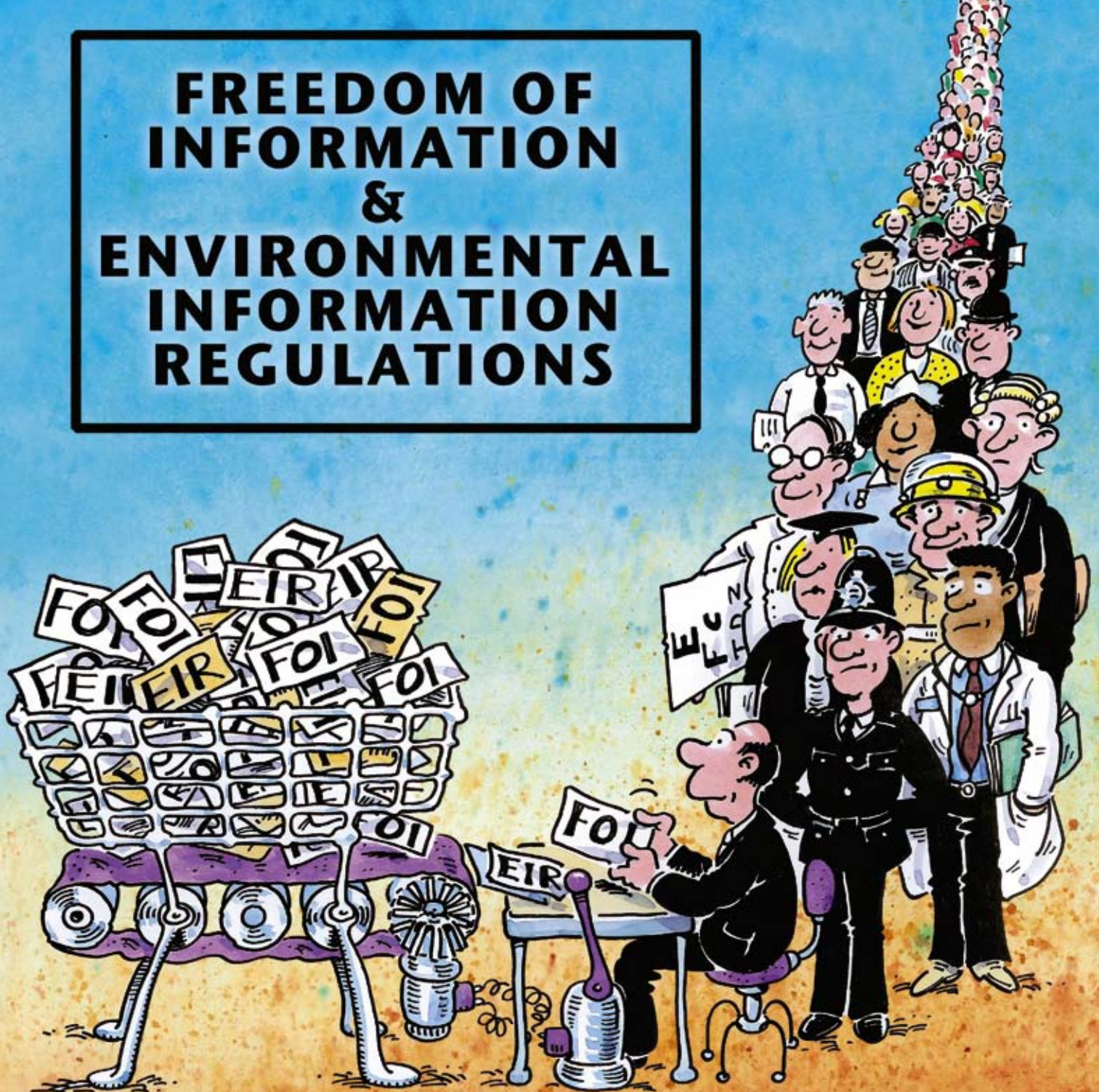


# FREEDOM OF INFORMATION & ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION REGULATIONS



Hints for Practitioners handling FOI/EIR requests

## Key principles in answering requests for information

Ensuring that a public authority answers requests for information promptly is a shared responsibility.

