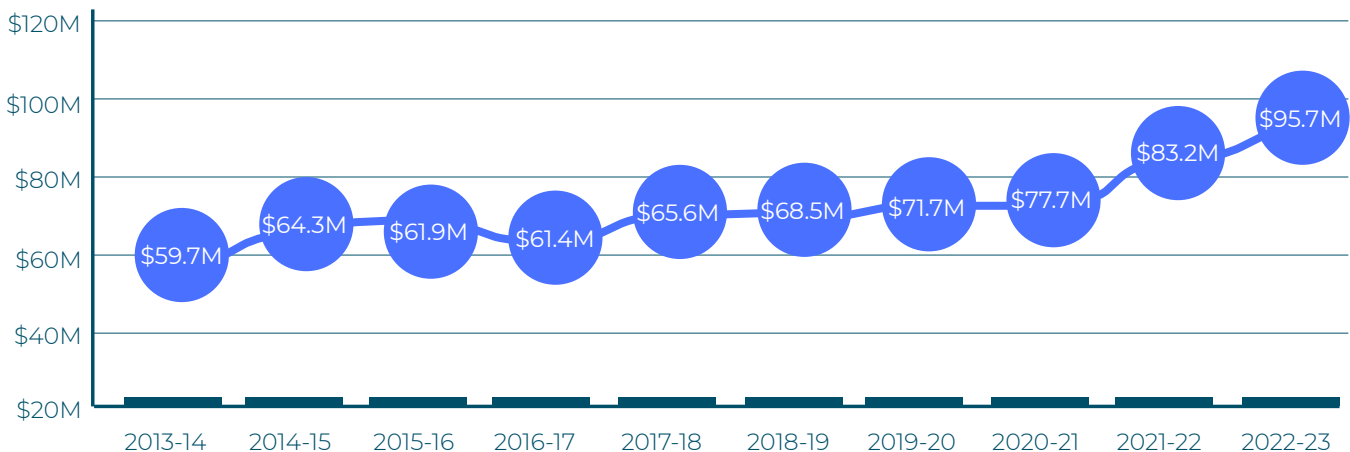# Managing ATIP Requests with Microsoft Teams

For Canadian government departments, the clock starts ticking the moment they receive an Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) request. Barring exceptions, your agency only has 30 days to complete each request and provide the requested materials to the citizen or corporation seeking them. After that, fines and penalties begin accruing, siphoning off funds from the budget and negatively impacting you and your department's reputation.

A steady uptick in requests only adds to the burden for departments struggling to respond promptly, which increases operational costs—Canadian departments spent $12.5 million more last year than the year prior. Despite that spending boost, Canadian departments failed to complete the response within the 30-day allotted time for 27% of requests in 2022-23, and many institutions fell short of their performance targets.

Total cost of operations | **Fiscal year** | ◼ **Cost of institutions' operations**

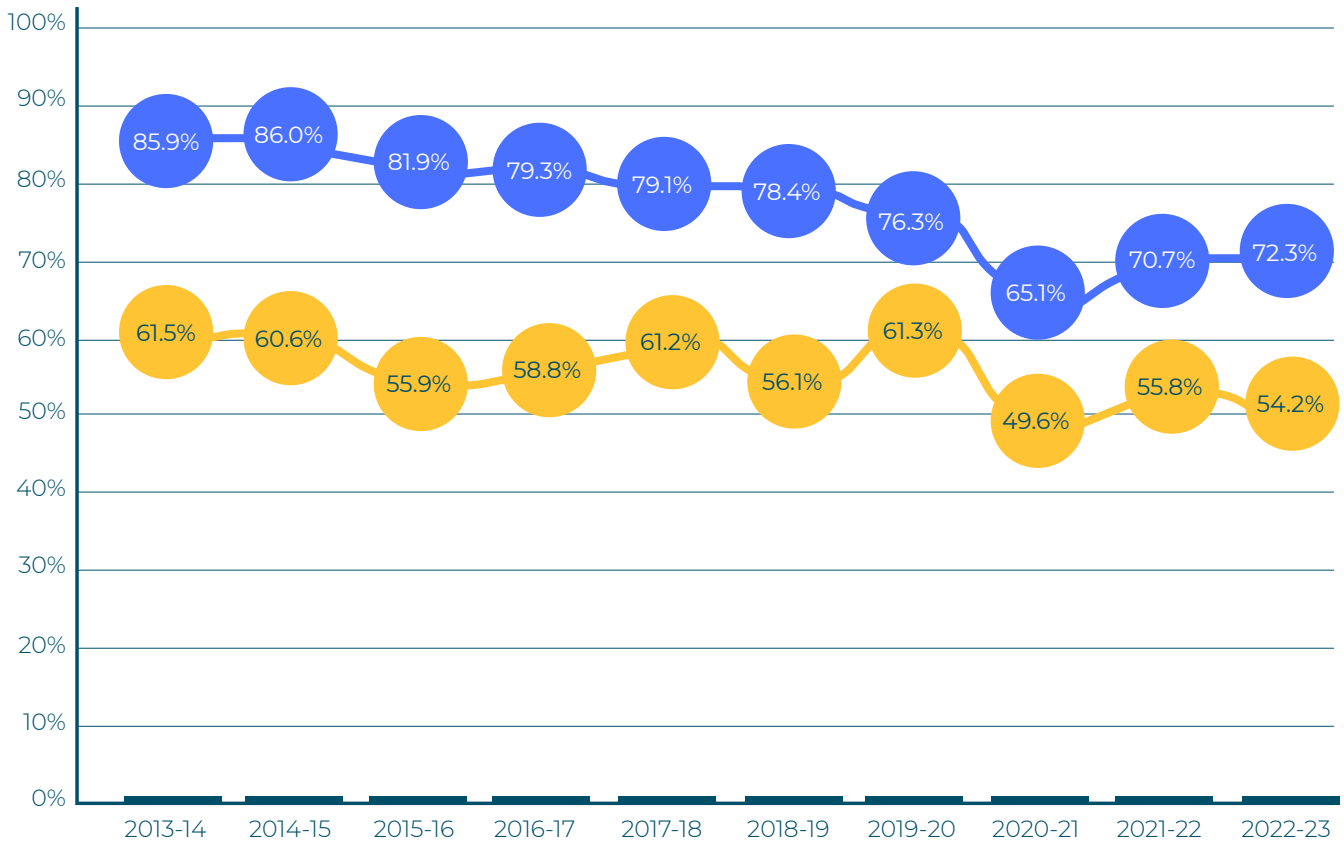| Fiscal year	Cost
2013-14	$59.7M
2014-15	$64.3M
2015-16	$61.9M
2016-17	$61.4M
2017-18	$65.6M
2018-19	$68.5M
2019-20	$71.7M
2020-21	$77.7M
2021-22	$83.2M
2022-23	$95.7M

