

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: freedom-of-information-rexxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx

Our Ref: VTR 2916

DATE 21 October 2011

Dear Mr McLean,

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act received on 30th September 2011. You asked for:-

1. *Please can you advise the TOTAL number of disciplinary **HEARINGS** at the DWP for ANY and ALL computer misuse infractions (NOT just social network access on work computers, but ANY computer orientated disciplinary event) concerning staff at the DWP and internet connectable computer equipment? The period to be covered is from 1st September 2011 to 30th September 2011. Both days inclusive? Thank you.*
2. *Please can you advise the TOTAL number of disciplinary **WARNINGS** (verbal and written) at the DWP for ANY and ALL infractions (NOT just social network access on work computers, but ANY computer orientated disciplinary event) concerning staff at the DWP and internet connectable computer equipment? The period to be covered is from 1st September 2011 to 30th September 2011. Both days inclusive? Thank you.*
3. *Please can you itemise the nature of each computer misuse as per '2' and '3' above? Thank you.*
4. *Are you aware that to date, there have been serious allegations in the media that the DWP have some culpability in the DEATHS of TWELVE innocent people including a 5 month old baby, and an unborn child due to the problems with the current welfare reform systems? These include cases such as Richard Sanderson who committed suicide when the DWP withdrew (via their local authority DWP benefit administering agency) Housing Benefit of £30 per week.*
5. *What measures are the DWP taking to fix their defective system that has left innocent people like Mrs Sanderson without a husband, or father to their child?*
6. *Was the £30 saving made by the DWP worth the life of this talented, but unemployed aircraft pilot?*

I am writing to advise you that the Department has decided not to disclose the information you requested to questions 1, 2 & 3, or to comment in answer to a questions 4,5 and 6.

In response to questions 1, 2, & 3:

The Fees Regulations (guidance published on the Information Commissioner's website) state that two or more requests to one public authority can be aggregated for the purposes of calculating costs if they are:

- by one person, or by different persons who appear to the public authority to be acting in concert or in pursuance of a campaign;
- for the same or similar information; and
- the subsequent request is received by the public authority within 60 working days of the previous request.

The intention of this provision is to prevent individuals or organisations evading the appropriate limit by dividing a request into smaller parts.

I note that you submitted a previous related FOI request, FOI 2691 (dated 10th September 2011) that this Department responded to on 29th September 2011.

The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to comply with your request.

In response to questions 4, 5 & 6:

The reason for this is that the information you requested is being withheld, as it falls under the exemption criteria, set out in section 40 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act. This exemption covers the release of personal information about someone other than the applicant, in this case you, where the information would breach any of the Data Protection Principles.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Fol Team

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 or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, 5th Floor The Adelphi, 1-11, John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HT. 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