

The Department for Communities and Local Government does not hold the information you have requested. The Department's response to each element of your request, using the numbers appearing in your e-mail of 27 January, is:

(i) in accordance with paragraph 5 of the *Model Contract for Special Advisers* issued by the Cabinet Office, the performance of a special adviser is assessed by the relevant Minister. Information relating to such assessments is not held by the Department, in connection with Departmental business, for the purposes of the FOI Act

(ii) no possible contract or code of conduct breaches by special advisers has been reported in the Department since May 2010 and, therefore, the Department hold no information falling within this element of your request. The Department is not able to comply with the second element of this part of your request, which asked for the requested information in respect of "*any other propriety issues around the performance of special advisers, senior civil servants and/or ministers*" without further clarification as your request, given that it extends to members of the senior civil service in the Department, covers a relatively large number of individuals and the term "propriety issues" could potentially relate to any aspect of performance or conduct;

(iii) no disciplinary matters concerning the performance of special advisers and/or ministers have been reported in the Department since May 2010 and the Department therefore holds no information falling within this part of your request;

(iv) the Department holds no information in relation to any briefings having been made to the media by special advisers in the Department about Jenny Watson;

(v) the Department does not spend any part of its allocated budget on "*political matters*" and therefore does not hold any information falling within the first element of this part of your request. The Department is not able to comply with the second element without further clarification as "*any other matter around the propriety or regularity of the Department's spending*" is potentially very broad in scope and could relate, for example, to any aspect of the Department's finances, including routine assurance and audit activities. As with (ii) above, however, if you would like to be more specific then the Department will be able to further consider this part of your request; and

(vi) there have been no requests for Ministerial directions within the Department since May 2010 and the Department therefore holds no information falling within this part of your request.