- Make sure that people in your authority know who is responsible for FOI/EIR.
- Pass on without delay any request which is not your responsibility.
- Practise good records management to ensure information can be quickly identified and retrieved.
- Remember that the 20 working days limit begins as soon as a request is received by a public authority. Within this timescale a public authority must either provide the information or explain, as fully as possible, why it is not going to do so.



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# 1. Introduction

Since 1 January 2005 all requests for information received by a public authority have had to be answered in accordance with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs). The only exception will be an individual's request for their own personal data (Subject Access Request) which must be handled under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. In many respects the FOI Act and the EIRs (2004) have not fundamentally altered the way public authorities interact with members of the public. For many years government departments have been required to respond to requests for information (referred to in the rest of this booklet as "requests") in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (the Code), and the EIRs (1992). The NHS has been subject to a Code of Practice on Openness, and the principle of openness has been enshrined in local government legislation. These regimes, alongside the Environmental Information Regulations 1992, had already established the principle that information should be disclosed wherever possible.

The access legislation is primarily about a culture change from "need to know" to "right to know". For public authorities it represents a balance

between greater openness and transparency of decision making on the one hand and the need to protect information where disclosure would cause harm or otherwise be contrary to the public interest on the other.

It is also important to remember that the legislation brings benefits. If public authorities implement it correctly and adopt a policy of greater openness, as far as reasonably possible, they can establish greater public trust and confidence in government.

Whatever local arrangements public authorities have made to handle requests, the same principles apply. This booklet is intended to give an overview of the actions required and the factors that need to be taken into consideration across the board. The precise allocation of responsibilities will need to be confirmed within your organisation, and this booklet should therefore be regarded as complementary to any more specific arrangements. The generic "you" in the text could therefore refer to an individual or a team.

For more detailed guidance please see the links and contacts in section 15.

## 2. What information is subject to the FOI Act and EIRs?

All recorded information held by, or on behalf of, a public authority is within the scope of the Act or the Regulations (although both recognise that the disclosure of personal data is subject to the Data Protection Act). The legislation applies regardless of the age, format, origin or classification of information. It covers files, letters, databases, loose reports, e-mails, office notebooks, videos, photographs, wall charts and maps etc. It extends to closed files and archived material as well as information in current use.

Remember, you are responsible for considering all information held by your organisation when a request for information is received – historical information relating to your area of responsibility, as well as information in current use. In addition to information that has been consigned to the archives, remember that other parts of your public authority may hold information that is relevant to a request: the onus is on you to consult them.

You should note that, in addition to information that is produced by your authority, the legislation applies to information that has been received from others. This could include other public authorities, companies, organisations and members of the public. Such information must

therefore be considered when it is relevant to a request. In general, it will be necessary to consult the originators about the prospect of disclosure. Their views will be important if it is necessary to assess the balance of public interest in the disclosure of information, but you should note that they do not have a veto – the final decision on whether to release or withhold information rests with the public authority holding the information. You may find it useful to also refer to the Code of Practice on the discharge of public authorities' functions under Part I of the Act (issued under Section 45) and the EIR Code of Practice (see section 15 for links to these).



### 3. FOI & EIR: key duties

This guide covers both FOI and EIR, as there are many similarities between the two regimes. One key point to note is that any request for “environmental information” must be answered in accordance with the EIRs rather than the FOI Act. It is possible that in some cases both regimes will be relevant. If you are dealing with a mixed request, it is essential to be clear which parts of the information fall under which regime so as to apply the correct exemption or exception if information has to be withheld. If in doubt seek advice.

