



Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

Department for Business, Energy &
Industrial Strategy
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FOI2019/05132

15 April 2019

Dear Don Priest,

Thank you for your email of 18 March 2019 where you requested the following information:

1 What security rules, codes, protocols, procedures and precautions are taken to ensure that the CIA, GCHQ /Cabinet office are not eavesdropping / spying on staff, officials and ministers in your Department with social media media eg Google, Facebook as a conduit?

2 What summaries / reports does the department have about its cyber security? Please indicate the public facing reports.

3 Has the Department risk assessed the threat posed by social media, especially that owned by foreign corporations and countries and especially US and CIA? What summaries does the department have of this information, including any public facing ones?

4 What social media apps are allowed on the Departments phones and computers? Which are installed?

5 Are Facebook, Google and Twitter apps allowed to be installed and or used on Department computers and mobile phones?

6 Are private, ie individually owned, mobile phones and computers with social media apps installed such as Facebook, Google and Twitter allowed in Department meetings, committees, and in the office environment?

8 If the answer to Qu 5 and Qu 6 are yes, how does the Department stop companies / CIA spying utilising microphones, cameras, and GPS data on those devices?

9 Has the department informed staff of the risk of spying and eavesdropping via social media apps? If so please send a copy of the memo / paper.

10 Has the Department contributed material to the Cabinet Office as part of the cyber security strategy? If so what?

Questions on Q sometimes written as QAnon, #Q #QAnon

(Background information on Q follows the questions)

11 Has the Secretary, Ministers or the top 3 civil servants in the Foreign Office been briefed about QAnon?

12 If so please indicate the date and the type of recorded information that has been briefed so that any future request may be narrowed down, as per Section 16 of the UK freedom of Information Act and Information Commissioner Guidance.

13 Has the Department any other recorded information on Q / QAnon ? If so please indicate the date and the type of recorded information that has been briefed so that any future request may be narrowed down, as per Section 16 of the UK freedom of Information Act and Information Commissioner Guidance. (If there is a mass of information that will take the request over the time limit, please disregard this question)

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'), you have the right to:

- know whether we hold the information you require
- be provided with that information (subject to any exemptions under the Act which may apply).

I can confirm that the Department holds information falling within the terms of your request. However, we need more time to consider your request.

The Freedom of Information Act ('the Act') obliges us to respond to requests promptly and in any case not later than 20 working days after receiving your request. However, when a 'qualified' exemption or exemptions may apply to the information and an accompanying public interest test is engaged, section 10(3) of the Act allows the time for response to be extended, in which case a full response must be provided within such time as is reasonable in all circumstances. The 'Qualified' exemptions which apply to the information falling within the terms of your request are:

Section 24: National Security

Section 31: Law Enforcement

The Department has not yet reached a decision on the application of these exemptions or the balance of the public interest. Due to the need to consider, in all the circumstances of the case, where the balance of the public interest lies in relation to the information that you have requested, the Department will not be able to respond to your request in full within 20 working days.

I hope to let you have a response by **16 May 2019**.

Appeals procedure

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original request and should be addressed to the Information Rights Unit:

Information Rights Unit
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET
Email: FOI.Requests@beis.gov.uk

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

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,

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy