

Annual Report on the *Access to Information Act*

2024-2025



Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Canada 

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| 1) Introduction | 3 |
| 2) Organizational Structure..... | 4 |
| 3) Delegation Order | 4 |
| 4) Performance 2024-2025 | 4 |
| 5) Staff Training and Awareness | 8 |
| 6) Policies, Guidelines and Procedures..... | 8 |
| 7) Initiatives and Projects to Improve Access to Information | 9 |
| 8) Summary of Key Issues and Actions Taken on Complaints | 9 |
| 9) Proactive Publication Under Part 2 of the ATIA..... | 10 |
| 10) Monitoring Compliance..... | 13 |
| Appendix A: Delegation Order | 14 |

© His Majesty the King in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Health, 2025.
Catalogue No. A101-30E-PDF
ISBN 2818-8136
Aussi disponible en français.

1) Introduction

The [*Access to Information Act*](#) (hereafter referred to as the *Act*) gives Canadian citizens as well as people and corporations present in Canada, the right to access records under the control of federal government institutions with limited and specific exceptions. The *Act* is intended to complement existing procedures for access to Government information and not to limit, in any way, information that is normally available to the public.

Section 94 of the *Act* requires the heads of federal government institutions to submit a report to Parliament on their institution's administration of the *Act* for each fiscal year. This report, along with all Access to Information annual reports, is tabled in Parliament in accordance with section 94 of the *Act* and describes how the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) administered the *Act* for fiscal year 2024-25.

As part of its commitment to openness and transparency, the CFIA recognizes the right to access information in government records and makes every reasonable effort to assist those who request access to information.

Mandate of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Mitigating risks to food safety is the CFIA's highest priority, and the health and safety of Canadians is the driving force behind the design and development of CFIA programs. The CFIA, in collaboration and partnership with industry, consumers, and federal, provincial and municipal organizations, continues to work towards protecting Canadians from preventable health risks related to food and zoonotic diseases.

The current and future economic prosperity of the Canadian agriculture and forestry sectors relies on a healthy and sustainable animal and plant resource base. As such, the CFIA is continually improving its program design and delivery in the animal health and plant resource areas in order to minimize and manage risks. In an effort to protect the natural environment from invasive animal and plant diseases and plant pests, the CFIA also performs extensive work related to the protection of environmental biodiversity.

Non-operational Subsidiaries

The CFIA did not have any non-operational subsidiaries during this reporting period.

2) Organizational Structure

Administration of the *Act*

Administration of the *Act* within the CFIA is the primary responsibility of the Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) Office, which is part of the Agency's Policy and Programs Branch. The ATIP Office processes all requests for information and coordinates all activities related to the *Act*, along with associated regulations, directives and guidelines. Proactive publication, in accordance with Part 2 of the *Act*, is a shared responsibility between multiple stakeholders across the Agency. For a breakdown of the group(s) and/or position(s) responsible for meeting each applicable proactive publication requirement under Part 2 of the *Access to Information Act*, see the section "Proactive Publication under Part 2 of the ATIA" below. The CFIA was not party to any agreements under section 96 of the *Act* during this reporting period.

Resources

The ATIP Office is headed by a director who reports to the Corporate Secretary. During the reporting period there were 16.24 full-time equivalents, 0.550 students, and 0.815 persons (contracted consultants) dedicated to the ATIP Office. In addition to the ATIP Office resources, there are also dedicated ATIP advisor positions in the core branches who report on branch-related ATIP issues and activities. These branch advisors work with the ATIP Office to ensure an efficient and effective process to respond to applicants in a timely manner.

An estimated \$1,219K in salary costs and \$367.6K in operating costs were incurred by the ATIP Office to administer the *Access to Information Act* for the reporting period. These costs do not include resources within each branch (such as the Branch ATIP advisors), nor any other expenditures incurred by the branches and program areas to meet the requirements of the *Act*.

