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Mr Steve Elibank

Sent via e-mail (request-35255-494db06c@whatdotheyknow.com)

27 June 2011

Dear Mr Elibank,

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT: REQUEST FOR INTERNAL REVIEW

Internal Review Reference Number: IR 305056
Fol Reference Number: FOI 300274

I refer to our answer given last June regarding the information you requested in your email dated 16 May 2010 regarding the payment of Public Duties Cost Allowances and your subsequent request for an Internal Review of that response.

May I first of all apologise for the excessive delay in providing a response to your request for an Internal Review; an error in a part of the system unfortunately led us to believe that a response had already been provided.

I note that you have now dropped your request for a copy of each piece of documentary evidence provided.

I have carefully reviewed the handling of your request. I can confirm that the Cabinet Office holds information specified in your request, but I should explain that it does not do so in a format that would easily provide the information in the manner and detail that you have requested. Despite the narrower scope of your question, I am of the view that the amount of work which would need to be undertaken to locate [or retrieve] the information would be in excess of the appropriate limit under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 1(1) does not oblige the Cabinet Office to comply with this request for information because we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit. However, we take the initial view that the information requested would be likely to be exempt from release in any event. This type of information is likely to be exempt under section 40(2) in reliance

on section 40(3)(a)(i) – Personal Information of the Freedom of Information Act.

I also consider that section 41(1) which protects information provided in confidence is likely to apply to some of the information in scope of your request.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by Cabinet Office. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RS' with a large loop and a trailing flourish.

Roger Smethurst