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Ariel Eliasov
Via: request-725174-56b2f60b@whatdotheyknow.com

Our ref: IR2021/02983

8 March 2021

Dear Ariel Eliasov

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REF: FOI2021/02598 - INTERNAL REVIEW

We refer to your email of 10 February in which you requested an Internal Review. Your request for an Internal Review was prompted by the Cabinet Office's response of 10 February to your request for information (reference FOI2021/02598) under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act').

This letter constitutes the outcome of the Internal Review. My findings are below.

The request

On 7 February you submitted a request for information. You wrote:

'Could you please provide a list of every government department and their full contact information. And their latest budget.'

The response

The Cabinet Office responded to you on 10 February. It informed you that:

'...some of the information you requested is held by the Cabinet Office.'

Information you have requested is exempt under section 21(1) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 21 exempts information if this information is reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. Section 21 is an absolute exemption and the Cabinet Office is not required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information. The information you require on government departments can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/>. You should contact individual government departments for any further information.'

Request for an Internal Review

On 10 February, you requested an Internal Review of your request for information. You wrote:

'Thank you for the response I believe it is not easily accessible to find and view all of the information that I have requested all the government departments have their own page.'

Outcome of the Internal Review

I have carefully reviewed the handling of your request and I consider that the exemptions at section 21(1) of the Freedom of Information Act (the Act) were properly applied.

This decision was made because information is exempt from disclosure under section 21(1) of the Act if that information is reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. Section 21 is an absolute exemption and the Cabinet Office is not required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information. The information you requested can be found by other means. I have therefore concluded that I should uphold the decision given in our letter.

However, under section 16(1) of the Act, public authorities have a duty to provide advice and assistance to individuals making requests for information under FOIA. Therefore, in this internal review we can provide further details about how the information you requested can be located.

You may find it useful to note that the following link provides a list of every government department. Contact details for each government department can also be found via this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations>.

You may also find it useful to see the latest budget for every governmental department at the time of your request: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spending-review-2020-documents/spending-review-2020#departmental-settlements>. Please bear in mind that this document was last updated 15 December 2020.

I have considered the points you make about how our original response of 10 February does not provide you with information that is easily accessible as each department has their own page. However, I do not consider that this means that the information you have requested does not meet the definition of readily available. The information you requested is readily available in the public domain and the Act does not require public authorities to create new information to answer requests. However, we hope that the refined links that we have provided in this internal review satisfies your request.

The Information Commissioner

This response ends the complaints process provided by the Cabinet Office. If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

Rachel Anderson
Head of Freedom of Information
Cabinet Office