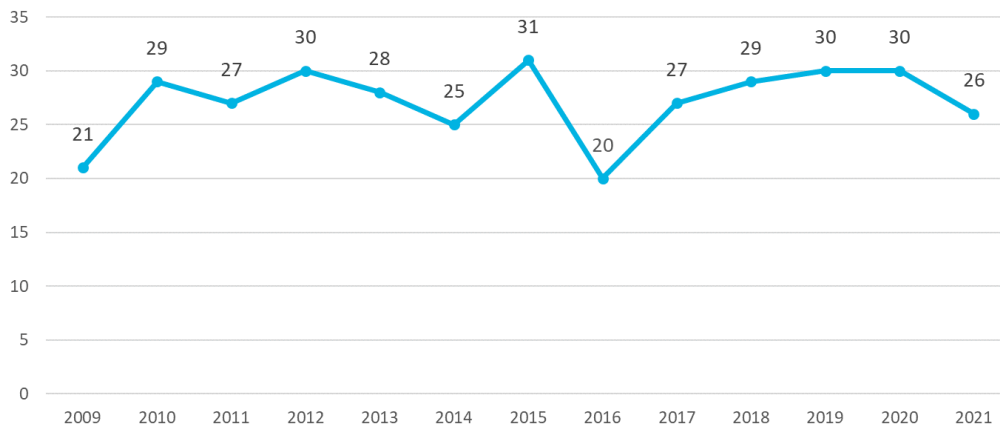
As in previous years, most FOI requests were received by those public authorities whose decisions impact individuals the greatest. The Royal Cayman Islands Police Service received the most requests of all public authorities (68), followed by Workforce Opportunities & Residency Cayman (WORC) (53), the Health Services Authority (HSA) (32), and the Department of Education Services (15).



RESPONSE TIMES 2009-2021

The FOI Act requires public authorities to give their initial decision to an FOI request “as soon as practicable” but not later than 30 calendar days after receiving it.

In a positive development, in 2021 the average time cases stayed open decreased to 26 days, down from 30 days in the previous years. The proportion of cases taking less than 10 days increased from 16% to 28%, and cases taking longer than 30 days dropped from 46% to 35%. The latter include many cases that were extended, internally reviewed or appealed.



RESPONSE TIMES 2021

6.1%

Same day

21.5%

1-10 days

37.4%

11-30 days

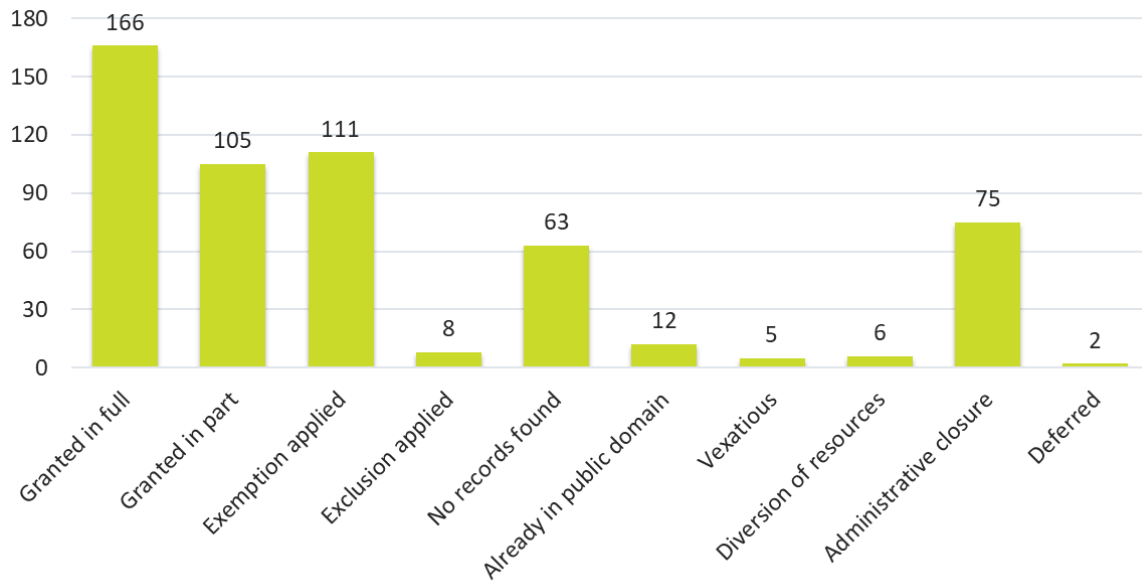
23.0%

31-60 days

12.1%

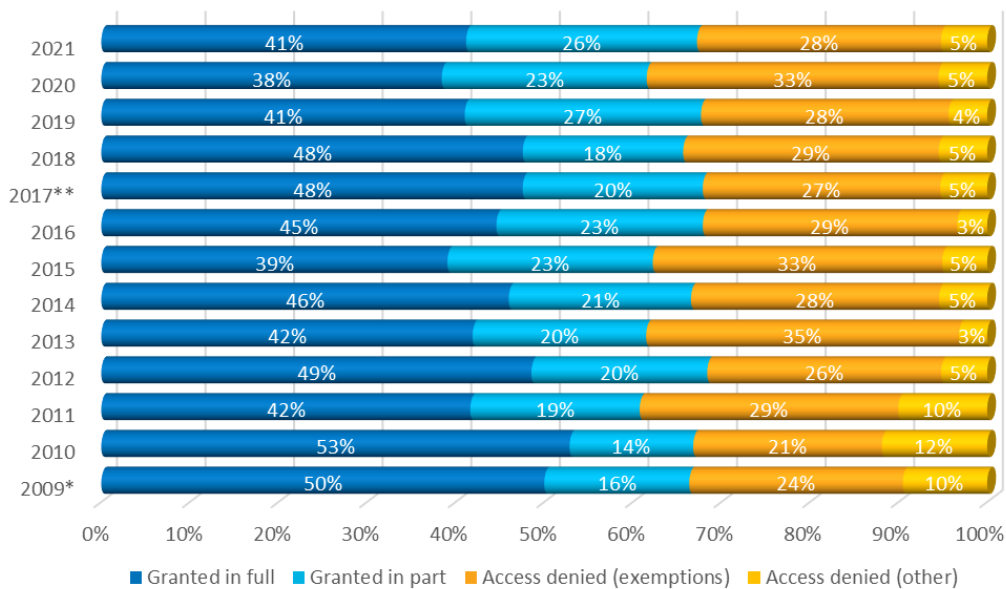
Over 60 days

OUTCOMES OF FOI REQUESTS (2021)



The FOI tracking system logs one or more outcomes for each request.

When certain outcomes are discounted (no records found, records already in the public domain, duplicate request, or request withdrawn), about two thirds of requests were granted in full or in part (67%).



* 6 months period from 01 January 2009 to 30 January 2009

** 18 months period from 01 July 2016 to 31 December 2017