



Gemma Stirling

By email to: [request-961519-bc813aae@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-961519-bc813aae@whatdotheyknow.com)

1 August 2023

Annex A: DHSC response to initial request

Annex B: Request for internal review

Dear Ms Stirling,

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 (FOIA): INTERNAL REVIEW**

### **CASE REFERENCE: IR-1462234 (FOI-1458018)**

You originally wrote to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) on 5 June 2023 requesting information relating to Test and Trace WhatsApp groups to which Matt Hancock was a party. We responded to you on 3 July and a copy of our response, including the full text of your request, can be found in Annex A.

You subsequently emailed DHSC on 12 July requesting an internal review into the handling of your original request. A copy of your email can be found in Annex B.

The purpose of an internal review is to assess how your Freedom of Information (FOI) request was handled in the first instance and to determine whether the original decision given to you was correct. This is an independent review as I was not involved in the original decision.

The review included repeated searches which have revealed a further two DHSC business-related groups, detailed below. Please accept our apologies that this information was not included in our original reply and for any inconvenience it may have caused.

<b>WhatsApp chat name</b>	<b>Participants</b>
TnT Matt Dido Jim	Matt Hancock
	Dido Harding
	James Bethell

WhatsApp chat name	Participants
Testing Testing	Matt Hancock
	Boris Johnson
	Dominic Cummings
	Chris Wormwald
	Simon Stevens

## Conclusion

After careful consideration, I have concluded that the response you received to your FOI request was partially compliant with the requirements of the FOIA as our original reply was incomplete.

The review is now complete.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by DHSC.

Guidance on contacting the ICO can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us> and information about making a complaint can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint>.

Yours sincerely,

Mr D Stanton  
FOI Internal Reviews  
[freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk)

## Annex A: DHSC response to initial request

Ms Gemma Stirling

By email to: [request-961519-bc813aae@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-961519-bc813aae@whatdotheyknow.com)

3 July 2023

Dear Ms Stirling,

### Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1458018

Thank you for your request dated 5 June to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), a copy of which can be found in the accompanying annex.

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

DHSC holds information relevant to your request.

We have found one relevant WhatsApp chat group and details can be found in the table below. Please note that, as we cannot provide a list of all groups without it exceeding the cost limit, we have limited the scope to DHSC business-related groups that are specifically about Test and Trace only as you have requested.

WhatsApp chat name	Participants
Testing Group	Duncan Selbie
	Jamie Njoku-Goodwin
	Ed Taylor
	Matt Hancock
	Kristen McCloud
	Emma Dean
	Kathy Hall
	Allan Nixon
	Natasha Price
	James Bethell
	David Williams
	Sam Roberts
	John Bell
	Tamsin Berry
	Jeremy Farrar
	Aidan Fowler
John Newton	
Duncan Selbie	

If you are not satisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to appeal by asking for an internal review. This should be sent to [freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk) or to the address at the top of this letter and be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communication.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have already appealed our original response and received our internal review decision. You should raise your concerns with the ICO within three months of your last meaningful contact with us.

Guidance on contacting the ICO can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us> and information about making a complaint can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint>.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Team  
[freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk)

## Annex

From: Gemma Stirling <request-961519-bc813aae@whatdotheyknow.com>

Sent: 05 June 2023 17:44

To: FreedomofInformation <freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: Freedom of Information request - Test and trace WhatsApp

Dear Department of Health and Social Care,

Thank you for this and I appreciate you explaining this to me.

I would like a list of the names of all WhatsApp groups Matt Hancock was a member of and the names of the other participants. These groups must be business related groups and not personal. Where a title exists this must be provided.

If an entire list is not possible (irrelevant of subject matter) then please limit the request to only those which are track and trace if it helps keep the request within the 18 hours limit.

Yours faithfully,

Gemma Stirling

## Annex B: Request for internal review

From: Gemma Stirling <request-961519-bc813aae@whatdotheyknow.com>

Sent: 12 July 2023 05:45

To: FreedomofInformation <freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk>

Subject: Internal review of Freedom of Information request - Test and trace WhatsApp

Dear Department of Health and Social Care,

Please pass this on to the person who conducts Freedom of Information reviews.

I am writing to request an internal review of Department of Health and Social Care's handling of my FOI request 'Test and trace WhatsApp'.

Please refer to the list in

<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.whatdotheyknow.com%2Frequest%2Fw&data=05%7C01%7Cdhmail%40dhsc.gov.uk%7C6c2e9e6852f84143c8e508db82c109d4%7C61278c3091a84c318c1fef4de8973a1c%7C1%7C0%7C638247537822495992%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTil6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=gbYN14yO7T%2Fg5aLgM1RInE8dX94Isi3AMGisHBbs3rY%3D&reserved=0> ... Where there clearly is more than one group for test and trace such as TnT Matt Dido Jim.

My next step will be to complain to the ICO.

A full history of my FOI request and all correspondence is available on the Internet at this address:

[https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.whatdotheyknow.com%2Frequest%2Ftest and trace whatsapp&data=05%7C01%7Cdhmail%40dhsc.gov.uk%7C6c2e9e6852f84143c8e508db82c109d4%7C61278c3091a84c318c1fef4de8973a1c%7C1%7C0%7C638247537822495992%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTil6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=zsd6gov%2FmFQTE3mEGiseSsN8VP1E8arkk4rl0GCMSKw%3D&reserved=0](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.whatdotheyknow.com%2Frequest%2Ftest%20and%20trace%20whatsapp&data=05%7C01%7Cdhmail%40dhsc.gov.uk%7C6c2e9e6852f84143c8e508db82c109d4%7C61278c3091a84c318c1fef4de8973a1c%7C1%7C0%7C638247537822495992%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTil6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=zsd6gov%2FmFQTE3mEGiseSsN8VP1E8arkk4rl0GCMSKw%3D&reserved=0)

Yours faithfully,

Gemma Stirling