



JOHN JOHNSON

By email request-488162-12ac7a77@whatdotheyknow.com

FOI Reference: FOI326358
22/6/2018

Dear JOHN JOHNSON

I refer to your request for information. I am writing to advise you that following a search of our paper and electronic records, I have established that the following information you requested is held by the Cabinet Office:

- Data that outlines the justification for making the Behavioural Insights Team independent from the UK Government.
- Provide the documentation that outlines how data is shared between the Government (and its Departments) and the now independent Behavioural Insights Team.

I have also established that the following information you requested is not held by the Cabinet Office:

- Provide a copy of the research ethical procedures that the Behavioural Insights Team must follow when they conduct research on behalf of the Government.
- Confirm whether the Behavioural Insights Team has ever conducted covert research, without gaining informed consent from participants.

- The Behavioural Insights Team was created in 2010 by the Coalition Government with the purpose of applying behavioural science, and alongside it rigorous evaluation, to public policy. Originally in No.10 and the Cabinet Office, the Behavioural Insights Team supported a range of government policies ranging from tax collection, through to health, crime, education, employment, economic growth and international development. In 2014, BIT Limited (BIT) was spun out as a social purpose company, part owned by the Cabinet Office, Nesta (the innovation charity) and the employees (including through an Employee Benefits Trust).

A primary reason for the spin-out was the expanding interest in the Behavioural Insights Team's work and with it increasing demand for its services across government in the UK and internationally. The spin-out provided the ability to grow BIT to support this increasing demand. The underlying justification for the spin-out and the joint venture structure underwent the requisite government testing and review.

- Each Government Department has its own specific data sharing processes, many of which will apply to all suppliers to those Departments, including BIT. Suppliers of Behavioural Insights services under the Crown Commercial Service Framework Agreement are certified as Cyber Essentials Plus compliant in regards to data security, this includes BIT.

In terms of data privacy standards, BIT puts in place a GDPR compliant data processing agreement with each Department before any personal data is shared. This sets out the data required, the nature and purpose of the processing and categories of the data subject. BIT has systems in place to allow the secure transfer of data to and from BIT. Data received is held on secure IT systems and is processed in line with any data processing agreement. As is required under the GDPR, the precise terms of the data processing agreements vary, depending on the precise nature of the data, the identity of the data subjects, and the data processing required for a particular project.

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:

Sharon Carter
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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. B.', written in a cursive style.

**FOI Team
Cabinet Office**