Source: Access to Information and Privacy Statistical Report for 2022-23, from Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Percentage | Fiscal year
■ **Precentage of ATIP requests responded to within legislated timelines**
■ **Precentage of institutions that respond to 90% or more of ATIP requests within legislated timelines**

Fiscal year	Blue %	Yellow %
2013-14	85.9%	61.5%
2014-15	86.0%	60.6%
2015-16	81.9%	55.9%
2016-17	79.3%	58.8%
2017-18	79.1%	61.2%
2018-19	78.4%	56.1%
2019-20	76.3%	61.3%
2020-21	65.1%	49.6%
2021-22	70.7%	55.8%
2022-23	72.3%	54.2%

Source: Access to Information and Privacy Statistical Report for 2022–23, from Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Responding to ATIP requests only gets more difficult over time—response rates have markedly decreased during the past decade—as more and more documents and artifacts are created, adding to the immense virtual pile of data you must sift through to find what's needed. Luckily, a tool already being used by over a dozen Canadian government departments provides a simple way to help your staff dramatically decrease turnaround time and improve the rate of responses within that 30-day window.

Search everywhere from your inbox

When end users add harmon.ie, their Outlook experience evolves into a powerful Information Management tool perfect for handling ATIP inquiries. With harmon.ie, users get a window into your organization's entire Microsoft 365 ecosystem without ever leaving their inbox. SharePoint, Microsoft Teams, and OneDrive locations are all visible, and end users can drill down to find the specific folders or files they're looking for.

But the real power comes from harmon.ie's robust search capabilities. Without having to switch between apps, harmon.ie can deliver search results across Microsoft 365, eliminating the need for colleagues to remember—or guess—where the files they need are stored.

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Organize and classify files as they're received

Beyond discovery and retrieval, harmon.ie also helps your staff save files in the right place from the start. When emails arrive in their inbox, they now have the option to simply drag and drop that message and/or any attachments into the ideal location on SharePoint or Teams. By saving things in the right place from the start and as soon as they're received, things stay organized and consistent.

End users can also add metadata as part of that same workflow. Adding relevant tags for those files and emails improves discovery and provides more clues and breadcrumbs for staff hunting down requested records. Departments can provide preset options for specific fields and even make some of them mandatory to boost compliance and increase metadata quality.

Get proactive

While responding to ATIP requests is the chief concern for departments, harmon.ie can also make things easier for staff working on proactive disclosures that fall under the ATIP umbrella, including contracts exceeding $10,000, ministerial travel expenses, and briefing packages. With harmon.ie, any qualifying emails or files can be shared to the right location and properly tagged with metadata, making it easy to find those materials and route them to the appropriate channels for public disclosure.

Transform your ATIP response process today

Ready to begin responding to ATIP requests without ever leaving your inbox? Use harmon.ie to optimize your department's response protocol, free up resources for other tasks, avoid unwanted fines, and better serve the public good. As an approved product listed in the Canadian Software Licensing Supply Arrangement (SLSA), it's an easy procurement decision to make, and harmon.ie is already used heavily by over a dozen GOC departments and counting.

To learn more about **harmon.ie** and empower your staff to be more productive, contact **Orangutech**.

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