#### Provision of information on request

Under FOI there is a requirement to provide a substantive response to any request for information promptly and in any event within 20 working days. There is some scope to extend this timescale if a qualified exemption is being considered and it is necessary to assess the balance of public interest. However, you must still respond within 20 days, saying which exemption is being considered and giving an estimated date of response. This extended timescale must be reasonable, and guidance issued by the Information Commissioner suggests that a reply within a further 20 days

should be possible even when it is necessary to consider the balance of public interest. Bank holidays and weekends, which might be regarded as holidays within a public authority, are excluded from the calculation of working days. The EIRs also require requests to be answered within 20 working days but there is provision to extend the response time to 40 working days, but only for complex and voluminous requests.

#### Proactive release of information

All public authorities must adopt and maintain a Publication Scheme. This represents a commitment to release information proactively.



## How to tell if a request is FOI or EIR

“Environmental information” can be summarised as

(a) the state of the elements of the environment, such as air and atmosphere, water, soil, land, landscape and natural sites and the interaction between these elements

(b) factors such as substances, energy, noise, radiation or waste affecting or likely to affect the elements of the environment

(c) measures such as policies, legislation, plans, programmes, environmental agreements, and activities affecting or likely to affect or protect the elements of the environment

(d) reports on the implementation of environmental legislation

(e) cost-benefit and other economic analyses and assumptions used within the framework of environmental measures and activities

(f) the state of human health and safety, including the contamination of the food chain, conditions of human life, cultural sites and built structures in as much as they are or may be affected by the state of the elements of the environment



## 4. Identifying and recording an FOI or EIR request

Any correspondence could include a request for information. If it is written (this includes e-mail), legible, gives the name of the applicant, an address for reply (which could be electronic), and includes a description of the information required, then it will fall within the scope of the legislation. It is very important to note that the correspondent does not need to mention the FOI Act or the EIRs. Also note that the EIRs do not specify that requests must be in writing. This means that telephone requests on environmental matters will also be valid (although in practice it is advisable to make a written record of any verbal requests received). Indeed, as noted in Section 8, public authorities are under a general duty to assist anyone who has made a request or proposes to request information. You must therefore keep this in mind if you receive any approach from anyone. It may be advisable to keep records of the requests you deal with, particularly to ensure that you meet legislative deadlines.

### What is an information request?

It is very important to draw a distinction between requests and routine correspondence. Requests for information that can be provided without any question – such as recruitment brochures, leaflets, press releases and the text of public speeches – should be treated as business as usual. Requests which are not for recorded information, but instead ask questions, such as “please explain your policy on x” or “please explain your decision to do y” are not requests for recorded information and therefore should be treated as routine correspondence. Public authorities will need to decide for themselves if they wish to record these requests.

But as a “rule of thumb”:

- If any information requested is held and needs to be actively considered then the request should be formally treated as a request for information.
- If it seems likely that the requested information cannot be disclosed, it should be formally recorded as a request for information.





## 5. Applying exemptions and the public interest test

Both the FOI Act and EIR provide a right of access to information. Information should therefore be released wherever possible. However, it would clearly not be appropriate for all information to be made public. This is recognised by “exemptions” in the FOI Act and “exceptions” in the EIR (see Section 12 for a list of exceptions and exemptions).

A few of the FOI exemptions are “absolute”, meaning that the information can be withheld without considering any public interest in disclosure. Nevertheless, it is important to ensure that the decision to cite an absolute exemption is valid, as this may itself be challenged. You need to consider whether it would be unlawful to release the information covered by an absolute exemption. In some cases, consideration should be given as to whether it is feasible to release some of the information on a discretionary basis, if you have the power to do so.

The majority of the exemptions in the FOI Act and all of the EIR exceptions are “qualified” and therefore the main consideration, if one of these exemptions or exceptions applies, is whether the public interest favours withholding or disclosing the information.

