

Trudy Baddams

[various) @whatdotheyknow.com

21 May 2019

FOI 2019/04305
FOI 2019/09686
FOI 2019/09691
FOI 2019/10695
FOI 2019/11724
FOI 2019/13053
FOI 2019/13179
FOI 2019/15715

Dear Trudy Baddams

Thank you for your Freedom of Information requests received on various dates between 30 January 2019 and 17 April 2019. You asked:

FOI2019/04305	<p><i>Government state there were adverts in newspapers and magazines about women's pension age increase, can you please supply names please?</i></p> <p><i>I.e. What newspapers and magazines carried these advertorials and when?</i></p>
FOI 2019/09686	<p><i>Government keep stating that letters were sent out to ALL those affected by the state pension age increase.</i></p> <p><i>Can you please tell me which Member of Parliament instigated this for the 1995 and 2011 Act?</i></p> <p><i>Can you please tell me which department of government were responsible for sending these letters (for both Acts)?</i></p> <p><i>Can you also please tell me the job title of the person responsible for overseeing the mail shot?</i></p>
FOI 2019/09691	<p><i>Can you tell me what newspaper supplements the advertorial for women's state pension age appeared in?</i></p> <p><i>Can you also tell me what magazines were used to advertise this fact?</i></p>

FOI 2019/10695	<i>The Hansard report stated that DWP should learn from their previous mistakes and give 10 years notice for every 1 year pension age increase, how many letters has the DWP sent to men who are seeing their pension age increase by 1 year? And when were these sent?</i>
FOI 2019/11724	<i>Andrea Leadsom stated that women had received 7 years notice of the women's state pension increase, can you please confirm how many years notice 1950's born women actually received about this increase.</i>
FOI 2019/13053	<i>It has been stated that automated pension forecasts were sent to women regarding their pensions, can you please tell me when these were sent, how many, and did the forecast contain pension age?</i> <i>Could you attach a copy of the forecast please</i>
FOI 2019/13179	<i>Your response to my FOI FOI2018/11986 but we need clarification:</i> <i>"To clarify, mailings undertaken as part of a communication research project have been included in the above table"</i> <i>please clarify what this research project is and how many letters this includes so we can achieve a true figure of how many letters were sent to women affected by pension age increase</i>
FOI 2019/15715	<i>Whilst you have provided us with certain photos and links to newspapers regarding pension age equalisation, it would appear that the information may have been in other newspapers. can you please clarify which newspapers carried this information and which magazines carried this information</i>

The Department has decided that Section 14(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) applies on this occasion to the requests listed above. Accordingly, we will not be responding to those requests.

Under section 14(1) of FOIA, public authorities are not obliged to comply with requests which are vexatious.

A request may be treated as vexatious for a number of reasons. For example, if compliance would create a significant burden in terms of expense and distraction; if a request is designed to cause disruption or annoyance; if a request can otherwise fairly be characterised as obsessive or manifestly unreasonable; if the request does not have any serious purpose or value.

By way of clarification it is the request that is treated as vexatious not the person making the request. An individual can make multiple requests and each is considered on its own merits.

Whether a request is vexatious is assessed with reference to all the circumstances of an individual case. In this case, the department is treating the requests listed above as vexatious.

Whilst we accept that the requests relate to issues in which the general public has a legitimate interest, the government's position in relation to changes to State Pension age has already been the subject of considerable public and parliamentary scrutiny and you have previously made many requests on this subject.

Parliament has published several comprehensive briefing papers and select committee reports and the government has also commissioned two independent reports to inform its first review of State Pension age, which was completed in July 2017. Furthermore, there have been parliamentary debates to which government Ministers have contributed, ministerial statements and responses to parliamentary questions. All of these are available in the public domain and we have included some helpful links here to relevant documents:

- <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmworpen/899/899.pdf>
- <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06546/SN06546.pdf>
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/611460/independent-review-of-the-state-pension-age-smoothing-the-transition.pdf
- <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7405/CBP-7405.pdf>
- <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06546/SN06546.pdf>
- <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-02-08/debates/5DB1E4AA-31EF-443C-9557-E5ED4968B8DC/StatePensionAge>
- <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2017-11-29/debates/721D593D-7E54-4E69-ADCB-CBCA73618FCD/StatePensionAgeWomen>
- <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN02234/SN02234.pdf>
- <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2016-11-30/debates/6D16B51A-12D7-4614-89AA-6A016F71600A/StatePensionAgeWomen>
- <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmworpen/899/89902.htm>
- <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2016-11-15/debates/DFB796DF-B853-47C8-AFEE-BA4EDC037EF7/StatePensionAgeWomen>
- [https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2016-01-07/debates/16010722000001/StatePensionAge\(Women\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2016-01-07/debates/16010722000001/StatePensionAge(Women))

- <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2015-12-02/debates/15120250000001/StatePensionAgeEqualisation>
- <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2016-02-01/debates/16020126000001/TransitionalStatePensionArrangementsForWomen>

This represents a sample of the level of public scrutiny to which the government's policies on State Pension age have already been subject to. In addition, the Department has received and replied to over 40 other FOI requests from you related to State Pensions.

The department is committed to transparency and openness and accepts that involves absorbing a reasonable level of disruption and administrative burden.

However, the Department believes there is no clear objective to your requests for a number of reasons including the following;

- the number and frequency of your requests;
- the lack of clarity in terms of what recorded information they are trying to obtain;
- the fact they often overlap;
- they regularly request information already in the public domain as well as information we have already provided to you;
- each response from the Department results in further requests.

Subsequently, regardless of intention, we consider that each of the requests causes a disproportionate and unjustified level of disruption to officials who are responsible for responding to them, placing an unreasonable burden on the department for no clear purpose.

You may also find the Information Commissioner's comprehensive guidance on section 14(1) of FOIA useful, which can be found here: <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1198/dealing-with-vexatious-requests.pdf>

Section 17 (6) of the FOI Act states that there is no need for public authorities to issue a refusal notice if they have already given the same person a refusal notice for a previous vexatious request and it would be unreasonable to issue another one. We are classing this letter as a refusal notice under Section 17 (6) of the FOI Act. You should therefore be aware that any further vexatious requests from you will not receive any response.

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@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, 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.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745