



Home Office

Corporate Services
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

020 7035 4848
(switchboard)

www.gov.uk

Pippa King
Via e-mail to <mailto:request-362434-18b2679a@whatdotheyknow.com>

24 November 2016

Dear Ms King,

Freedom of Information request – 41920

Thank you for your email of 02 October 2016 in which you asked for information regarding biometric information. Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I can confirm that the Home Office hold some of the information you have requested and is detailed below.

Government's response to Recommendation 4 was "CAST are working with the Home Office Test and Design Consultancy Services to document the Home Office biometric accuracy testing approach to ensure consistency and transparency across the Home Office. It is expected that this document will be complete by the end of the year [2015]."

1a) Please advise if the Home Office's / Home Office Test and Design Consultancy Services report on biometric accuracy testing has been published.

2a) If it has been published please provide a copy or a link to the report.

3a) If it has not been published please advise why and when it will be published.

The Home Office biometric accuracy and testing will form part of the procurement process for potential suppliers and published in early 2017.

Government's response to Recommendation 5 was "The Home Office sponsors an ethics group to provide scrutiny, challenge and review of ethical issues raised by forensic science, focused on DNA. We are considering whether the same ethical oversight should be applied to the collection, use and retention of fingerprints and custody images."

1b) Please advise if the Home Office has, upon the Science and Technologies Committee's recommendation to "to facilitate an open, public debate around the growth of biometric systems", any plans to set up any ethical oversight and/or public debate on biometrics and how government uses/plans to use the public's biometric data.

2b) If the Home Office has set up such arena for debate/consultancy on biometrics please advise details.

3b) If the Home Office has not set up any ethical oversight or public debate on biometrics please advise why and when such oversight/debate is planned.

The Home Office sponsors the National DNA Database (NDNAD) Ethics Group, an advisory non-departmental public body which provides independent advice on ethical issues relating to the operation of the NDNAD. The remit of this group will be extended to cover ethical issues relating to both forensics and biometrics.

Government's response to Recommendation 11 was "As Lord Bates announced earlier this year, the Home Office is currently undertaking a policy review of the statutory basis for the retention of facial images, and consulting key stakeholders. Terms of Reference for the review were agreed following consultation with the Information Commissioner, Biometrics Commissioner and Surveillance Camera Commissioner. As part of that review, we are considering the role of the Biometrics Commissioner, the Government will of course publish the findings of the review and consult formally as appropriate."

1c) Please advise if the Home Office's consideration of the role of the Biometrics Commissioner has been undertaken.

2c) If it has been published please provide a copy or a link to the report.

3c) If it has not been published please advise why and when it will be published.

Issues considered during the development of the Biometrics Strategy included the role of the Biometrics Commissioner. The Strategy will be published in due course, but no particular date for publication has been set.

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 41920. 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
4th Floor, Peel Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
E-mail: info.access@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 the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely

Andy Woodgate
Information Rights Team

Annex

If you remain dissatisfied after an internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF