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Andrew Totten

Email: [request-108802-768ad675@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-108802-768ad675@whatdotheyknow.com)

11 May 2012

Dear Mr Totten

**REVIEW OF REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000**  
**Cabinet Office Internal Review Reference: IR 316312**  
**(Original Case Reference: Fol 316312)**

I refer to your e-mail of 14 April 2012 in which you stated that it is within the scope of the Freedom of Information Act to obtain a full and complete list of past events that have triggered COBR, minus detailed information such as dates, duration, attendance and agendas. I have conducted an internal review of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. In your request you stated:

I acknowledge that 'premature disclosure of detailed information, such as COBR meetings including actual dates, duration, attendance and agendas of individual meetings would have an inhibiting effect on the frankness and candour of the assessment.'

However, I do feel it is still within the scope of the FOI act to obtain a full and complete list of past events that have triggered COBR, minus detailed information such as dates, duration, attendance and agendas.

It is in the public interest to disclose this information because it would provide a better picture of exactly what constitutes a level 2 or 3 emergency as outlined in the 'concept of operations' document, thus ensuring transparency in the mechanisms of government in response to crisis.

It is not in the public interest to withhold this information because it lacks any details that could affect future policy making in this area.

Having carefully considered the handling of the original request and your request for an internal review, I uphold the original decision. I am satisfied that the disclosure of this information could undermine measures taken to safeguard national security and that the balance of public interest favours the application of exemptions under sections 24 (National security) and 35 (formulation or development of government policy & Ministerial communications) of the Act.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request for information you, have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Smethurst', enclosed within a large, irregular oval loop.

**ROGER SMETHURST**