Dear Richard De Lange

I refer to your request where you asked:

“I understand from previous FOI requests that government ministers (with three exceptions) can receive a payment on leaving office. Presumably Lib Dem ministers did so after the 2015 election. Similarly there would have been ministers who could have claimed the severance payment as a result of government reshuffles when they found themselves without a new ministerial office.

However, I would ask for a list of all government ministers of this and the previous coalition administration, who 'voluntarily' stepped down from their ministerial post in circumstances other than those I described in my first paragraph, even if their resignation subsequently resulted in a reshuffle of some kind. I would also request which of them requested this payment, the size of that payment and the current name of the department that made the payment.

To be clearer I would expect such a list to include the following: David Laws, Liam Fox, Chris Huhne, Brooks Newmark, Ian Duncan Smith.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any clarification.”

The Gazette publicises Ministerial changes (including Ministerial resignations) and the date these changes occurred. From these notices you will be able to establish the department from which a Minister has resigned. I enclose an electronic link to The Gazette website: https://www.thegazette.co.uk/

The legislation governing Ministerial severance payments is the Ministerial and other Pensions and Salaries Act 1991 (Section 4 of Chapter 5). This legislation states the criteria upon which severance payments are made: the amount of severance payment allowed, which is one quarter of annual salary; that severance payments can only be made three weeks after Ministers leave office; and that Ministers who have reached the age of 65 at the time of leaving office are not eligible to receive such a payment. For ease, I enclose an electronic link to the relevant section of the legislation: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1991/5/section/4.

Alongside the above, you can find current Ministerial salaries in legislation listed by type of office in the Ministerial and other Salaries Act 1975 (Amendment) Order 2011. This, along with the information in the legislation mentioned in the previous paragraph, will allow you to calculate the amount of severance pay each Ministerial office is entitled to.
I enclose an electronic link to the relevant section of the legislation: 

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the FOI team. 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:

Helen Ewen  
Cabinet Office  
70 Whitehall  
London  
SW1A 2AS

email: foi-team@cabinetoffice.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

FOI Team  
Cabinet Office