

Serious Fraud Office

Director: Richard Alderman

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Date: 30 November 2009

Dear Mr Wynn

SFO Reference 2009-98

Thank you for your request made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000, received on 02 November 2009.

Your request was as follows:

I therefore ask for all written information you have about the Equitable Life collapse, which is not already public, especially anything about the re-insurance treaty and written by the SFO.

SFO Response:

I am of the view that the material requested is exempt under section 30 of the FOIA. The material has been held for the purposes of an investigation into serious or complex fraud which the SFO has duty to conduct with a view to it being ascertained whether a person should be charged with an offence or a person charged with an offence is guilty of it. Section 30 is a qualified exemption. I have undertaken the required public interest assessment and concluded that the public interest favours application of the exemption.

Please also note that your request is also subject to further exemptions under s31 of FOIA (information which if disclosed would be likely to prejudice the prevention/detection of crime, the apprehension/prosecution of offenders and the administration of justice). I have considered the public interest in respect of the section and am satisfied that the public interest is in favour of non-disclosure.

General Right of Access to Information

Section 1 of the FOIA states:

- (1) Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled--
 - (a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and
 - (b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to him.

If you are unsatisfied with the decision made in relation to your request, you may ask for an internal review. The SFO's procedure for dealing with a complaint about an FOIA request is to carry out an internal review of the original decision and this is carried out by someone other than the original decision maker who was not involved with the original decision.

Please let me know if you would like an Internal Review within two calendar months of receipt of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

Kay Squires
Freedom of Information Officer