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Mr P Griffiths
Request-4726-de662501@whatdotheyknow.com

Our reference: FOI261518

Date: 5 February 2008

Dear Mr Griffiths

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Thank you for your request made on 14 January for "a copy of the department's policy regarding e-mails and how long they should be kept" and other related information.

The information is not recorded in the type of format which you appear to envisage. There is not a single document recording an "e-mail policy". You may, however, find the following information of use.

E-mails are automatically deleted from the system after 90 days unless specific action is taken to save them to an appropriate container. Back-ups of the servers used to process email are stored on tape for a year. These are designed to enable full system recovery and not as archives from which individual emails can be retrieved, As full recovery of all data is required for each tape restored, any attempt to retrieve an individual email is a time-consuming and costly exercise offering no certainty of recovering any specific email unless it was being held on the server at the precise time the back-up was created.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request or wish to request an internal review, you should write to:

Sue Gray
Director
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AS



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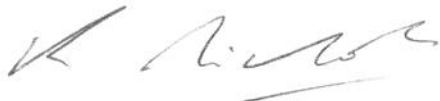
email: foiteam@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk

You should note that the Cabinet Office will not normally accept an application for internal review if it is received more than two months after the date that the reply was issued.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by Cabinet Office. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

Yours sincerely



Kevin Nichols

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