

26 May 2010

Steve Elibank
request-31040-8ac4fb41@whatdotheyknow.com
(by email only)

*Dear Mr Elibank***REVIEW OF REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000**

Thank you for your email of 30 April 2010 which requested that I conduct an internal review of the handling of your FOI request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. In your request you asked:

....please provide me with a *full* copy of the Manual of Protective Security, and a *full* copy of the Security Policy Framework: not the redacted/limited version(s) made available online.

Firstly may I apologise for the late response to your initial FOI request. This delay was caused by technical problems with Cabinet Office IT systems on 19 April; the response letter was issued on 20 April once these problems had been resolved.

The Cabinet Office has explained that your FOI request is being dealt with in two parts; and that we require more time to consider public interest factors relating to the Security Policy Framework. We wrote to you on 19 May 2010 to advise that this sizable project is still underway. We estimate that it will take at least another 20 working days to complete and will endeavour to provide you with the information from the SPF by 20 June 2010.

With regards to the Manual of Protective Security, information has been withheld citing sections 21 (information available to applicant by other means), 23 (information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters), 24 (national security), 27 (international relations) and 31 (law enforcement). I have reviewed the use of these exemptions and am satisfied that they have been applied appropriately. Where the exemptions are qualified (Sections 24, 27 and 31) I have reassessed the balance of the public interest; the main arguments were set out in the response letter dated 19 April 2010. Having considered all the circumstances of this case, I am content that the public interest in maintaining the exemptions continues to outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information.

It has been explained that the releasable information from the Manual of Protective Security is available to you in hard copy format. The response to your request explained that it was not reasonably practicable to convert the information in order to send it to you electronically as you had requested. This decision took account of the staff time and resources that would be required to give effect to your preference, including the need to create several new documents in order to send the information by email.

Under section 11 of the Freedom of Information Act a public authority has to give effect to your preference in relation to the means by which the communication of information should be made in so far as is reasonably practicable. Having carefully considered all the circumstances involved in the handling of the request, I believe the decision of 27 April 2010 was correct. I would like to reiterate the offer to provide the information in hard copy format and invite you to provide a mailing address for this purpose.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

Yours sincerely,

Zara Smart

PP. SUE GRAY

