

CSB FOIA ANNUAL REPORT

FOR
10/01/2021
THROUGH
09/30/2022

The following **Annual Freedom of Information Act** report covers the Period 10/01/2021, through 09/30/2022, as required by 5 U.S.C. 552.

I. BASIC INFORMATION REGARDING REPORT

1. Name, Title, Address, and Telephone Number

Michele Bouziane
Chief FOIA Officer
Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board
1750 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Suite 910
Washington, DC 20006
202-603-9849

2. Electronic address for Report: See #3.

3. How to obtain a copy of the report in paper form: Send request to above address.

All of our annual reports are available at <https://www.csb.gov> on the Legal/FOIA page and can be downloaded in the following formats and printed: PDF Word XLS (Raw Data Format) XML

II. MAKING A FOIA REQUEST

1. You can submit a FOIA request directly to the CSB through FOIAonline until 9/30/2023 at: <https://foiaonline.gov/foiaonline/action/public/home>. You can also send a FOIA request to the CSB through regular mail. Mark both the envelope and its contents: "FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST." Be sure to include your name and address on your request. It is a good idea to include a daytime phone number or e-mail address, in case we need to contact you about your request. Do not include a return envelope. Mail your request to: CSB, 1750 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 910, Washington DC 20006.

III. ACRONYMS, DEFINITIONS, AND EXEMPTIONS

1. Acronyms used :

| Acronym | Definition |
|---------|--|
| CSB | Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board |

2. Definition of terms used in this report :

- a. **Administrative Appeal** - a request to a federal agency asking that it review at a higher administrative level a FOIA determination made by the agency at the initial request level.
- b. **Average Number** - the number obtained by dividing the sum of a group of numbers by the quantity of numbers in the group. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the average number is 8.
- c. **Backlog** - the number of requests or administrative appeals that are pending at an agency at the end of the fiscal year that are beyond the statutory time period for a response.
- d. **Component** - for agencies that process requests on a decentralized basis, a "component" is an entity, also sometimes referred to as an Office, Division, Bureau, Center, or Directorate, within the agency that processes FOIA requests. The FOIA now requires that agencies include in their Annual FOIA Report data

for both the agency overall and for each principal component of the agency.

- e. **Consultation** - the procedure whereby the agency responding to a FOIA request first forwards a record to another agency for its review because that other agency has an interest in the document. Once the agency in receipt of the consultation finishes its review of the record, it responds back to the agency that forwarded it. That agency, in turn, will then respond to the FOIA requester.
- f. **Exemption 3 Statute** - a federal statute that exempts information from disclosure and which the agency relies on to withhold information under subsection (b)(3) of the FOIA.
- g. **FOIA Request** - a FOIA request is generally a request to a federal agency for access to records concerning another person (i.e., a "third-party" request), or concerning an organization, or a particular topic of interest. FOIA requests also include requests made by requesters seeking records concerning themselves (i.e., "first-party" requests) when those requesters are not subject to the Privacy Act, such as non-U.S. citizens. Moreover, because all first-party requesters should be afforded the benefit of both the access provisions of the FOIA as well as those of the Privacy Act, FOIA requests also include any first-party requests where an agency determines that it must search beyond its Privacy Act "systems of records" or where a Privacy Act exemption applies, and the agency looks to FOIA to afford the greatest possible access. All requests which require the agency to utilize the FOIA in responding to the requester are included in this Report.

Additionally, a FOIA request includes records referred to the agency for processing and direct response to the requester. It does not, however, include records for which the agency has received a consultation from another agency. (Consultations are reported separately in Section XII of this Report.)

