



Mike McKie

By email: request-669846-455f7721@whatdotheyknow.com

FOI Reference: FOI2020/07625
07/07/2020

Dear Mike McKie

I refer to your request where you asked:

"I would like to know (for the period of the latest Honours review 2015-2019) what percentage of publicly nominated Honours nominees were awarded Honours - in other words, of the total submissions received by the Cabinet Office for this period, what number were awarded Honours.

If this information is not available, what is the proportion of recipients for the same period that were nominated by the public?"

We have considered your request and can confirm that some of the information in scope of this request is held by the Cabinet Office.

In regards to your question regarding the number of submissions received by the Cabinet Office, the Honours and Appointments Secretariat receives around 3,500 nominations per year.

In relation to the exact total of nominations received by the Cabinet Office within the period request, we consider that Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act applies. Section 12 relieves public authorities of the duty to comply with a request for information if the cost of dealing with it would exceed the appropriate limit.

The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government. This is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3 1/2 working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating,

retrieving and extracting it, below the appropriate limit. The work necessary to ascertain the answers to the other questions you pose is prohibitively time-consuming as the information is not held in the form that you request. Within our records, information regarding nominations is not categorised by the year in which the Cabinet Office received it. A change of IT system in 2019 means that this information is held in multiple formats in multiple databases. In FOI terms answering this question would exceed the cost of compliance as calculated by staff time costs under Section 12. In relation to all your questions save the one mentioned above, your request is therefore refused under that section of the Act. Additionally, some of this information is not held: the Cabinet Office does not hold information on public nominations made to the FCO through its public nomination process, nor nominations made by the public to other Government departments.

The information you have requested relating to the number of successful nominations is exempt under section 21(1) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 21 exempts information if this is reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. Section 21 is an absolute exemption and the Cabinet Office is not required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information. All honours lists are published on the London Gazette website at www.thegazette.co.uk. Additionally, honours lists dating back to New Year 2008 honours list are published at www.gov.uk/government/collections/honours-reform-and-operation and at <https://www.gov.uk/honours/honours-lists>, which also provides the number of recipients on each list who have undertaken outstanding work in their communities either in a voluntary or paid capacity.

Finally, in regards to the proportion of honours recipients who were nominated in the same period, I am able to provide some general information that may assist.

Nominations which are made by members of the public come directly to the Cabinet Office. Alongside this, organisations, charities and businesses make nominations directly to other government departments. As a complete record of all nominations is not held by the Cabinet Office, and because nominations can be brought before the independent honours committees numerous times before a final decision is made, we are not able to answer the question relating to the total number of public nominations which were successful within a particular timeframe.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request or wish to request an internal review, you should write to:

Eirian Walsh Atkins
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall

London
SW1A 2AS

email: foi-team@cabinetoffice.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 your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by Cabinet Office. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. B.', written in a cursive style.

FOI Team
Cabinet Office