Even if an exception or a qualified exemption applies, the public interest in withholding the information has to outweigh the public interest in releasing, if information is to be withheld. In some cases this will be clear cut, but quite often it will not. There is no fixed definition of “public interest” and this assessment will essentially be a matter of judgement on a case by case basis. This judgement can best be made by the staff who are familiar with the subject concerned, as they will understand the nature of any sensitivities. However, you should consider carefully who might be able to inform your decision in each particular case. Where commercial interests are involved, consultation with those affected should inform, although not necessarily determine, the public interest.

Factors which are likely to argue in favour of disclosure will include furthering public understanding and debate on a key policy proposal or decision, or promoting accountability and transparency about a particular decision taken by a public authority or about the use of public money. There is also an accepted public interest in allowing individuals to understand the reasoning behind decisions which affect their lives or which have an effect on public health and safety. However it is also

accepted that “what the public are interested in” and “what is in the public interest” are not necessarily the same thing. Harmful effects of disclosure must also be taken into account.

Undesirable outcomes which could tip the balance against disclosure include endangering public safety, undermining effective government by discouraging frankness and candour in internal communications, and harming a public authority's competitive position in a commercial matter.

When a qualified FOI exemption (or any EIR exception) is cited, the balance of factors for and against disclosure must be explained in your reply to the applicant.

## Disclosing information

Before releasing information you must be satisfied that you have the necessary authority to do so – check with the appropriate person in your authority. This is especially important if information proposed for release has a protective marking, if the material was originated outside your public authority, or was produced under the terms of a contract or any other collaborative or legally binding arrangement.



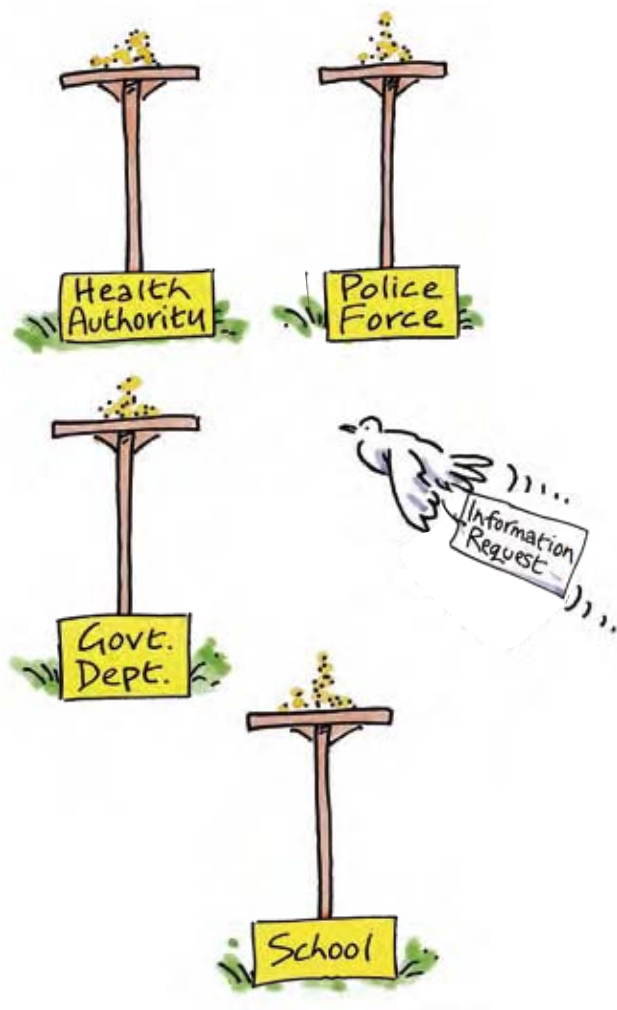
## 6. Who is responsible for answering a request?

Arrangements for answering a request will vary between public authorities. Some authorities will deal with requests centrally and in others it will be the relevant section.

If you receive a request that is not for your area, pass it on. **DO THIS QUICKLY!** The 20 working day period starts when the request is received by a public authority, not when it reaches the "right" desk.

