



United States Consumer Product Safety Commission

Freedom of Information Act

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2021

I. BASIC INFORMATION REGARDING THE REPORT

1. Contact for questions about the report: Ms. Abioye E. Mosheim, Chief FOIA Officer, Assistant General Counsel, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Office of the General Counsel, Division of the Secretariat, 4330 East West Highway, Bethesda, Maryland 20814- 4408, Telephone: 800-638-2772, Facsimile: 301-504-0127, Email: amosheim@cpsc.gov.
2. Web address for this report: <https://www.cpsc.gov/Newsroom/FOIA/Reports/>.
3. A paper copy of the report is available from CPSC's Office of the General Counsel, Division of the Secretariat at the address above.

II. MAKING A FOIA REQUEST

1. All Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests received by the CPSC are processed at CPSC's headquarters. The address is: Freedom of Information Act Request, Chief FOIA Officer, Office of the General Counsel, Division of the Secretariat, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 4330 East West Highway, Bethesda, Maryland 20814-4408. Telephone: 800- 638-2772, Facsimile: 301-504-0127, Email: cpscfoiarequests@cpsc.gov or via the FOIA Public Access Link (PAL) at <https://foiapal.cpsc.gov/palMain.aspx>.
2. Requests that are denied or partially denied usually fall under Exemptions 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Exemption 3 denials often relate to provisions of Section 6 the Consumer Product Safety Act ("CPSA"), which restricts the release of:
 - Trade secrets, confidential or proprietary business information;
 - Information that identifies manufacturers or private labelers of consumer products

- unless CPSC has taken prescribed statutory steps; and
- Information required to be reported by manufacturers to CPSC under Section 37 of the CPSA.

In addition, Section 25(c) of the CPSA restricts release of information that could identify any injured person or any person treating any injured person without consent of the individual so identified.

The type of information most often withheld under Exemptions 4, 5, 6 and 7 involves confidential business information, inter and intra-agency communications that are protected by legal privileges, information implicating privacy considerations, and enforcement-related records, respectively.

3. Section 6 of CPSA, which applies to FOIA requests, generally requires CPSC to notify manufacturers or private labelers before disclosing information from which their identities can be readily ascertained by the public. This statutory provision specifies time periods for the advance notice and time periods for the manufacturer's or private labeler's response. Adherence to the notification requirements of Section 6 of the CPSA may delay CPSC's responses to FOIA requests for information within the scope of Section 6.

III. ACRONYMS, DEFINITIONS AND EXEMPTIONS

1. Agency-Specific Acronyms or Other Terms.
 - a. CPSA • Consumer Product Safety Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2055, *et seq.*.
 - b. CPSC or Commission • Consumer Product Safety Commission.
2. Definitions 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 or component within the same 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 or component within the same 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), 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 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 use 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 entireties 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 that 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 20 working days from receipt of a perfected FOIA request).

3. The FOIA Exemptions from Disclosure:

- a. **Exemption 1:** classified national defense and foreign relations information
- b. **Exemption 2:** information that is related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of the agency
- 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
CPSC	Consumer Product Safety Commission

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
15 U.S.C. 2074(c)	Information that identifies persons or those treating injured persons, absent consent	N/A	CPSC	67	67
15 U.S.C. §§ 2055(a)(2), 2055(b)(1), 2055(b)(5)	Certain information reported to, or otherwise obtained by the Consumer Product Safety Commission which either contains or relates to a trade secret or is "subject to section 552(b)(4) of Title 5"	Consumer Prod. Safety Comm'n v. GTE Sylvania, Inc., 447 U.S. 102, 122 (1980) (15 U.S.C. § 2055(b)(1)); Mulloy v. Consumer Prods. Safety Comm'n, No. 85-3720, 1986 WL 17283, at *1 (6th Cir. July 22, 1986) (per curiam) (unpublished disposition) (15 U.S.C. § 2055(a)(2) and 15 U.S.C. § 2055(b)(5)); Reliance Elec. Co. v. Consumer Prod. Safety Comm'n, No. 87-1478, slip op. at 16-17 (D.D.C. Sept. 19, 1989) (15 U.S.C. § 2055(b)(5)).	CPSC	108	108

15 U.S.C. 2055(e)(1)	Information submitted under statutory reporting requirement for certain consumer products involved in product liability actions	N/A	CPSC	1	1
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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
CPSC	543	596	548	591
AGENCY OVERALL	543	596	548	591

After reviewing its database, CPSC updated the number of requests pending at the start of the Fiscal Year 2020.

