



Home Office

Office for Counter- Extremism www.gov.uk/home-office
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Mr P John
request-410352-e3d16248@whatdotheyknow.com

FOI Ref: 44162

Date: 19 September 2017

Dear Mr John

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your e-mail of 5 June, in which you requested:

“... please disclose to me a copy of the report concerning foreign funding and support of jihadi groups, prepared by the Home Office extremism analysis unit, commissioned by David Cameron approximately 18 months ago.”

This has been interpreted as the review referred to by the Prime Minister on 2 December 2015:

“I can announce today that we will establish a comprehensive review to root out any remaining funding of extremism within the UK. This will examine specifically the nature, scale and origin of the funding of Islamist extremist activity in the UK, including any overseas sources. It will report to myself and my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary next spring.”^[2]

For your information, the key findings of the named review were released to the public by the Home Secretary in a written statement on 12 July 2017. This statement can be accessed on the UK Parliament website using the following hyperlink:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2017-07-12/HCWS39/>

Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

^[2] “Daily Hansard: – Debate 2 December 2015 Column 336; The Prime Minister (Mr David Cameron)” published

Parliament.UK [online] available at

<https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmhansrd/cm151202/debtext/151202-0001.htm> [accessed 9 June 2017]

I can confirm that the Home Office holds the information that you have requested. However, after careful consideration we have decided that the information is exempt from disclosure under section 24 of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 24 of the Act is a qualified exemption, and requires the consideration of a public interest test. We have balanced the public interest for section 24 and found that the public interest falls in favour of maintaining the exemption. Arguments for and against disclosure in terms of the public interest, with the reasons for our conclusion are set out in the attached annex.

We also consider sections 23, 27, 31, 35, 36, 38, and 41 to apply to some of the information in scope, however as we consider section 24 to apply to the whole report we have not gone on to consider these exemptions in detail.

Section 40 - Personal information

In addition to the above, personal information is being withheld under section 40(2).

Section 40 exempts personal data from disclosure if its release would, among other criteria; contravene any of the data protection principles in Schedule 1 to the Data Protection Act 1998. In this instance, disclosure of the information would be neither fair nor lawful and contrary to the reasonable expectations of the data subjects. Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption, which does not require a public interest test.

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to the address below, quoting reference 44162. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

Information Rights Team
Home Office
Lower Ground Floor, Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
e-mail: foirequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff who were not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely

Extremism Analysis Unit

Annex

Freedom of Information request from P John (reference 44162)

Information requested:

Please disclose to me a copy of the report concerning foreign funding and support of jihadi groups, prepared by the Home Office extremism analysis unit, commissioned by David Cameron approximately 18 months ago..

Public interest test

Some of the exemptions in the FOI Act, referred to as 'qualified exemptions', are subject to a public interest test (PIT). This test is used to balance the public interest in disclosure against the public interest in favour of withholding the information, or the considerations for and against the requirement to say whether the information requested is held or not. We must carry out a PIT where we are considering using any of the qualified exemptions in response to a request for information.

The 'public interest' is not the same as what interests the public. In carrying out a PIT we consider the greater good or benefit to the community as a whole if the information is released or not. The 'right to know' must be balanced against the need to enable effective government and to serve the best interests of the public.

The FOI Act is 'applicant blind'. This means that we cannot, and do not, ask about the motives of anyone who asks for information. In providing a response to one person, we are expressing a willingness to provide the same response to anyone, including those who might represent a threat to the UK.

Section 24 Response

The information is exempt from disclosure under section 24 of the FOI Act. Section 24 (1) provides that information that does not fall under section 23 is exempt if it is required for the purpose of safeguarding national security.

Public interest considerations in favour of disclosing the information - section 24

The nature of EAU's work often overlaps with and helps inform positions on national security, and the Home Office recognises that there is a general public interest in disclosure and the fact that greater transparency increases public trust in, and engagement with the government. Disclosure of the report would enable the public to develop greater public understanding and confidence in how the government is tackling national security threats.

Public interest consideration in favour of withholding the information - section 24

By releasing the report, information on what and who EAU identifies as the focus of security activity could be used to the advantage of terrorist or criminal organisations.

Information that undermines the operational integrity of these activities will adversely affect public safety and have a negative impact on national security.

Balance of the public interest

We assess that the protection of the government's national security strategy is of overriding importance to the public, and that in this instance, the public interest is best served by non-disclosure of the requested information.

Date: 19 September 2017