If the information requested requires the involvement of more than one section, or if it involves information provided to the public authority by a third party (maybe a contractor, another public authority, or a campaigning organisation), it will usually be necessary to consult all those concerned.

In some cases, it will be necessary to consider the implications of disclosure beyond the boundaries of your authority. It could have an effect on future relationships with contractors or on individuals who have supplied information to your authority.





Remember that the response you give will be on behalf of your public authority as a whole. You must therefore consider all information held by, or on behalf of, your public authority, not just that held within your area. This also means that you will need to assess the balance of public interest in the light of the views expressed by others.

It is very important to consider the possibility that releasing (or withholding) information in response to a request could have wider implications. The normal procedures for informing the most senior people in your organisation should therefore be followed when appropriate. This will be especially important if there is a prospect that the response may draw criticism or cause embarrassment to your organisation.



In particular, if the information to be disclosed (or the fact that information is being withheld) is novel, contentious or in any other way likely to be newsworthy, you may need to contact and brief staff who deal with enquiries from the media e.g. your press office. Wherever possible this should be done several days in advance of release.

## 7. Information or documents?

The legislation gives an entitlement to information rather than documents, although the information requested will often consist of a whole document. Remember that, although most information is held in the form of documents, it is also necessary to consider other media such as video tapes, microfiche or photographs. This will obviously have a bearing on the manner in which any information is disclosed.

It is not necessary to create new information in order to answer a request, even if this can be easily done from other information that is held. However, the authority should provide the requestor with advice and assistance so that they may understand what information is held and could be requested.

Also note that both the FOI Act and the EIRs allow applicants to express a preference about the form in which information is communicated. In particular, information may be requested in the form of copies of original documents, a variety of electronic formats, or via an opportunity to inspect the record containing the information. Where practicable and reasonable to do so, you should meet any

such request. If you are unable to comply with an expressed preference you should explain why.

In general, you will have the following options when releasing information:

- If it is not necessary to claim any exemptions and the whole document is relevant to the request, release it in its entirety.
- If sections of the document are exempt, redact (i.e. remove by cutting out) these sections and release the remainder. You should make a note of any redactions with the exemption(s) / exception(s) that apply to each.
- If redaction would make the document incomprehensible or if the relevant information is contained within a small section of a document or dispersed throughout several documents, assemble into a readable format such as a digest.

## Redacting information

There is need for care when information has to be redacted. Be aware that :

- Deletions in MS Word can be reversed if a document is sent electronically.
- If text is blacked out with a marker pen it can remain legible when photocopied.

If a redacted document is transmitted electronically, it should be saved as a pdf file (using Adobe Acrobat Writer), or scanned and saved as an image file. The safest way to redact hard copy documents is by copying the original document, cutting out the redacted sections and photocopying the remaining text.

It is possible that some information contained in a document will not be relevant to the request that has been made. In this case it will generally be appropriate for these sections of the text to be removed. However, if you are satisfied that there is no sensitivity about the additional information, you could consider releasing the whole document.

You should also bear in mind your obligations under other legislation when responding to requests for information, in particular the Disability Discrimination Act. As far as possible, a public authority has a duty to assist applicants by ensuring they receive the information in the form most suitable for them.



## 8. What to do when a request is unclear

There is a requirement under both the FOI Act and the EIRs for applicants to describe the information they want.

The legislation also puts a duty on public authorities to provide advice and assistance to people who have made, or propose to make, a request for information. These parallel obligations will be most evident when a request for information is unclear or it seems possible that it could be satisfied by directing the applicant to another source of information.

The key requirement is to establish a dialogue with the applicant. If clarification of the request is needed in order to identify and locate the information, this must be requested promptly and in any event no later than 20 working days. The day after the clarification is received by the public authority the 20 working day period begins. It will often be helpful to explain what information is readily available, or to explore ways in which a request could be made more specific. This will be particularly important if the original request would be refused due to excessive cost. You should keep a written record of any conversations with the applicant.





