



Department
for Work &
Pensions

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Date: 8 November 2018

Ref No: FS50767053

Dear John Slater,

Following correspondence with the Information Commissioner's Office, we have been asked to write to you again to confirm the position in respect of our response to your FOI 784.

On 26 February 2018 you requested information of the following description:

"RFI1 - What datasets does the DWP hold on its standard IT systems (i.e. excluding bespoke datasets held by local offices) about claimants in respect of:

- *ESA*
- *IB*
- *PIP*
- *DLA*
- *JSA*
- *Universal Credit*

RFI2 – For the datasets from RFI1 what type of data is held? Please note I only want to know the type of data held not the actual data.

For the avoidance of doubt a dataset is a collection of data. Most commonly a data set corresponds to the contents of a single database table, or a single statistical data matrix, where every column of the table represents a particular variable, and each row corresponds to a given member of the data set in question.

If the Department is unsure about any aspect of my request please seek clarification".

On 17 April 2018, DWP responded and said as follows

"The Department may hold the information that you have requested. However the Department would withhold any information on the basis of the provisions contained in Sections 31 and 24 of the Freedom of Information Act ("the Act"), which covers the prevention of crime, and national security respectively".

You requested an internal review on 22 April 2018 .The outcome of the DWP internal review was sent to you on 11 May 2018. DWP upheld its original position.

The ICO has reminded us of the requirement to conform to section 1(1) of the FOIA and to inform you whether or not we hold information of the description specified in your request, or to set out a provision that allows us to neither confirm nor deny that the requested information is held. We apologise for the omission of this important element in our original response.

DWP Response

In accordance with the provisions of s24(2) and s31(3) of the FOI Act, we neither confirm nor deny that we hold the requested information.

Sections 31 and 24 of the Freedom of Information Act ("the Act"), which covers the prevention of crime, and national security respectively. Section 31 and 24 are qualified exemptions, and as such, a public interest test needs to be applied. While there is a legitimate public interest in ensuring that the public can have confidence that the Department has datasets in place to enable claims to benefit to be processed, it is not in the public interest for the Department to provide details of these, or the information contained within as this may enable individuals to attempt to circumvent the Department's security controls.

Confirming what information is held, particularly concerning claims to benefit would assist an individual in testing the effectiveness of the Department's security controls. This is not in the public interest, and therefore we are withholding the information in accordance with Section 17 of the Act.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours,

DWP Digital, Parliamentary Business Focal Point

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you can ask for an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central FoI Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. Any review request should be sent within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of an internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at: Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745