

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: [freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

Our Ref: FOI 3174

04 August 2015

Dear Steven Preece

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015 in which you ask:

**In a recent DWP publication – Employment and Support Allowance Sanctions – you include two statements from claimants who have supposedly been affected by a benefit sanction, whilst in the ESA Work Related Activity Group - ‘Zac’ and ‘Sue’.**

**<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employment-and-support-allowance-sanctions>**

**You also include photos of the two people included in the publication; one of which is supposedly Sue, whose image is also used on the ‘The Daily Jobseeker’ blog on tumblr. <http://dailyjobseeker.tumblr.com/post/101666827899/standing-out-from-the-crowd>**

**Is Sue a genuine benefit claimant in the ESA WRAG or is she a DWP/JCP staff member, actress or made up person? Is the photo a genuine photograph of Sue herself, or is it a stock (or sourced) photo?**

**Could you please provide me with any evidence or information to show that the statements/comments used in the publication are from genuine ESA WRAG claimants (Zac and Sue).**

**Response:**

**The photos used are stock photos and along with the names do not belong to real claimants. The stories are for illustrative purposes only. We want to help people understand when sanctions can be applied and how they can avoid them by taking certain actions. Using practical examples can help us achieve this.**

**We have temporarily changed the pictures to silhouettes and added a note to make it more clear that these are illustrative examples only.**

**We will test both versions of the factsheet with claimants and external stakeholders to further improve it in the future. This will include working with external organisations.**

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central FOI Team

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### **Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act**

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing [freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk) or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, 4th Floor, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London SW1H 9NA. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)