## 9. What about fees?

Fees Regulations made under the FOI Act say that requests should be processed without any charge unless the cost involved exceeds £600 for central government and £450 for other public authorities. The range of activities that can be taken into consideration in determining the cost is very limited. It is legitimate to count the time involved in identifying, retrieving and searching for the requested information. You can also count the time taken to extract the information from a document containing it, but not the time associated with deciding whether information should be released or withheld.

Above the appropriate limit, there will be no requirement to proceed with a request, but, as noted above, it will be appropriate in these circumstances to assist the applicant to narrow the scope of the request.

Under the EIRs there is no “cost limit” for dealing with requests but requests that cost a disproportionate amount can be refused on the basis that they are manifestly unreasonable, subject to a public interest test. Any charges imposed must be reasonable, and public authorities should publish a schedule of their charges.



## 10. What to do when information is refused

The reasons for withholding information must be explained to the applicant. It is not sufficient for your reply to simply include a broad statement such as: “prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs”. As a minimum, you must identify a specific exemption/exception as the basis for withholding information and explain why it applies.

If the exemption is not absolute, your reply must set out the “public interest” factors for and against disclosure that were considered. The only exception to providing the reasons for withholding information is if this action would in itself involve disclosure of information that is exempt.

It is very important to determine whether the exemption or exception genuinely applies to all of the information requested. Public authorities will be criticised for withholding complete documents and blocks of information if this cannot be justified. If it is possible to release some of the information, you should do so.

Protective markings do not constitute an automatic reason for citing an exemption.

Such markings reflect the protection of the most sensitive information in the document required at the time it was created. You will need to give careful consideration as to why the information was marked with a classification and whether this is still relevant; wherever possible the originator should be consulted. The sensitivity of information will generally diminish over time, and the age of the information is therefore likely to be a key factor in determining whether it can be released.

When information is refused, the applicant must be informed of the right to appeal, initially via the public authority’s internal review process and then to the Information Commissioner. Public authorities are advised to develop a standard form of wording for this.

The arrangements for handling appeals or internal reviews will vary from public authority to public authority. However, it is good practice for all public authorities to have measures in place to deal with disclosure, related complaints and internal reviews. Where possible, the review should be handled by a different person to the one who dealt with

the original request. This process constitutes an independent review of the way the request was handled and gives an opportunity to decide whether the original decision was appropriate. In order to conduct the review, all the information relevant to the decision to refuse the request needs to be examined. In the event of any subsequent appeal to the Information Commissioner, he will usually need to see this information.

## Applicants may appeal because

- the response took longer than 20 working days
- information was withheld and they believe that the exemptions or exceptions have been wrongly applied
- the calculation of costs contravenes the Fees Regulations
- the public authority has in any other way mishandled the request

EIR requests for internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date of the refusal letter. Public authorities must deal with any EIR appeal within 40 working days of receipt of the request for an appeal. There are

no statutory time limits under FOI for this internal review process. However, there are good practice guidelines for prompt handling for internal reviews (see link at section 15).



## 11. What happens next?

### The Information Commissioner

The applicant can complain to the Information Commissioner, who can issue a Decision Notice. That Decision Notice can either order the public authority to disclose some or all of the information, or decide that information was correctly withheld.

The FOI Act also places a duty on the Information Commissioner to promote the following of good practice by public authorities and in particular to promote compliance with the requirements of the Act and the provisions of the related codes of practice. The Act provides the Commissioner with a number of enforcement tools in order to carry out these statutory duties.

The Commissioner is able, through the use of Practice Recommendations and Enforcement Notices, to take a robust approach towards those public authorities that repeatedly fail to meet their responsibilities under the legislation. In such circumstances he may take action where there is evidence of systemic, repeated or serious non-compliance with the legislation; evidence that obligations are being deliberately or persistently ignored or not taken sufficiently

seriously; as a means of grouping together several similar complaints against the same public authority; failure to adopt, or make information available in accordance with, a publication scheme.

