

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Our Ref: VTR3510

19 February 2018

Dear Lara,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 23/08/2017.

You asked DWP:-

- a) To confirm whether the DWP provides any data to the Home Office on individuals for immigration enforcement purposes.
- b) To confirm whether the Home Office provides any data to the DWP on individuals for immigration enforcement purposes.
- c) If yes to a) or b), please provide a copy of any agreement and/or policy governing the sharing of such data.
- d) To provide a copy of any agreement(s) or policy(ies) superseded by those that are currently in force.
- e) To provide a breakdown of the number of the individuals whose data has been shared by month since the current agreement or policy governing data-sharing between the DWP and the Home Office entered into force, or if there is no agreement/policy in force, since January 2015.
- f) If there is no data-sharing agreement/policy in force and data is being shared on an ad hoc basis, please list the data items that are shared by each agency (eg name, address, nationality).

DWP Response:

The answer to questions a) and b) is Yes.

With regards to question c) the Department has now completed its search for the information and a copy of the agreements is attached.

Question d) – A copy of the agreements is attached.

We cannot provide a breakdown for question e) as it falls under the exemption in section 31 and 35 of the Freedom of Information Act.

This exemption set out in section 31 of the Act covers the prevention and detection of crime. This allows public authorities to withhold information if its disclosure would, or would be likely to prejudice the assessment or collection of tax, and on the operation of immigration controls. We believe that disclosure would undermine compliance activity and Governments ability to combat tax avoidance and maintain immigration controls.

The exemption set out in section 35 of the Act relates to the formulation of government policy, and is being withheld because the information it contains relates to the on-going formulation and development of government policy on the operation of immigration controls and the system for employers conducting right to work checks to prevent illegal working.

In applying this exemption the department has balanced the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information.

Question f) does not apply and we are providing the agreements.

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

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@dpw.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