

Ms Nicola Humphries
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

By email to: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk



Charity Commission Direct
PO Box 1227, Liverpool L69 3UG

t: 01823 345158

f: 01823 345008

Your Ref: FS50365354

Our Ref: HH/C-319289-0B19/FDT

Date: 11 August 2011

Your case Reference: FS50365354 - Mr William Thackeray

I am writing in response to your letter of 15 July in which you asked the Commission to explain how the time to supply the information in the requested format is broken down.

We have re-estimated the time it would take to scan and send the information (which has been prepared to send to Mr Thackeray by post) by the preferred means of communication. As you will see from what I say later in this letter, following this re-estimate, we have concluded that the Commission cannot rely on the exemption contained in section 12 of the Freedom of the Information Act 2000 (Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit). I will therefore arrange for the information to be scanned and sent by email to Mr Thackeray.

The original time estimate was based on how long it would take to scan and email the information which had been prepared to be sent to Mr Thackeray using our standard scanning settings and email system. It also took into account the time it would take to name each document, place each document in the relevant folder in our electronic records management system and perform quality checks. It did not, however, take into account the time which had already been taken to prepare the information to be sent by post.

Following the advice given in your letter of 15 July, I asked the relevant division to provide a breakdown of the estimated time it would take to communicate the information electronically, excluding those elements which you advised could not be included. However, as explained in my letter dated 29 July, there is conflicting information in our internal records about the technical

On track to meet your deadline?

Visit www.charitycommission.gov.uk for help
on filing your annual return and accounts

General Enquiries: 0845 300 0218

Textphone: 0845 300 0219

Website: www.charitycommission.gov.uk

parameters for sending information in electronic format using our email system and the division was unable to provide a reliable breakdown. The Commission is therefore most grateful to the Information Commissioner for allowing us to run further sample tests to work out how long it would take to scan and email the information which we have prepared to send to Mr Thackeray by post.

An initial sample test suggested that it would take approximately 9.5 hours to scan and email the information using our standard scanning settings. In view of this result, I took advice from our IT division about whether we could reduce the time it would take to scan and email the information by reducing the size of the electronic documents created by the scans. Our IT division very kindly worked out a way of reducing the size of the electronic documents by changing the scanning settings.

The results of our further sample tests using the changed settings indicated that it would take approximately 3.5 hours to perform the scan and send the emails. The estimate is based on an assumption that the information would have to be sent in approximately 21 separate emails so that each email would not exceed the 15Mb limit imposed by the GSI network.

In order to provide a full and comprehensive reply to your request for a more detailed breakdown of the time estimate we have provided, I also asked the relevant division to provide me with details of the amount of time it took to:

- determine whether the Charity Commission holds the information;
- locate the information, or a document which may contain it;
- retrieve the information, or a document which may contain it; and
- extract the information from a document containing it.

I have been advised that these elements of preparing the information took approximately 15 hours.

Therefore, on the basis of our further sample tests, we estimate that it would take approximately 18.5 hours to supply the information in the requested form.

The Charity Commission takes its responsibility under the Freedom of Information Act very seriously and we seek to learn from cases which raise new issues about complying with those obligations. There are a number of learning points for us from this case and we are considering how we might improve our staff guidance using the lessons learned.

I hope this information is helpful, but please let me know if you require any further details regarding this matter.

Yours sincerely

Helen Hinchliffe

CharityTribunalTeam@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk