



# HM TREASURY

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Information Rights Unit

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Ref: 9/37

12 February 2009

Dear Mr Wynn

## Freedom of Information Act 2000: Financial Ombudsman Service

Thank you for your enquiry dated 18 January requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

2. You asked –

*when will the Treasury respond to recommendation B 12 of the report of the European Parliament about Equitable Life, dated 23 May 2007 - “the committee urges the UK Government to address these shortcomings, strengthen the FOS’s capacities and ensure that it is truly independent from the FSA and from the government itself”.*

3. The Government responded to this recommendation in July 2008. That response explained that the FOS and the Financial Services Compensation Scheme in the UK operate independently of the Government and that an independent review of the FOS and its relationship with consumers, the financial services industry and other stakeholders had been undertaken and its report published in April 2008.

4. The review called on the FOS to be much more open and transparent; and to improve its outreach activities and go back to basics, refocusing on its founding principles of speed, informality and independence. The review can be accessed at –

<http://www.thehuntreview.org.uk>

5. Details of the FOS response to the review, and progress with implementation, are published at the following link –

[http://www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk/publications/policy\\_statements.html](http://www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk/publications/policy_statements.html)

6. I hope the above information is helpful to you. I would just point out that the Freedom of Information Act gives a right of access to recorded information. In general a request such as yours, anticipating future events, would not be valid under the Act. I have provided a link to the Information Commissioner’s guidance to requesters; it gives some pointers on how to construct a request for the best prospects of success.



[http://www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/library/freedom\\_of\\_information/practical\\_application/its\\_public\\_information\\_foi%20charter\\_final.pdf](http://www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/library/freedom_of_information/practical_application/its_public_information_foi%20charter_final.pdf)

7. If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. It will be helpful to us if you remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

**Paul Morran**  
**Information Rights Unit**

**Your Rights to Complain under the FOI Act**

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request an review of our decision, you should write within two months of the date of this letter to HM Treasury, Information Rights Unit, 2/S2, 1 Horse Guards Road, London SW1A 2HQ. email - [public.enquiries@hm-treasury.gov.uk](mailto:public.enquiries@hm-treasury.gov.uk)

If you are not content with the outcome your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Treasury. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.