

August 18, 2014

National Archives and Records Administration
Office of Government Information Services
Attention: FOIA Advisory Committee
8601 Adelphi Road - OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001

To the Committee Members:

I would like to bring the following issue to the Committee's attention: inaccurate points of contact and other information on the FOIA.gov website. The outdated information includes email addresses, failure to reflect agency structural changes and mergers, bad website links, names of responsible FOIA staff, and mailing addresses. I estimate from spot checks that as many as 25 – 30 percent of the agency listings have outdated contact information. However, I am not personally prepared to provide a detailed listing of which agency contact data is incorrect.

In short, much of the various contact information for Departmental, component and agency FOIA Offices on the FOIA.gov website is out of date and inaccurate, and these errors are becoming more pervasive over time. One possible cause of these errors may be because no one seems to be specifically tasked with updating and correcting outdated information on the FOIA.gov website. The Department of Justice Office of Information Policy position has been that each agency is responsible for maintaining accurate information, but the agencies have not always been proactive about checking the FOIA.gov site and providing corrected and updated information.

As you know, the FOIA.gov website provides a point of reference to locate an agency's FOIA Office, public FOIA Liaison, and agency FOIA website.

<http://www.foia.gov/report-makerequest.html>

At the bottom of the page is a link to a two-page "All Agencies" directory with a more comprehensive set of agencies' FOIA contact information. The data in this listing is in many cases incorrect, adding barriers to submitting a public records request.

I ask that the Advisory Committee consider this challenging FOIA problem and encourage a prompt and efficient solution to providing more accurate data to the public.

Sincerely,

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