



Home Office

Performance ,
Assurance and
Governance
Directorate
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

020 7035 4848
(switchboard)

www.gov.uk

A. Brunt

Via e-mail: request-541073-68229e09@whatdotheyknow.com

Date 22nd March 2019

Dear Mr Brunt

Freedom of Information request – 51708

Thank you for your e-mail of 25th February 2019 in which you ask for an internal review into the handling of your Freedom of Information (FOI) request reference 51708. Your request asked for information about false criminal accusations, false flag events and investigation of criminal offences.

Your original FOI request can be viewed at Annex A and the Home Office's original response is at Annex B. Your internal review request is at Annex C.

I have now completed the review. I have examined all the relevant papers and consulted the policy unit who provided the original response. I have considered whether the correct procedures were followed and can confirm that I was not involved in the initial handling of your request.

My conclusion is that the Home Office's original response to refuse your request under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act was correct.

With reference to part 1 of your request for an internal review, the original response explained that you could consider refining your request by either specifying and limiting the time period of your request or by specifying a category for which you require information. This might relate to a specific area of Home Office responsibilities, for example (although we could not guarantee that any information held would not be exempt from disclosure).

Regarding parts 2 and 3 of your request, the estimate that it would take more than 24 hours to locate, retrieve and extract any information within scope of your request is based on the size of the Home Office, the number of directorates and smaller organisational units which it contains and the range of its responsibilities. The information you have asked for would not be centrally recorded, if it is held at all. To assess whether any information is held would involve very detailed and time-consuming searches and the examination of individual files or records. Electronic searches would not be sufficient or, indeed, of much help at all given that the request provides little in the way of key words or phrases which

might usefully be the basis of a search.

In the absence of any indication that information such as you describe is held, we would also probably need to contact a large number of staff to ask whether they are aware of any such information or where it might be located.

I am satisfied that the estimate in the original response that such a search would take will in excess of 24 hours was correct.

I should mention our original response was dated 29th January 2018. This error has been changed in Appendix B to show the correct date the response was issued, 29th January 2019.

This completes the internal review process by the Home Office. If you remain dissatisfied with the response to your FOI request, you have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner. The website of the Information Commissioner's Office at www.ico.org.uk includes information on how to make a complaint.

Yours sincerely

Anne Tomkins

Information Rights Team
Switchboard 020 7035 4848
E-mail FOIRequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A: FOI request 51708 in full

- 1) Any data in respect of real false flag events that may have been specifically orchestrated to introduce a 'national security defence' to supplying information that may expose planned and organised abuse or may expose government complicity in planned and organised abuse?
- 2) Whether the Home Office, its employees or contractors have ever supported people to make false criminal accusations, in order to discredit genuine victims of similar crimes or to try and influence genuine victims to not pursue justice via the criminal justice system (i.e. to try and modify real victims behaviour if they are seeking justice)?
- 3) If the Home Office has ever pressured any Police force to not investigate serious criminal offences.

Annex B: full text of the response letter to FOI request 51708

Office for Security and
Counter-Terrorism
2 Marsham Street,
London, SW1P 4DF

FOI : 51708

29 January 2019

Dear A Brunt,

Thank you for your e-mail of 29 December in which you request the following information:

- 1) Any data in respect of real false flag events that may have been specifically orchestrated to introduce a 'national security defence' to supplying information that may expose planned and organised abuse or may expose government complicity in planned and organised abuse?
- 2) Whether the Home Office, its employees or contractors have ever supported people to make false criminal accusations, in order to discredit genuine victims of similar crimes or to try and influence genuine victims to not pursue justice via the criminal justice system (i.e. to try and modify real victims behaviour if they are seeking justice)?
- 3) If the Home Office has ever pressured any Police force to not investigate serious criminal offences.

In answer to Question 1

I can confirm that the Home Office does not hold the information which you have requested.

In answer to Questions 2 and 3

Under Section 12 of FOI Act, we have estimated that the cost of meeting your request would exceed the cost limit of £600 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. We are therefore unable to comply with your request. The searching, collating, and assessing of the information requested would exceed 24 hours.

The £600 limit is based on work being carried out at a rate of £25 per hour, which equates to 24 hours of work per request. The cost of locating, retrieving and extracting information can be included in the costs for these purposes. The costs do not include considering whether any information is exempt from disclosure, overheads such as heating or lighting, or items such as photocopying or postage.

The Home Office may be able to provide some information in scope of your request if you refine your request by either reducing the time period of your request and/or specifying a category to bring the cost of compliance under the limit.

Please note that if you simply break your request down into a series of similar smaller requests, we might still decline to answer it if the total cost exceeds £600. Equally, even if a revised request were to fall within the cost limit, it is possible that relevant exemptions in the Act might apply.

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to the address below, quoting reference **51708**. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

Information Rights Team
Home Office Third Floor, Peel Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
e-mail: foirequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff who were not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely,

**Freedom of Information
Home Office**

Annex C: Request for an Internal Review of FOI 51708

1. Please suggest ways this question could be altered to obtain the information/similar information requested without incurring costs.

2. Given this request is for data that's both quite important and also can be answered (I feel) quite easily, please clarify why this request would take so long that it would incur costs.