3) Delegation order

Delegation orders set out what powers, duties, and functions for the administration of the *Access to Information Act* have been delegated by the head of the institution and to whom. A copy of the CFIA's most recent delegation order can be found in Appendix A of this report.

4) Performance 2024-2025

The CFIA received 271 new requests under the *Act* between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025. There were 69 outstanding requests from the previous year, bringing the total to 340 requests. Of the 340 requests, 210 were processed during the reporting period, and 130 were carried forward to 2025-26. Of the 210 requests completed, 17 exceeded 1,000 pages and included three

requests greater than 5,000 but less than 10,000 pages, one request greater than 10,000 but less than 20,000 pages and two requests over 30,000 pages.

The ATIP Office reviewed a total of 105,602 pages during the reporting period, of which 29,718 were released. The ATIP Office’s service standard decreased to approximately 80% of requests closed within legislated timelines. This represents an 8% decrease from the previous reporting period.

The following table outlines the cycle of ATI requests at CFIA for the last five fiscal years:

| Number of Requests... | Fiscal Year | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 |
| Received | 231 | 219 | 220 | 237 | 271 |
| Completed | 216 | 213 | 240 | 223 | 210 |
| Outstanding from previous FY | 54 | 69 | 75 | 55 | 69 |
| Carried forward | 69 | 75 | 55 | 69 | 130 |

The following represents a breakdown of the sources of requests received during the fiscal year:

- 70 requests from business (26%)
- 42 requests from media (15%)
- 34 requests from organizations (13%)
- 76 requests from the public (28%)
- Five (5) requests from academia (2%)
- 44 declined to self-identify (16%)

Completion Times and Extensions

The 210 requests completed in 2024-25 were processed within the following timeframes:

- 92 within 30 days or less (44%)
- 41 within 31 to 60 days (20%)
- 38 within 61 to 120 days (18%)
- 17 within 121 to 180 days (8%)
- 20 within 181 to 365 days (9%)
- 42 over 365 days (1%)

The CFIA was able to close 44% of requests within the first 30 days; this represents a 5% decrease from the last reporting period where 49% were closed within the first 30 days.

It was necessary to extend the 30 calendar day time limit for 104 requests. This represents just under half of the requests closed in this reporting period. All extensions were calculated and applied as prescribed in the *Act*. Of the 132 extensions taken, 37 were required for third-party consultations pursuant to section 27 of the *Act*, 70 for interference with operations and another 25 for consultations with federal or provincial authorities. The CFIA monitors performance through weekly updates to senior CFIA officials.

Disposition of Completed Requests

There were 210 requests completed in 2024-25. The disposition of the requests is as follows:

- 25 were fully disclosed (12%)
- 111 were partially disclosed (53%)
- Four (4) were fully exempted (2%)
- None were fully excluded (0%)
- 52 where no records existed (25%)
- 18 were abandoned by the applicants (8%)

Exemptions and Exclusions

The CFIA invoked exemptions pursuant to the *Act* a total of 281 times. The exemptions were invoked as follows:

- Seven (7) instances for records dealing with information obtained in confidence (s. 13)
- Zero (0) for records concerning federal-provincial affairs (s. 14)
- 15 for records deemed injurious to the conduct of international affairs (s. 15)
- 17 for records concerning law enforcement and investigations (s. 16)
- Nine (9) for safety of individuals (s. 17)
- One (1) for economic interests of Canada (s. 18)
- 80 for records containing personal information (s. 19)
- 106 for records containing third-party business information (s. 20)
- 37 for records relating to the internal decision-making processes of government (s. 21)
- Zero (0) for records relating to testing procedures, tests and/or audits (s. 22)
- Eight (8) for records containing solicitor-client privilege (s. 23)
- One (1) for statutory prohibition against disclosure (s.24)

Two (2) exclusions were invoked for published material. No exclusions were invoked during the reporting period for Confidences of the King's Privy Council for Canada.

