



26 August 2008

'FOIRequester'  
[request-1123-ce7fd36c@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-1123-ce7fd36c@whatdotheyknow.com)  
(by email only)

*Dear 'FOIRequester'*

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Thank you for your email of 21 August 2008 about the handling of your email of 13 July 2008 in which you requested the following information:

*"Following the Prime Minister's comments regarding the amount of food wasted by British households, could you please tell me how much unused food, in terms of weight, was thrown out by Number 10 in the last 6 months?"*

I am responding in accordance with the Cabinet Office's complaints procedure that you referred to in your email of 21 August. As you know, the details of the procedure are on the Cabinet Office's website here:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ContactUs/Complaints.aspx>

I have now looked into how your correspondence has been handled and the points you made in your emails to the department and I am satisfied that your correspondence has been dealt with appropriately.

Your email of 21 August made it clear that you were requesting information under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, as the subject line of your email was "*Freedom of Information request - Food Wastage*".

As the Cabinet Office's email of 15 July 2008 explained, section 8(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Act states that any request for information must include the name of the applicant. If a request for information does not contain the name of the applicant that request is not a 'valid' request under the terms of the Act and the public authority is not required to process it.

The 'name' you have given on your request for information is 'FOIRequester' and, as you correctly pointed out in your email of 18 July, a request submitted under a pseudonym is not a valid request. The Information Commissioner's guidance on vexatious and repeated requests makes this explicitly clear (Part A, question nine). The Commissioner's charter for responsible Freedom of Information requests also suggests applicants should state their name (page three).



I have noted your comment about the 'deadline' for responding to your request being 13 August and that the department has "a legal obligation to provide a response by no later than 20 working days of a request being received." As we believe your request for information is not a 'valid' request the twenty working day deadline for responding does not apply and the Cabinet Office is not therefore obliged to issue you with a refusal notice under section 17 of the Act.

I am copying this letter to the Information Commissioner's Office.

*Yours faithfully,*

MICHAEL PIGOTT

*Neil Wood*

