

# Exhibit 15



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
**BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL**  
**5720 INTEGRITY DRIVE**  
**MILLINGTON TN 38055-0000**

5720  
PERS 00J6/20210015  
March 31, 2021

Ms. Nate Jones  
The Washington Post  
301 K Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20071-7403

Dear Mr. Jones:

SUBJECT: YOUR FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) REQUEST

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request of October 9, 2020. You seek a copy of all application records for Foreign Government Employment (FGE) pertaining to retired or former U.S. Navy military personnel from January 1, 2015 to the date of request processing. Your FOIA request number is 2021-000245 and FOIA correspondence file number is 20210015.

A copy of some responsive documentation is enclosed. A second and final batch of responsive documentation will be provided to you on or near the end of May 2021.

Portions of the provided documents are withheld under the 5 U.S.C. § 552 (b) (4) exemption which protects trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person [that is] privileged or confidential. Disclosure of this information would cause substantial competitive harm to the company and, therefore, are exempt from disclosure.

Portions of documents contain personally identifiable information (PII), such as the names, dates of birth, and social security numbers of individuals. This information is exempt from disclosure under 5 U.S.C. § 552(b) (6), since release of such information would result in a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Portions of documents containing deliberative process information are exempt from disclosure under FOIA exemption 5 [5 U.S.C. § 552(b) (5)]. Disclosure would significantly inhibit the free and frank opinions, recommendations, advice, subjective evaluations, and other deliberative communications in future similar decision-making processes.

I am the official responsible for the partial denial of your request. You have the right to an appeal. Should you wish to submit an appeal, it must be received within 90 calendar days

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from the date of this letter. Please provide a letter requesting an appeal and include a copy of your initial request and a copy of this letter of partial denial. You are encouraged (though not required) to provide an explanation why you believe the redactions were inappropriate or our search was inadequate. Also, please provide a copy of your appeal letter to us at Bureau of Naval Personnel, PERS Code 00J6, 5720 Integrity Drive, Millington, TN 38055.

There are two ways to file an appeal—through FOIAonline or by mail.

1. Through FOIAonline. This will work only if you set up an account on FOIAonline before you make the request that you would like to appeal. To set up an account, go to FOIAonline (this is a website that will appear as the top hit if you search the internet for "FOIAonline"), click "Create Account" (a link located within the blue banner at the top in the upper right corner), enter your data into the field that subsequently appears, and click "Save" (at the bottom left of the screen). With your account thereby created, you will have the power to file an appeal on FOIAonline to any request you file on FOIAonline thereafter. To do so, locate your request (enter a keyword or the request tracking number in the "Search for" field on the "Search" tab), click on it, then the "Create Appeal" tab in the left-hand column. Complete the subsequent field, click "Save," and FOIAonline will submit your appeal.

2. By mail. Address your appeal to:

The Judge Advocate General (Code 14)  
1322 Patterson Avenue SE  
Suite 3000  
Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5066

[Note: the preceding address is the default address. Alternatively, it may be sent to the Department of the Navy General Counsel if appropriate (the Office of the General Counsel generally handles issues outside of those of the uniformed service). That address is as follows:

Department of the Navy  
Office of the General Counsel  
1000 Navy Pentagon  
Room 5A532  
Washington, DC 20350-1000

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If you have any questions regarding the processing of your request, please contact CDR Andrea Leahy at (703) 604-0443, [andrea.leahy@navy.mil](mailto:andrea.leahy@navy.mil). You may also contact the DON FOIA Public Liaison, Christopher Julka, at [christopher.a.julka@navy.mil](mailto:christopher.a.julka@navy.mil), (703) 697-0031. In addition, the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) provides a voluntary mediation process for resolving disputes between persons making FOIA requests and the Department of the Navy (DON). For more information, go to <https://www.archives.gov/ogis/about-ogis/contact-information>.

Sincerely,

*David P. German*

D. P. GERMAN  
FOIA/PA Officer