Active Requests Carried Over

The CFIA carried over 130 requests under the *Access to Information Act* to the 2025-26 fiscal year. Of those 130 requests, 95 were carried over within legislated timelines and 35 were carried over beyond the legislated timelines. The following table provides a breakdown of carried-over requests by the fiscal year in which they were received:

| Reporting period requests carried over were received | Requests carried over within legislated timelines | Requests carried over beyond legislated timelines |
|--|---|---|
| 2024-25 | 84 | 23 |
| 2023-24 | 10 | 8 |
| 2022-23 | 0 | 3 |
| 2021-22 | 1 | 1 |

None of the requests carried over were received prior to fiscal year 2021-22.

Active Complaints

The CFIA had 3 active complaints at the end of the reporting period. All of the active complaints were received during the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Consultations

During the reporting period, the CFIA received 61 consultations from other Government institutions and organizations concerning the release of CFIA records. This represents a slight increase from last year, during which 58 consultations were received. Of the 61 consultations received, 48 were received from other Government of Canada institutions and 13 were from other organizations. The CFIA completed 64 consultations, which required the review of 4,385 pages.

Completion times for consultations received from other Government of Canada institutions were as follows:

- Three (3) within 15 days or less (6%)
- 22 within 16 to 30 days (43%)
- 17 within 31 to 60 days (33%)
- Seven (7) within 61 to 120 days (14%)
- Zero (0) within 121 to 180 days (0%)

- Two (2) within 181 to 365 days (4%)
- Zero (0) over 365 days (0%)

Completion times for consultations received from other organizations were as follows:

- One (1) within 15 days or less (8%)
- Nine (9) within 16 to 30 days (69%)
- Three (3) within 31 to 60 days (23%)
- Zero (0) within 61 to 120 days (0%)
- Zero (0) within 121 to 180 days (0%)
- Zero (0) within 181 to 365 days (0%)
- Zero (0) over 365 days (0%)

Court Cases

Two new applications were filed with the Federal Court of Canada and none were closed during the reporting period. The new applications were filed pursuant to section 44 of the *Act*. Section 44 allows a third party, to whom the head of a government institution must give notice regarding the disclosure of a record, to apply to the Court for a review of the matter.

5) Staff Training and Awareness

The ATIP Office delivered 5 virtual and/or in-person training sessions to 157 employees during fiscal year 2024-25. The purpose of these training sessions was to increase awareness of the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*, clarify requirements under the *Act*, and highlight processes that facilitate the CFIA in meeting its obligations. General ATIP training remains a mandatory requirement for all CFIA employees.

6) Policies, Guidelines and Procedures

The CFIA continuously works on process improvements in order to provide greater oversight and accountability for ATIP activities. The activities related to ATIP are reviewed semi-annually and weekly updates regarding request volumes and performance are provided to the Offices of both the Ministers of Health and Agriculture and Agri-food, CFIA's senior management cadre, and key internal partners. No new policies, guidelines, or procedures were implemented during the reporting period.

7) Initiatives and Projects to Improve Access to Information

The CFIA is in the process of testing its new request processing software that was acquired to enhance its ability to respond to requests under the *Act*. The new software includes a suite of modernized tools which should allow the Agency to maintain or increase its current service standard in responding to requests. Full implementation of the new software will be completed by the third quarter of 2024-25. The CFIA will continue to run its current software in parallel with the new system for a period of time.

The ATIP Office continued to increase its use of various electronic tools, including the ATIP Online Management Tool and ePost Connect to transfer response packages to requesters in electronic fashion. The use of these tools allows requesters to access their response packages more quickly. Moreover, the use of secure electronic tools allows the ATIP Office to communicate more quickly and efficiently with requesters as well as reduce the transit time for consultations with third parties and other Government departments.

