



Michael Bimmler

request-8437-e0ef4fdd@whatdotheyknow.com

27 April 2009

Dear Mr Bimmler,

FOI request (our reference FOI 263980)

I am writing regarding your request for information, which the Cabinet Office received on 26 March 2009. This request followed an earlier request with which we were unable to comply without exceeding the cost limit.

In the first request, you asked for:

'all information held by the Cabinet Office on the consideration and decision of this [the request for the Cabinet minutes of 13 and 17 March 2003] entire FOI case, as long as that information has not already been published. If this request will infer excessive costs, I am willing to narrow it down to records and documents pertaining to the consideration of whether a section 53 certificate shall be issued or not or which in other ways are directly or indirectly concerned with this section 53 certificate. I explicitly include internal correspondence and correspondence with other parties (both governmental and external) concerning this case, resp. in the "narrow" version of my request, concerning the certificate.'

Following my letter of 25 March, you have narrowed your request to cover:

- 1. The Cabinet Secretariat, including all sub-units*
- 2. The Private Office of the Secretary of the Cabinet.*

If this is still excessive, please search instead in

- 1. The Economic and Domestic Secretariat*
- 2. The Private Office of the Secretary of the Cabinet.*

If this too is excessive, please only search in:

1. The Economic and Domestic Secretariat'

I can confirm that the Cabinet Office holds information falling within the description specified in your request. However, we estimate that the cost of complying with your request (including just searching within the Economic and Domestic Affairs Secretariat as you suggest) would exceed the appropriate limit of £600. The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing your request further.

In order to try to bring your request within the cost limit, I suggest that you should narrow down your request to any date or periods of time which are relevant (perhaps one week?), at the same time as maintaining the focus on one particular business unit.

You should however be aware that if you break your request down into a series of smaller requests, we might, depending on the circumstances of the case, decline to answer if the aggregated cost of complying exceeds £600, as permitted by the Fees Regulations.

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

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

Internet: https://www.ico.gov.uk/Global/contact_us.aspx

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn Fairhurst" with a stylized flourish at the end.

KATHRYN FAIRHURST

