



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA
FOI.Team@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk

10 March 2014

Dear Mr Bickers

Our ref: FOI319036

Thank you for your email of 10 February in which you request:

- a. Copies of all instructions and documentation given to Number 10 pass holders when receiving their pass to the building, ie what instructions are they given on how to use and look after their pass.*
- b. Since 01 September 2010, how many Number 10 pass holders have been investigated for inappropriate use of their pass e.g. allowing someone else to enter the building.*
- c. If there has been at least one investigation, please tell me what sanctions were imposed on the pass holder(s)*
- d. Please can I see all documentation giving guidance on how to punish for inappropriate users of a pass."*

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I can confirm that we hold information in relation to your request.

This information is being withheld as it falls under the exemptions at section 24(1) (national security), section 31(1)(a) (law enforcement) and section 38 (a) and (b) (health and safety).

Sections 24(1), 31(1)(a), 38(1)(a) and (b) apply because to release any information relating to the security arrangements in place for protecting the Prime Minister's Office would reveal information which would be useful to

persons with harmful intent towards the Prime Minister, his family, those working in Downing Street and visitors.

Section 24(1) – National Security

The Cabinet Office recognises that there is a general public interest in openness and transparency.

However, disclosing this information would allow others to draw an inference about some of the protection arrangements in place in Downing Street, which (by nature of the office of Prime Minister) would prejudice national security.

Disclosure would therefore increase the risk of criminal, including terrorist, attacks on the Prime Minister and his family, Downing Street staff and others, and the Downing Street estate which could lead to serious harm to people, including the loss of life, damage to the structure of the building, as well as reputational damage to the UK in our international standing.

There is a very strong public interest in maintaining the security of the Downing Street estate and all who live and work there. We have determined that in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest disclosing this information.

Section 31(1)(a) – Law Enforcement

It follows that the compromise of specific security operations or arrangements damages the capability of the police to prevent crime - in these circumstances, a potential attack on the Prime Minister and others, and/or a building of national significance. The public interest therefore falls in favour of not disclosing information which would allow others to draw an inference about some of the security arrangements in place.

Section 38(1)(a) and (b) – Health and Safety

Section 38(1)(a) and (b) are engaged because the planning and carrying out of such attacks would endanger the health and safety of the Prime Minister, his family, visitors and the staff in his Office.

We accept that there are factors in favour of disclosure (openness and transparency), but we have concluded that these factors are outweighed by the much stronger public interest in withholding the information – in this case arrangements for access to the Prime Minister's Office – in order to reduce the risk of such attacks and thereby not endangering the safety of individuals in or around the Downing Street estate.

We have determined that the public interest in this case strongly favours maintaining the exemptions because of the importance of preventing criminal or terrorist action, and thereby safeguarding national security and protecting the health and safety of those who would be put at risk from the disclosure of this information.

Yours sincerely

NS Howard

NICHOLAS HOWARD

Mr S Bickers



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

If you are unhappy with the level of service you have received from this office in relation to any aspect of your request, you may ask for an internal review.

You should contact:

Roger Smethurst
Head of Knowledge and Information Management
Cabinet Office
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

email: foi.team@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk

You should note that the Cabinet Office will not normally accept an application for internal review if it is received more than two months after the date that the reply was issued.

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

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