8) Summary of Key Issues and Actions Taken on Complaints

The CFIA received seven (7) complaints from the Office of the Information Commissioner in 2024-25. This represents a decrease of two (2) complaints over the previous reporting period, in which nine (9) complaints were received. The reasons cited for the new complaints are as follows:

- Two (2) concerned the exemption of information
- Two (2) concerned a delay
- Three (3) concerned time extensions

Between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2025, 10 complaints were completed, including complaints carried forward from previous years. Of the 10 complaints closed, one was discontinued, seven were resolved as “ceased to investigate”, and two were deemed well founded.

The well-founded complaints both pertained to time extensions taken and both complaints resulted in orders from the Information Commissioner. For the first complaint, the CFIA was in a position to comply with the order within 15 days of receipt by providing the final response to the requester. For the second complaint, the CFIA continues to process the records pertaining to this request and intends to comply with the Information Commissioner’s order to release by early 2028.

9) Proactive Publication under Part 2 of the ATIA

| Legislative Requirement | Section of ATIA | Publication Timeline | Does requirement apply to your institution? (Y/N) | Internal group(s) or position(s) responsible for fulfilling requirement | % of proactive publication requirements published within legislated timelines | Link to web page where published |
|--|-----------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| Apply to all Government Institutions as defined in section 3 of the <i>Access to Information Act</i> | | | | | | |
| Travel Expenses | 82 | Within 30 days after the end of the month of reimbursement | Yes | Corporate Accounting and Services | 83% | Government Travel Expenses |
| Hospitality Expenses | 83 | Within 30 days after the end of the month of reimbursement | Yes | Corporate Accounting and Services | 83% | Hospitality Expenses |
| Reports tabled in Parliament | 84 | Within 30 days after tabling | Yes | ATIP Office Policy and Regulatory Affairs Directorate Financial and Procurement Services | 100% | Reports to Parliament - inspection.canada.ca |
| Apply to government entities or Departments, agencies, and other bodies subject to the Act and listed in Schedules I, I.1, or II of the <i>Financial Administration Act</i> | | | | | | |
| Contracts over \$10,000 | 86 | Q1-3: Within 30 days after the quarter Q4: Within 60 days after the quarter | Yes | Monitoring and Controls Team | 100% | Government Contracts over \$10,000 |
| Grants & Contributions over \$25,000 | 87 | Within 30 days after the quarter | Yes | Legislative Affairs Science Strategies and Innovation | 100% | Grants and Contributions |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------|--|-----|-----------------------|----------------|--|
| Packages of briefing materials prepared for new or incoming deputy heads or equivalent | 88(a) | Within 120 days after appointment | Yes | Horizontal Policy | 100% | Proactive disclosure at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency - inspection.canada.ca |
| Titles and reference numbers of memoranda prepared for a deputy head or equivalent, that is received by their office | 88(b) | Within 30 days after the end of the month received | Yes | President's Office | 85% | Briefing Note Titles and Numbers |
| Packages of briefing materials prepared for a deputy head or equivalent's appearance before a committee of Parliament | 88(c) | Within 120 days after appearance | Yes | Parliamentary Affairs | 100% | Open Government Portal |
| Applies to government institutions that are departments named in Schedule I to the <i>Financial Administration Act</i> or portions of the core public administration named in Schedule IV to that Act (i.e. government institutions for which Treasury Board is the employer) | | | | | | |
| Reclassification of positions | 85 | Within 30 days after the quarter | No | Not applicable | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Apply to Ministers' Offices (therefore apply to any institution that performs proactive publication on behalf of a Minister's Office) | | | | | | |
| Packages of briefing materials prepared by a government institution for new or incoming ministers | 74(a) | Within 120 days after appointment | No | Not applicable | Not applicable | Not applicable |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------|---|----|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Titles and reference numbers of memoranda prepared by a government institution for the minister, that is received by their office | 74(b) | Within 30 days after the end of the month received | No | Not applicable | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Package of question period notes prepared by a government institution for the minister and in use on the last sitting day of the House of Commons in June and December | 74(c) | Within 30 days after last sitting day of the House of Common in June and December | No | Not applicable | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Packages of briefing materials prepared by a government institution for a minister's appearance before a committee of Parliament | 74(d) | Within 120 days after appearance | No | Not applicable | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Travel Expenses | 75 | Within 30 days after the end of the month of reimbursement | No | Not applicable | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Hospitality Expenses | 76 | Within 30 days after the end of the month of reimbursement | No | Not applicable | Not applicable | Not applicable |