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	
CPSC	92	149	98	87	9	29	0	31	7	0	18	28	548
AGENCY OVERALL	92	149	98	87	9	29	0	31	7	0	18	28	548

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
CPSC	Unable to Locate or Contact Requester	24	28
	Directed Requester to Publicly Available Information	4	
AGENCY OVERALL			28

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
CPSC	0	4	116	58	45	123	78	0	27	0	2	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	4	116	58	45	123	78	0	27	0	2	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
CPSC	0	16	16	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	16	16	0

VI.B. DISPOSITION OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS -- ALL PROCESSED APPEALS

Agency / Component	Number Affirmed on Appeal	Number Partially Affirmed & Partially Reversed/Remanded on Appeal	Number Completely Reversed/Remanded on Appeal	Number of Appeals Closed for Other Reasons	TOTAL
CPSC	4	4	3	5	16
AGENCY OVERALL	4	4	3	5	16

VI.C.(1). REASONS FOR DENIAL ON APPEAL -- 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
CPSC	0	0	4	1	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	4	1	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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
CPSC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	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
CPSC	N/A	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL			0

VI.C.(4). RESPONSE TIME FOR ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS

Agency / Component	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
CPSC	19	28.65	19	63
AGENCY OVERALL	19	28.65	19	63

VI.C.(5). TEN OLDEST PENDING ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS

Agency / Component		10th Oldest Appeal	9th	8th	7th	6th	5th	4th	3rd	2nd	Oldest Appeal
CPSC	Date of Appeal	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number of Days Pending	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	Date of Appeal	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number of Days Pending	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

VII.A. FOIA REQUESTS -- RESPONSE TIME FOR ALL PROCESSED PERFECTED REQUESTS

Agency / Component	SIMPLE				COMPLEX				EXPEDITED PROCESSING			
	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
CPSC	15	92.79	<1	857	31	142.36	<1	1166	13	17.8	6	82
AGENCY OVERALL	15	92.79	<1	857	31	142.36	<1	1166	13	17.8	6	82

VII.B. PROCESSED REQUESTS -- RESPONSE TIME FOR PERFECTED REQUESTS IN WHICH INFORMATION WAS GRANTED

Agency / Component	SIMPLE				COMPLEX				EXPEDITED PROCESSING			
	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
CPSC	32	101.82	<1	857	68	180.44	3	1166	82	82	82	82
AGENCY OVERALL	32	101.82	<1	857	68	180.44	3	1166	82	82	82	82

VII.C. PROCESSED SIMPLE REQUESTS -- 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
CPSC	79	14	8	4	4	4	3	1	2	3	2	6	11	141
AGENCY OVERALL	79	14	8	4	4	4	3	1	2	3	2	6	11	141

VII.C. PROCESSED COMPLEX REQUESTS -- 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
CPSC	145	52	25	24	10	2	7	7	2	10	17	12	46	359
AGENCY OVERALL	145	52	25	24	10	2	7	7	2	10	17	12	46	359

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

[illegible]

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
CPSC	102	429.5	421	456	390.5	402	1	621	621
AGENCY OVERALL	102	429.5	421	456	390.5	402	1	621	621

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

Agency / Component		10th Oldest Request	9th	8th	7th	6th	5 th	4th	3rd	2nd	Oldest Request
CPSC	Date of Receipt	2017-11-20	2017-11-17	2017-11-14	2017-11-09	2017-11-09	2017-11-08	2017-11-07	2017-10-25	2017-10-23	2016-11-18
	Number of Days Pending	971	972	975	977	977	978	979	988	990	1222
AGENCY OVERALL	Date of Receipt	2017-11-20	2017-11-17	2017-11-14	2017-11-09	2017-11-09	2017-11-08	2017-11-07	2017-10-25	2017-10-23	2016-11-18
	Number of Days Pending	971	972	975	977	977	978	979	988	990	1222

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
CPSC	23	88	2	7.92	105
AGENCY OVERALL	23	88	2	7.92	105

VIII.B. REQUESTS FOR FEE WAIVER

Agency / Component	Number Granted	Number Denied	Median Number of Days to Adjudicate	Average Number of Days to Adjudicate
CPSC	20	43	9	8.71
AGENCY OVERALL	20	43	9	8.71

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
CPSC	7	1.00	8.00	5557.09	23300.00	28857.09
AGENCY OVERALL	7	1.00	8.00	5557.09	23300.00	28857.09

X. FEES COLLECTED FOR PROCESSING REQUESTS

Agency / Component	Total Amount of Fees Collected	Percentage of Total Costs
CPSC	2182.09	39.2700
AGENCY OVERALL	2182.09	39.2700

CPSC's updated fee regulations went into effect March 1, 2021, and we started assessing fees for requests received that day and afterwards.

XI.A. NUMBER OF TIMES SUBSECTION (C) USED

Agency / Component	Number of Times Subsection Used
CPSC	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
CPSC	230	230
AGENCY OVERALL	230	230

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
CPSC	465	0
AGENCY OVERALL	465	0

XII. B. CONSULTATIONS ON FOIA REQUESTS -- RECEIVED, PROCESSED, AND PENDING CONSULTATIONS

Agency / Component	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that were <u>Pending</u> at the Agency as of <u>Start</u> of the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations <u>Received</u> from Other Agencies During the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that were <u>Processed</u> by the Agency During the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that were <u>Pending</u> at the Agency as of <u>End</u> of the Fiscal Year
CPSC	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	0	0

XII.C. CONSULTATIONS ON FOIA REQUESTS -- TEN OLDEST CONSULTATIONS RECEIVED FROM OTHER AGENCIES AND PENDING AT THE AGENCY

Agency / Component		10th Oldest Consultation	9th	8th	7th	6th	5th	4th	3rd	2nd	Oldest Consultation
CPSC	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
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
CPSC	460	596	506	548
AGENCY OVERALL	460	596	506	548

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
CPSC	407	465
AGENCY OVERALL	407	465

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
CPSC	13	16	14	16
AGENCY OVERALL	13	16	14	16

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
CPSC	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0