- h. **Full Grant** - an agency decision to disclose all records in full in response to a FOIA request
- i. **Full Denial** - an agency decision not to release any records in response to a FOIA request because the records are exempt in their entirety under one or more of the FOIA exemptions, or because of a procedural reason, such as when no records could be located.
- j. **Median Number** - the middle, not average, number. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the median number is 7.
- k. **Multi-Track Processing** - a system in which simple requests requiring relatively minimal review are placed in one processing track and more voluminous and complex requests are placed in one or more other tracks. Requests granted expedited processing are placed in yet another track. Requests in each track are processed on a first in/first out basis.
- l. **Expedited Processing** - an agency will process a FOIA request on an expedited basis when a requester satisfies the requirements for expedited processing as set forth in the statute and in agency regulations.
- m. **Simple Request** - a FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in its fastest (non-expedited) track based on the low volume and/or simplicity of the records requested.
- n. **Complex Request** - a FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in a slower track based on the high volume and/or complexity of the records requested.
- o. **Partial Grant/Partial Denial** - in response to a FOIA request, an agency decision to disclose portions of the records and to withhold other portions that are exempt under the FOIA, or to otherwise deny a portion of the request for a procedural reason.
- p. **Pending Request or Pending Administrative Appeal** - a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has not taken final action in all respects.
- q. **Perfect Request** - a request for records which reasonably describes such records and is made in accordance with published rules stating the time, place, fees (if any) and procedures to be followed.
- r. **Processed Request or Processed Administrative Appeal** - a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has taken final action in all respects.

- s. **Range in Number of Days** - the lowest and highest number of days to process requests or administrative appeals.
 - t. **Time Limits** - the time period in the statute for an agency to respond to a FOIA request (ordinarily twenty working days from receipt of a perfected FOIA request).
3. Concise descriptions of the nine FOIA exemptions :
- a. **Exemption 1** - classified national defense and foreign relations information
 - b. **Exemption 2** - internal agency rules and practices
 - c. **Exemption 3** - information that is prohibited from disclosure by another federal law
 - d. **Exemption 4** - trade secrets and other confidential business information
 - e. **Exemption 5** - inter-agency or intra-agency communications that are protected by legal privileges
 - f. **Exemption 6** - information involving matters of personal privacy
 - g. **Exemption 7** - records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, to the extent that the production of those records (A) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings, (B) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication, (C) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, (D) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, (E) would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or (F) could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual
 - h. **Exemption 8** - information relating to the supervision of financial institutions
 - i. **Exemption 9** - geological information on wells

3. Agency Component Abbreviations

| Component Abbreviation | Component Name |
|------------------------|---|
| CSB | U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) |

IV. Exemption 3 Statutes

| Statute | Type of Information Withheld | Case Citation | Agency / Component | Number of Times Relied upon by Agency / Component | Total Number of Times Relied upon by Agency Overall |
|---------|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|---|---|
| N/A | N/A | N/A | CSB | 0 | 0 |

V.A. FOIA REQUESTS -- RECEIVED, PROCESSED AND PENDING FOIA REQUESTS

| Agency / Component | Number of Requests Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year | Number of Requests Received in Fiscal Year | Number of Requests Processed in Fiscal Year | Number of Requests Pending as of End of Fiscal Year |
|--------------------|---|--|---|---|
| CSB | 74 | 337 | 294 | 117 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 74 | 337 | 294 | 117 |

After reviewing its database, CSB updated the number of requests pending as of the start of the fiscal year.

V.B.(1). DISPOSITION OF FOIA REQUESTS -- ALL PROCESSED REQUESTS

| Agency / Component | Number of Full Grants | Number of Partial Grants / Partial Denials | Number of Full Denials Based on Exemptions | Number of Full Denials Based on Reasons Other than Exemptions | | | | | | | | | TOTAL |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--|--|---|---|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-------|
| | | | | No Records | All Records Referred to Another Component or Agency | Request Withdrawn | Fee-Related Reason | Records not Reasonably Described | Improper FOIA Request for Other Reason | Not Agency Record | Duplicate Request | Other *Explain in Chart Below | |
| CSB | 1 | 1 | 9 | 54 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 18 | 7 | 0 | 202 | 0 | 294 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 1 | 1 | 9 | 54 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 18 | 7 | 0 | 202 | 0 | 294 |

V.B.(2). DISPOSITION OF FOIA REQUESTS -- "OTHER" REASONS FOR "FULL DENIALS BASED ON REASONS OTHER THAN EXEMPTIONS"

| Agency / Component | Description of "Other" Reasons for Denials from Chart B(1) | Number of Times "Other" Reason Was Relied Upon | TOTAL |
|--------------------|--|--|-------|
| CSB | N/A | 0 | 0 |

| | | | |
|----------------|--|--|---|
| AGENCY OVERALL | | | 0 |
|----------------|--|--|---|

V.B.(3). DISPOSITION OF FOIA REQUESTS -- NUMBER OF TIMES EXEMPTIONS APPLIED

| Agency / Component | Ex. 1 | Ex. 2 | Ex. 3 | Ex. 4 | Ex. 5 | Ex. 6 | Ex. 7(A) | Ex. 7(B) | Ex. 7(C) | Ex. 7(D) | Ex. 7(E) | Ex. 7(F) | Ex. 8 | Ex. 9 |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------|-------|
| CSB | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

VI.A. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS OF INITIAL DETERMINATIONS OF FOIA REQUESTS -- RECEIVED, PROCESSED, AND PENDING ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS

| Agency / Component | Number of Appeals Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year | Number of Appeals Received in Fiscal Year | Number of Appeals Processed in Fiscal Year | Number of Appeals Pending as of End of Fiscal Year |
|--------------------|--|---|--|--|
| CSB | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

VI.C.(2). REASONS FOR DENIAL ON APPEAL -- REASONS OTHER THAN EXEMPTIONS

| Agency / Component | No Records | Records Referred at Initial Request Level | Request Withdrawn | Fee-Related Reason | Records not Reasonably Described | Improper Request for Other Reasons | Not Agency Record | Duplicate Request or Appeal | Request in Litigation | Appeal Based Solely on Denial of Request for Expedited Processing | Other *Explain in chart below |
|--------------------|------------|---|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| CSB | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

VI.C.(3). REASONS FOR DENIAL ON APPEAL -- "OTHER" REASONS

| Agency / Component | Description of "Other" Reasons for Denial on Appeal from Chart C(2) | Number of Times "Other" Reason Was Relied Upon | TOTAL |
|--------------------|---|--|-------|
| CSB | N/A | 0 | 0 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | | | 0 |

VII.C. PROCESSED REQUESTS GRANTED EXPEDITED PROCESSING -- RESPONSE TIME IN DAY INCREMENTS

| Agency / Component | <1-20 Days | 21-40 Days | 41-60 Days | 61-80 Days | 81-100 Days | 101-120 Days | 121-140 Days | 141-160 Days | 161-180 Days | 181-200 Days | 201-300 Days | 301-400 Days | 401+ Days | TOTAL |
|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|-------|
| CSB | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

VII.D. PENDING REQUESTS -- ALL PENDING PERFECTED REQUESTS

| Agency / Component | SIMPLE | | | COMPLEX | | | EXPEDITED PROCESSING | | |
|--------------------|----------------|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| | Number Pending | Median Number of Days | Average Number of Days | Number Pending | Median Number of Days | Average Number of Days | Number Pending | Median Number of Days | Average Number of Days |
| CSB | 67 | 453 | 521 | 2 | 603 | 603 | 1 | 394 | 394 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 67 | 453 | 521 | 2 | 603 | 603 | 1 | 394 | 394 |

VII.E. PENDING REQUESTS -- TEN OLDEST PENDING PERFECTED REQUESTS

| Agency / Component | | 10th Oldest Request | 9th | 8th | 7th | 6th | 5th | 4th | 3rd | 2nd | Oldest Request |
|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------|
| CSB | Date of Receipt | 2019-02-26 | 2019-02-26 | 2018-09-27 | 2018-09-26 | 2018-08-24 | 2018-01-08 | 2018-01-08 | 2017-09-28 | 2017-09-20 | 2016-06-03 |
| | Number of Days Pending | 900 | 900 | 999 | 1000 | 1022 | 1182 | 1182 | 1249 | 1255 | 1581 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | Date of Receipt | 2019-02-26 | 2019-02-26 | 2018-09-27 | 2018-09-26 | 2018-08-24 | 2018-01-08 | 2018-01-08 | 2017-09-28 | 2017-09-20 | 2016-06-03 |
| | Number of Days Pending | 900 | 900 | 999 | 1000 | 1022 | 1182 | 1182 | 1249 | 1255 | 1581 |