| | | | | | | |
|--|----|--|----|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Contracts over \$10,000 | 77 | Q1-3: Within 30 days after the quarter Q4: Within 60 days after the quarter | No | Not applicable | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Ministers' Offices Expenses Note: This consolidated report is currently published by TBS on behalf of all institutions. | 78 | Within 120 days after the fiscal year | No | Not applicable | Not applicable | Not applicable |

10) Monitoring Compliance

The CFIA monitors the time taken to process access to information requests through weekly updates to senior management, including the President, on files closed by the ATIP Office. These updates include the dates requests were received, the due date, and the date each file was closed. Also included are the number of files past their legislated due date.

Analysts are required to confer with their team leader or manager prior to taking lengthy extensions to explore options for reducing the required extension. Options can include having discussions with requesters to identify time-saving measures (e.g. clarification of the scope of requests) and review to determine if (third-party, inter-institutional, inter-governmental) consultations can be reduced or eliminated. When it is clear that consultations cannot be eliminated, a case-by-case assessment of the need to consult with other parties is undertaken and the team leader or manager is engaged. These activities are done on a continuous basis as a part of the everyday work of the ATIP Office.

The ATIP Office is engaged to review material intended for pro-active publication in accordance with Part 2 of the Act as well as additional pro-active publication not required by the Act. These reviews are done in the spirit of the Act to ensure information proposed for publication does not contain information subject to exemption were it requested under Part 1 of the Act. The reviews are also a measure to ensure accurate, timely, and complete publication of proactively published information. Ultimately, each internal group partaking in pro-active publication under Part 2 is responsible for monitoring compliance with the provisions of the Act.

Appendix A: Delegation Order

Access to Information Act and Privacy Act Delegation Orders

The President of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, pursuant to section 95 of the *Access to Information Act* and section 73 of the *Privacy Act*, hereby designates the persons holding the positions set out in the schedule hereto, or the persons occupying on an acting basis those positions, to exercise the powers, duties and functions of the President as the head of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, under the provisions of the Acts and related regulations set out in the schedule opposite each position. This designation replaces all previous delegation orders.

En vertu de l'article 95 de la *Loi sur l'accès à l'information* et de l'article 73 de la *Loi sur la protection des renseignements personnels*, le Président de l'Agence canadienne d'inspection des aliments délègue aux titulaires des postes mentionnés à l'annexe ci-après, ainsi qu'aux personnes occupant à titre intérimaire les-dits postes, les attributions dont il est, en qualité de responsable d'une institution fédérale, investie par les articles des lois mentionnées en regard de chaque poste. Le présent décret de délégation remplace et annule tout décret antérieur.

