

Corporate Services Division

Personnel and Training Branch
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Office of the
**First Minister and
Deputy First Minister**
www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk

Mr D Moore
request-201623-24857286@whatdotheyknow.com

Your Ref:

Our Ref: FOI 2014- 024

Date: 4 April 2014

Dear Mr Moore

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for your request, received on 12 March 2014, for information about Special Advisors' salaries. We have completed our search for this information and wish to advise that the specific detail you have requested (provided in the Annex) is being withheld under the terms of the exemption in section 40 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 40(2) – Personal Information

In relation to this exemption, the information you have requested cannot be released without disclosing the personal information of individuals, or it would allow those individuals to be identified.

Section 1(1) of the Data Protection Act (DPA) defines the “processing” of information or data as including its disclosure. The first data protection principle (set out in Schedule 1 of the DPA) requires that –

Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless –

- (a) at least one of the conditions in Schedule 2 is met, and*
- (b) in the case of sensitive personal data, at least one of the conditions in Schedule 3 is also met.*

In this case, none of the conditions in Schedule 2 of the DPA have been met and therefore to release this information would be in breach of the first data protection principle.

Special Advisors are paid on personal pay points contained within two broad paybands. I can however confirm that OFMDFM Special Advisors receive a salary in the pay band B £58,452 to £91,809.

In line with their experience and skills each of the Special Advisers were appointed to a starting salary in payband B.

I hope you find this helpful. If you are unhappy with the level of service you have received in relation to our handling of this request, you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. You should contact –

Director of HR and Corporate Services
Room E4.20
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST
BT4 3SR

Tel - 028 9052 0694
Email - foi@ofmdfmni.gov.uk

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you then 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

The Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless the internal review procedure outlined above has been completed.

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<http://www.ipo.gov.uk/types/copy/c-other.htm>

Please contact me if you have any queries about this letter, remembering to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Ena Stanfield



REQUEST

I request the current salary paid to each Special Adviser working in the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (Northern Ireland). I am aware of that the salary scale for these individuals is published, but I am specifically requesting details of the actual salary.

I also request the point on the salary scale that each person was on when they were appointed to their role and if not appointed to the bottom point of the scale, the justifications provided for that.