

International Boundary and Water Commission

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AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 552 (Pub. L. 90-23, as amended by Pub. L. 93-502 and 99-570).

SOURCE: 55 FR 35898, Sept. 4, 1990, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1102.1 Purpose.

The purpose of this part is to prescribe rules, guidelines and procedures to implement the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552, as amended on November 21, 1974, by Public Law 93-502, and on October 27, 1986, by Public Law 99-570.

§ 1102.2 Definitions.

Act means the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552, as amended.

Commercial-use request refers to a request from or on behalf of one who seeks information for a cause or purpose that furthers the commercial, trade, or profit interests of the requester or person on whose behalf the request is made. In determining whether a requester properly belongs in this category, the Section will consider how the requester will use the documents.

Commissioner means head of the United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico.

Direct costs means those expenditures which the Section actually incurs in searching for and duplicating (and in the case of commercial requesters, reviewing) documents to respond to a FOIA request. Direct costs include, for example, the salary of the employee performing work (the basic rate of pay for the employee plus 16 percent of that rate to cover benefits) and the cost of operating duplicating machinery. Not included in direct costs are overhead expenses such as costs of space, and heating or lighting the facility where the records are stored.

Disclose or disclosure means making records available, on request for exam-

ination and copying, or furnishing a copy of records.

Duplication refers to the process of making a copy of a document in response to a FOIA request. Such copies can take the form of paper, microform, audiovisual materials, or machine-readable documentation. The Section will provide a copy of the material in a form that is usable by the requester unless it is administratively burdensome to do so.

Educational institution refers to a preschool, a public or private elementary or secondary school, an institution of graduate higher education, an institution of undergraduate higher education, an institution of professional education, and an institution of vocational education, which operates a program or programs of scholarly research.

Noncommercial scientific institution refers to an institution that is not operated on a "commercial" basis as that term is referenced above, and which is operated solely for the purpose of conducting scientific research the results of which are not intended to promote any particular product or industry.

Person or *Requester* includes any individual, firm, corporation, organization or other entity.

Records and/or *information* are defined as all books, papers, manuals, maps, photographs, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by the Section under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business or in carrying out its treaty responsibilities and obligations, and preserved or appropriate for preservation by the Section as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the information value of the data in them, but does not include books, magazines or other material acquired solely for library purposes and through other sources, and does not include analyses, computations, or compilations of information not extant at the time of the request. The term "records" does not include objects or articles such as structures, furniture, paintings, sculptures, three-dimensional models, vehicles, and equipment.

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Representative of the news media refers to any person actively gathering news for an entity that is organized and operated to publish or broadcast news to the public. The term “news” means information that is about current events or that would be of current interest to the public. Examples of news media include television or radio stations broadcasting to the public at large, and publishers of periodicals (but only those instances when they can qualify as disseminators of “news”) who make their products available for purchase or subscription by the general public. In the case of “freelance” journalists, they may be regarded as working for a news organization if they can demonstrate a solid basis for expecting publication through that organization even though not actually employed by it.

Request means a letter or other written communication seeking records or information under the Freedom of Information Act.

Review refers to the process of examining documents located in response to a request that is for commercial use to determine if any portion of that document is permitted to be withheld, and processing any document for disclosure (i.e., doing all that is necessary to excise them and otherwise prepare them for release). It does not include time spent resolving general legal or policy issues regarding the application of exemptions.

Search includes all time spent looking for material that is responsive to a request, including page-by-page or line-by-line identification of material within documents. Searches should be performed in the most efficient and least expensive manner so as to minimize costs for both the Section and the requester; for example, line-by-line searches should not be undertaken when it would be more efficient to duplicate the entire document. Note that such activity should be distinguished from “review” of material in determining whether the material is exempt from disclosure. Searches may be done manually or by computer using existing programming.

The *Section* means United States Section, International Boundary and

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Water Commission, United States and Mexico.

All terms used in this part which are defined in 5 U.S.C. 552 shall have the same meaning herein.

§ 1102.3 Procedures for requesting access to records or information.

(a) A request for any information or records shall be addressed to the FOIA Officer, United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission, 4171 North Mesa, suite C-310, El Paso, TX 79902-1422. The envelope and the letter shall be clearly marked “Freedom of Information Request” or “Request for Records,” or the equivalent, to distinguish it from other mail to the Section. If the request is not so marked and addressed, the 10-day time limit described in the Act will not begin to run until the request has been received by the FOIA Officer in the normal course of business. In each instance where a request is received in the normal course of business, the FOIA Officer shall notify the requester that its request was improperly addressed and the date the request was received.

(b) In order for the Section to locate records or information and make them available, it is necessary that it be able to identify the specific record or information sought. Persons wishing to inspect or obtain copies of records or information should, therefore, seek to identify them as fully and accurately as possible. In cases where requests are submitted which are not sufficient to permit identification, the FOIA Officer will endeavor to assist the persons seeking the records or information in filling in necessary details. In most cases, however, persons seeking records or information will find that time taken in trying to identify materials in the beginning is well worth their while in enabling the Section to respond promptly to their request.

(c) A person submitting a request should—

(1) Indicate the specific event or action, if any or if known, to which the request has reference.

(2) Designate the Division, Branch, or Project Office of the Section which may be responsible for or may have