



Home Office

Corporate Services
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

020 7035 4848
(switchboard)

www.homeoffice.gov.uk

S Mehta - BritCits

request-176653-f415bd93@whatdotheyknow.com

4th March 2014

Dear S Mehta,

Reference number: 28948

Thank you for your e-mail of 4th February in which you asked for an internal review of our response to your Freedom of Information (Fol) request for details held on the Casework Information Database (CID).

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

My findings are set out in the attached report. My main conclusion is that the original response is correct. The estimated cost of meeting your request would exceed the cost limited of £600 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

A full explanation of this decision can be found in the report below.

Yours sincerely

A Anokwuru
Information Access Team

Switchboard 020 7035 4848

E-mail info.access@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Internal review of response to request under the Freedom of Information (Fol) Act 2000 by S Mehta (28948)

Responding Unit: Information Management Services (IMS)

Chronology

Original Fol request: 13th September 2013

IMS response: 10th October 2013

Request for internal review: 4th February 2014

Subject of Request

1. S Mehta submitted the following request for information under the Freedom of Information Act on 13th September 2013. The request is set out in full below:

Please provide me with a comprehensive databases structure for your cid system noting field names the data stored and the type of data ie...

Database name cid one

Table name subject

First name. Text of subjects given first name

Dob. Date. Subjects date of birth

Horef. Text. Subjects ho id ref

Table images

Imageid

Data

Table imagelink

Horef . Link to table subject

Imageid. Link to table images

Database visas

Table visaref

Plus anything else held within the CID

The response by IAT

2. The IAT response of 10th October provided part of the information requested, however S Mehta's request of 13th September for a comprehensive database structure was refused under section 12(1) as it was estimated that the cost of meeting the request would exceed the cost limited of £600 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

The full response can be found at **Annex A**.

S Mehta's request for an internal review

3. S Mehta submitted a request for an internal review on 4th February 2014 questioning the application of section 12 applied to the request. A full copy of S Mehta's request for an internal review can be found at **Annex B**.

Procedural issues

4. S Mehta submitted the request for information on 13th September 2013.
5. IMS provided a full response on 10th October 2013 which was the nineteenth working day.
6. S Mehta was informed of the right to an independent internal review into the handling of the request, as is required by section 17(7)(a) of the Act.
7. The IMS response also informed S Mehta of the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner, as specified by section 17(7)(b) of the Act.

Consideration of the response

8. IMS refused S Mehta's information request under section 12 which states:

(1)Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

(2)Subsection (1) does not exempt the public authority from its obligation to comply with paragraph (a) of section 1(1) unless the estimated cost of complying with that paragraph alone would exceed the appropriate limit.

In the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 the "appropriate limit" is specified as £600 or 24 hours of work.

9. I have contacted Home Office IT who has confirmed that the cost limit would be exceeded. Home Office IT has given me the following information:
- The exact number of screens on CID amounts to 186
 - The time it would take to check each screen, noting down all the fields and the title page of each screen, check the naming convention of each column header and then entering this onto a separate spreadsheet would take 10-15mins per page.

I have broken this down into the following detailed costs estimate:

Total screens on CID to be checked:	186
Time taken to check screens:	10-15 minutes
Total Cost :	£750 - £1,162.50 (30 – 46.5 hours)

10. I conclude that section 12 applies to this request for information and that it was correctly applied in the initial response.
11. Please be aware that if the request was refined so that I would fall under the cost limit, other exemptions may apply in favour of withholding the information.

Conclusion

12. IMS responded within the 20 working day deadline.

13. IMS correctly applied section 12(1) to the request and further explanation of this has now been provided as part of this Internal Review.

A Anokwuru
Information Access Team
Home Office
4th March 2014

Annex A

Dear S Mehta

[Reference 28948]

Thank you for your e-mail of 11 September 2013, in which you ask for details of the information held on the Casework Information Database (CID). Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We are now in a position to provide a full response to your request.

The CID contains:

- ☐ Name
- ☐ Date of birth
- ☐ Nationality
- ☐ Arrival details
- ☐ Temporary admission address
- ☐ Detention details
- ☐ Refusal reasons
- ☐ Diary actions
- ☐ Notes
- ☐ Removal details
- ☐ Photograph

We are however unable to provide you with a comprehensive database structure for the CID system noting field names, the data stored and the type of data for each. Under section 12 of the Act, the Home Office is not obliged to comply with an information request where to do so would exceed the cost limit.

We hold the information which you have requested but 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 it.

For further explanation of the cost limit see the attached **Annex**.

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 28948. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

Information Access Team
Home Office
Ground Floor, Seacole 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 a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely

Diana Pottinger
Information Access Team

Switchboard 020 7035 4848

E-mail info.access@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Annex – explanation of cost limit – section 12

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 and preparing the response 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.

Currently there are over 75 screens on the Caseworker Information Database (CID). The cost of locating, retrieving and extracting the information, and then providing a subsequent definition/explanation of each heading would exceed the cost limit of £600 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

If you refine your request, so that it is more likely to fall under the cost limit, we will consider it again.

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.

Annex B

Dear FOI Responses,

This is not a satisfactory response. The Home Office should easily have this data available as the headings in the database so I cannot imagine how it could take over 24 hours to extract the headings.

If you still cannot provide this info, I'd like an internal review please.

Yours sincerely,

BritCits

Annex C

This completes the internal review process by the Home Office. If you remain dissatisfied with the response to your Fol request, you have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner at the following address:

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