VIII.A. REQUESTS FOR EXPEDITED PROCESSING

| Agency / Component | Number Granted | Number Denied | Median Number of Days to Adjudicate | Average Number of Days to Adjudicate | Number Adjudicated Within Ten Calendar Days |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| CSB | 0 | 19 | 36 | 44 | 5 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 0 | 19 | 36 | 44 | 5 |

VIII.B. Requests for Fee Waiver

| Agency / Component | Number Granted | Number Denied | Median Number of Days to Adjudicate | Average Number of Days to Adjudicate |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| CSB | 0 | 10 | <1 | 10.7 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 0 | 10 | <1 | 10.7 |

IX. FOIA Personnel and Costs

| Agency / Component | PERSONNEL | | | COSTS | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| | Number of "Full-Time FOIA Employees" | Number of "Equivalent Full-Time FOIA Employees" | Total Number of "Full-Time FOIA Staff" | Processing Costs | Litigation-Related Costs | Total Costs |
| CSB | 0 | 0.45 | 0.45 | 72331.00 | 3200.00 | 75531.00 |
| AGENCY | 0 | 0.45 | 0.45 | 72331.00 | 3200.00 | 75531.00 |

| | | | | | | |
|---------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| OVERALL | | | | | | |
|---------|--|--|--|--|--|--|

X. Fees Collected for Processing Requests

| Agency / Component | Total Amount of Fees Collected | Percentage of Total Costs |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| CSB | 0.00 | |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 0.00 | 0.0000 |

XI.A. Number of Times Subsection (C) Used

| Agency / Component | Number of Times Subsection Used |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| CSB | 0 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 0 |

XI.B. Number of Subsection (A)(2) Postings

| Agency / Component | Number of Records Posted by the FOIA Office | Number of Records Posted by Program Offices |
|--------------------|---|---|
| CSB | 0 | 12 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 0 | 12 |

XII.A. Backlogs of FOIA Requests and Administrative Appeals

| Agency / Component | Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of Fiscal Year | Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Fiscal Year |
|--------------------|--|---|
| CSB | 70 | 0 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 70 | 0 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | of Days | | | | | | | | | | |
| AGENCY OVERALL | Date | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | Number of Days | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

XII.D.(1). COMPARISON OF NUMBERS OF REQUESTS FROM PREVIOUS AND CURRENT ANNUAL REPORT -- REQUESTS RECEIVED AND PROCESSED

| Agency / Component | NUMBER OF REQUESTS <u>RECEIVED</u> | | NUMBER OF REQUESTS <u>PROCESSED</u> | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| | Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report | Number Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report | Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report | Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report |
| CSB | 179 | 337 | 134 | 294 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 179 | 337 | 134 | 294 |

XII.D.(2). COMPARISON OF NUMBERS OF REQUESTS FROM PREVIOUS AND CURRENT ANNUAL REPORT -- BACKLOGGED REQUESTS

| Agency / Component | Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of the Fiscal Year from Previous Annual Report | Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of the Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report |
|--------------------|--|---|
| CSB | 69 | 70 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 69 | 70 |

XII.E.(1). COMPARISON OF NUMBERS OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS FROM PREVIOUS AND CURRENT ANNUAL REPORT -- APPEALS RECEIVED AND PROCESSED

| Agency / Component | NUMBER OF APPEALS <u>RECEIVED</u> | | NUMBER OF APPEALS <u>PROCESSED</u> | |
|--------------------|---|---|--|--|
| | Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report | Number Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report | Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report | Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report |
| CSB | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

XII.E.(2). COMPARISON OF NUMBERS OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS FROM PREVIOUS AND CURRENT ANNUAL REPORT -- BACKLOGGED APPEALS

| Agency / Component | Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of the Fiscal Year from Previous Annual Report | Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of the Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report |
|--------------------|---|--|
| CSB | 0 | 0 |
| AGENCY OVERALL | 0 | 0 |