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Xxxxxxx Xxxxx

Reference: FOICR 17781/11

Date: 14 March 2011

Dear Xxxxxxx

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your e-mail of 15 February, in which you ask for information on the National Identity Scheme. Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Your questions and the responses are detailed below.

In

http://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/reduction_in_price_of_passports#outgoing-109221 you made a number of assertions regarding passports. These sought to justify the increase in the price of a passport from £18.00 in 1995 to £77.50 fifteen years later, an over fourfold increase in fifteen years, but were extremely unconvincing.

I refer to http://www.publicservice.co.uk/news_story.asp?id=14243 "Scrapping biometric passports to save £134m".

Please assist me with my enquiries into you activities by answering the following questions.

1) The negotiations referred to in the article are presumably not concluded. Please provide the figure for the costs saved by scrapping fingerprinting of people who are not criminals but simply wish to go about their lawful business.

We estimate that the cancellation of ID cards and the National Identity Register will realise savings of £86m over four years and further savings in the region of £134m will be realised by halting the introduction of fingerprint biometric passports.

The negotiations with suppliers to cancel or amend contracts signed under the National Identity Service have been concluded. The payments to suppliers associated with cancellation of these contracts are as follows:

Supplier	Compensation Payment
Thales	£2,002 k
Cable and Wireless	£ 68,k
3M	£183 k
Total	£2,253,k

In addition the Identity and Passport Service (IPS) is paying Thales to decommission ID card systems and securely to destroy the personal data held in these systems. These payments will not exceed £400k.

Other contracts held by IPS and the UK Border Agency (UKBA) have been modified as a result of the decision to cancel ID cards and halt second biometric passports. No compensation payments to suppliers were necessary in the course of modifying these contracts.

2) If your assertions in response to my earlier enquiry were truthful then a reduction in the price of passports is now due. Please provide copies of all documents where reductions in the price of passports is discussed.

Please see the response to your earlier information request numbered 17267/11 which is attached for your convenience.

A reply which is not in plain text format will be deemed to be a refusal to answer. It may be that copies of documents cannot be provided in plain text format, if that is the case please contact me to discuss a suitable format.

Section 11(1) of the Act states that where an applicant expresses a preference for communication to be made in a particular form the public authority should, as far as is reasonably practicable, comply with this preference. This section of the Act refers to the

form in which the information will be provided eg. electronic or paper. However, it does not cover the way in which the information is presented. IPS is acting in accordance with Home Office instructions which recommend that all electronic departmental responses are issued in the portable document format (pdf).

In keeping with the Freedom of Information Act, we assume that all information can be released to the public unless it is exempt. In line with normal practice we are therefore releasing the information which you requested via the IPS website.

I hope that this information meets your requirements. I would like to assure you that we have provided you with all relevant information that IPS holds.

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to the address below, quoting reference 17781/11. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

Information Access Team
Home Office
Ground Floor, Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
e-mail: FOIRequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff who were not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely

X Xxxxxx
Parliamentary and Correspondence Management Team