



Home Office

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L Hart

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3 December 2013

Dear Sir/Madam

Freedom of Information request (reference number: 29229)

I am writing further to your email of 8 October 2013 regarding your request for information about the Quilliam Foundation. Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You will find our response set out in the Annex. Some information has been withheld from you under section 24 of the Act (national security). Section 24 is a qualified exemption, which means that the Home Office is not required to release information if the balance of the public interest lies in favour of withholding it. Arguments for and against disclosure in terms of the public interest test are also set out in the Annex.

In keeping with the Freedom of Information Act, we assume that all information can be released to the public unless it is exempt. In line with normal practice we are therefore releasing the information which you requested via the Home Office website.

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: **29229**. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

Information Access Team
Home Office
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

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Information Access Team

Annex

Freedom of Information request from L Hart (reference: 29229)

Information requested

I am requesting information on Home Office funding and communication with the Quilliam Foundation.

Please provide me with:

1. A breakdown of all Home Office funding given to the Quilliam Foundation for the last five years, and any future planned/allocated spend. I would like the total amounts given and information on specific projects funding was given for, if any.

2. Copies of all correspondence between the Home Office and the Quilliam Foundation for the year 2013.

Response

In response to request (1), we are able to disclose the total funding to the Quilliam Foundation for the years 2008-2012 in the format below. Please note that the Home Office does not hold funding information for the Quilliam Foundation prior to 2008. The Home Office does not currently fund the Quilliam Foundation.

Financial Year	Funding amount (£)
2008-2009	674,608.00
2009-2010	396,882.80
2010-2011	158,896.66
2011-2012	26,993.34

After careful consideration we have decided that information relating to the Home Office funding of specific projects is exempt from disclosure under section 24 of the Freedom of Information Act. This provides that information can be withheld where disclosure would prejudice the national security of the UK and the public interest falls in favour of applying the exemption. Section 24 of the Act is a qualified exemption and requires the consideration of the public interest. These arguments are set out at the end of this Annex.

In response to request (2), we would advise that there has been no correspondence between the Home Office and the Quilliam Foundation for the year 2013.

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(1) – National Security

24(1) Information which does not fall within section 23(1) is exempt information if exemption from section 1(1)(b) is required for the purpose of safeguarding national security.

Considerations in favour of disclosing the information

Disclosing information detailing the Home Office funding of specific projects would generally help towards enhancing the openness of government and help the public understand the nature and work of the organisation engaged during the implementation and delivery of the Prevent strategy. Providing further information about Home Office work in this area would inform public debate and help to develop public confidence in the Prevent strategy.

Considerations in favour withholding the information

Disclosing information detailing the Home Office funding of specific projects could potentially reveal detailed information about the work of the Home Office to reduce threats to the UK from individuals developing extremist ideas. Releasing this information could also potentially result in disengagement of vulnerable individuals within communities, which could facilitate the propagation of extremist values. These are the values that are a threat to the security of the UK. These developments would serve to undermine the effectiveness of the Home Office and hence weaken and prejudice the national security of the UK.

Conclusion

We assess that safeguarding national security interests is of overriding importance and that, in this instance, the public interest is best served by the Home Office withholding information detailing the funding of specific projects.