



6 June 2017

Mr James McConnell

Via e-mail: [request-409118-3c70ef74@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-409118-3c70ef74@whatdotheyknow.com);  
[request-409115-61a8a61f@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-409115-61a8a61f@whatdotheyknow.com);  
[request-409116-4d8b1c02@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-409116-4d8b1c02@whatdotheyknow.com);  
[request-409117-277b18cc@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-409117-277b18cc@whatdotheyknow.com)

Our ref: FOI 2017/24 & 2017/25

Dear Mr McConnell,

### **Freedom of Information Request**

Thank you for your emails of 27 May 2017, in which you requested the following information from the United Kingdom Supreme Court (UKSC) and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC):

*Could you please explain how and when did administrative courts become lawful, and can citizens claim common law jurisdiction in court.*

I should explain that the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) can be used to access recorded information held by a public body. It cannot be used to obtain guidance, opinions, conjecture or legal advice.

Section 84 of the Act states that in order for a request for information to be handled as a Freedom of Information (FOI) request, it must be for recorded information. For example, a Freedom of Information request would be for a copy of a policy, rather than an explanation as to why we have that policy in place.

Having assessed your question, I have determined that it does not constitute a valid FOI request, and I am unable to deal with it under the terms of the Act. This is because you are not asking for recorded information, but are seeking an opinion or legal advice.

It might help if I explain that the role of the Supreme Court is to act as the final court of appeal in the UK for civil cases, and for criminal cases from England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It hears cases of the greatest public or constitutional importance affecting the whole population. The UKSC is not able to offer advice, legal or otherwise.

If you are seeking legal advice, you may like to speak to a solicitor or contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau, details of which can be found at:  
<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

Outside of the terms of the Act, I can inform you that we would not hold any information that is relevant to this request in any event. I should explain that we only hold information relating to the UK Supreme Court. Other courts in England and Wales are part of Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS), which is an Executive Agency of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ).

It may be that the MoJ holds further information about this matter so you may want to contact them, if you have not already done so. Their contact details are:

Ministry of Justice  
Data Access and Compliance Unit  
Postal Point 10.31, Floor 10  
102 Petty France  
London  
SW1H 9AJ

Email [data.access@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:data.access@justice.gsi.gov.uk)  
Contact form <https://www.justice.gov.uk/information-access-rights/foi-requests/make-an-foi-request-online>

As part of our obligations under the FOIA, the UK Supreme Court has an independent review process. If you are dissatisfied with this response, you may write to request an internal review. The internal review will be carried out by someone who did not make the original decision, and they will re-assess how the Department handled the original request. If you wish to request an internal review, please write or send an email to the following address:

William Arnold  
Director of Corporate Services  
UK Supreme Court  
Parliament Square  
London  
SW1P 3BD  
e-mail: [william.arnold@supremecourt.uk](mailto:william.arnold@supremecourt.uk)

If you remain dissatisfied after an internal review decision, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner's Office under Section 50 of the FOIA. You can contact the Information Commissioner's Office at the following address:

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

Internet: [https://www.ico.gov.uk/Global/contact\\_us.aspx](https://www.ico.gov.uk/Global/contact_us.aspx)

I am sorry that I am unable to be of more assistance to you on this occasion.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca Lawson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**REBECCA LOWSON**  
Information Officer