Schedule / Annexe

| Position | <i>Access to Information Act and Regulations / Loi sur l'accès à l'information et règlements</i> | <i>Privacy Act and Regulations / Loi sur la protection des renseignements personnels et règlements</i> |
|---|---|---|
| Executive Vice-President / Premier vice-président | Full authority / Autorité absolue | Full authority / Autorité absolue |
| Vice-President and Associate Vice-President, Policy and Programs (PPB) / Vice-présidente et Vice-présidente-associée, Politiques et programmes (DGPP) | Full authority / Autorité absolue | Full authority / Autorité absolue |
| Corporate Secretary, PPB / Directrice principale, Secrétariat corporatif, DGPP | Full authority / Autorité absolue | Full authority / Autorité absolue |
| Director, Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP), PPB / Directeur, Accès à l'information et protection des renseignements personnels (AIPRP), DGPP | Full authority / Autorité absolue | Full authority / Autorité absolue |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Operations Manager, ATIP, PPB / Gestionnaire des opérations, AIPRP, DGPP | Full authority / Autorité absolue | Sections of the Act: / Articles de la Loi : 8(4), 14, 15, 17(2)(b), 17(3)(b), 18(2), 19(1), 19(2), 20, 21, 22, 22.3, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33(2) and / et 72(1) |
| Privacy Manager, ATIP, PPB / Gestionnaire de protection des renseignements personnels, AIPRP, DGPP | Full authority / Autorité absolue | Sections of the Act: / Articles de la Loi : 8(2)(c), 8(2)(d), 8(2)(g), 8(2)(j), 8(2)(l), 8(4), 8(5), 9(1), 9(4), 10, 14, 15, 17(2)(b), 17(3)(b), 18(2), 19(1), 19(2), 20, 21, 22, 22.3, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33(2), 35(4) and / et 72(1) |
| Team Leader, ATIP, PPB / Chef d'équipe, AIPRP, DGPP | Full authority / Autorité absolue | Sections of the Act: / Articles de la Loi : 8(4), 14, 15, 17(2)(b), 17(3)(b), 18(2), 19(1), 19(2), 20, 21, 22, 22.3, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33(2) and / et 72(1) |
| Senior Privacy Advisor, ATIP, PPB / Conseiller principal de protection de la vie privée, AIPRP, DGPP | Sections of the Act: / Articles de la Loi : 4(2.1), 7, 9(1), 9(2), 11(2), 11(3), 11(4), 11(5), 27(1), 27(4), 28(1), 33 and / et 35(2) Sections of the regulations: / Articles des règlements : 7(2) and / et 7(3) | Sections of the Act: / Articles de la Loi : 8(2)(c), 8(2)(d), 8(2)(g), 8(2)(j), 8(2)(l), 8(4), 8(5), 9(1), 9(4), 10, 14, 15, 17(2)(b), 17(3)(b), 18(2), 19(1), 19(2), 20, 21, 22, 22.3, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33(2), 35(4) and / et 72(1) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Senior Advisor, ATIP, PPB / Conseiller principal, AIPRP, DGPP | <p>Sections of the Act: / Articles de la Loi :</p> <p>4(2.1), 7, 9(1), 9(2), 11(2), 11(3), 11(4), 11(5), 27(1), 27(4), 28(1), 33 and / et 35(2)</p> <p>Sections of the regulations: / Articles des règlements :</p> <p>7(2) and / et 7(3)</p> | <p>Sections of the Act: / Articles de la Loi :</p> <p>8(4), 15 and / et 33(2)</p> |
| Senior Analyst, ATIP, PPB / Analyste principal, AIPRP, DGPP | <p>Sections of the Act: / Articles de la Loi :</p> <p>4(2.1), 7, 9(1), 9(2), 11(2), 11(3), 11(4), 11(5), 27(1), 27(4), 28(1), 33 and / et 35(2)</p> <p>Sections of the regulations: / Articles des règlements :</p> <p>7(2) and / et 7(3)</p> | <p>Sections of the Act: / Articles de la Loi :</p> <p>8(4), 15 and / et 33(2)</p> |
| Analyst, ATIP, PPB / Analyste, AIPRP, DGPP | <p>Sections of the Act: / Articles de la Loi :</p> <p>4(2.1), 7, 9(1), 9(2), 11(2), 11(3), 11(4), 11(5), 27(1), 27(4), 28(1), 33 and / et 35(2)</p> <p>Sections of the regulations: / Articles des règlements :</p> <p>7(2) and / et 7(3)</p> | <p>Sections of the Act: / Articles de la Loi :</p> <p>8(4), 15 and / et 33(2)</p> |

Paul MacKinnon, President, Canadian Food Inspection Agency /
Président, Agence canadienne d'inspection des aliments