### The Information Tribunal

If the requester or the public authority is dissatisfied with the Information Commissioner's Decision Notice, they have the right to appeal to the Information Tribunal. The Information Tribunal is responsible for hearing appeals under the FOI Act, the EIRs and the Data Protection Act. The Tribunal is a panel composed of the Chairman or a Deputy Chairman along with two lay members, all appointed by the Lord Chancellor. Either party has 28 calendar days (after receiving an Information Commissioner Decision Notice) in which to lodge an appeal. Appeals may be decided either by written or oral hearings. Oral hearings take place at venues across the United Kingdom and are usually open to the general public.



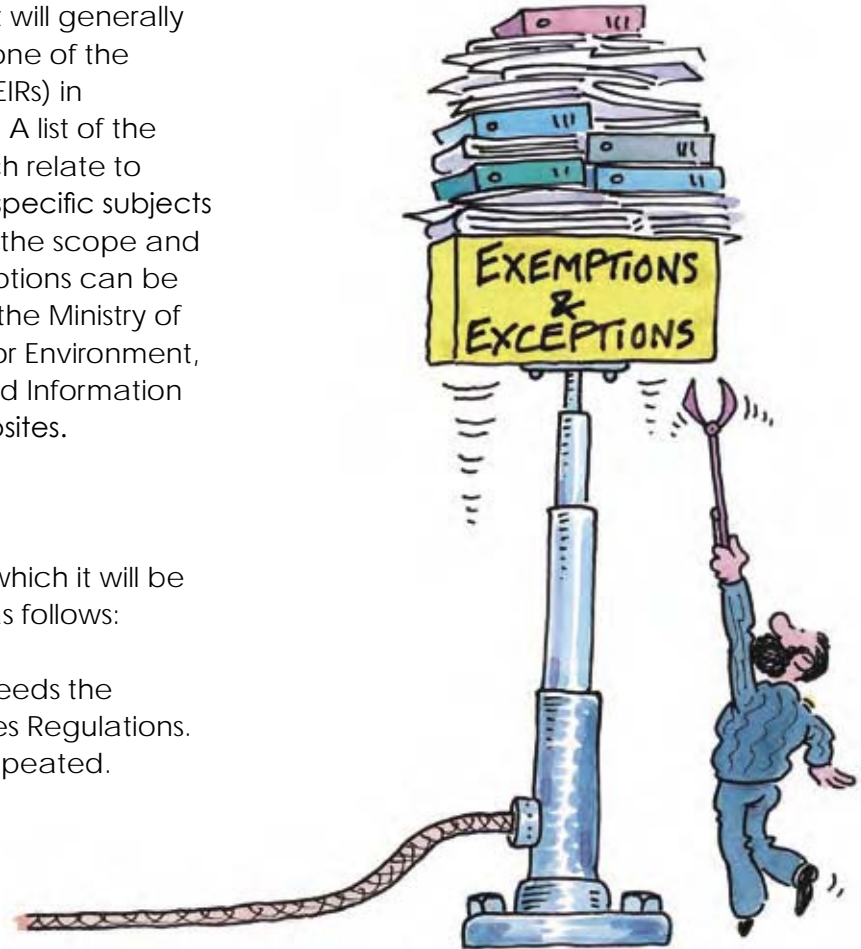
## 12. Exemptions and exceptions

In order to withhold information it will generally be necessary to be able to cite one of the exemptions (FOI) or exceptions (EIRs) in accordance with the legislation. A list of the exemptions and exceptions which relate to distinct classes of information or specific subjects follows. More information about the scope and use of the exemptions and exceptions can be found in the relevant sections of the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) websites.

### Under FOI

The only other circumstances in which it will be possible to refuse a request are as follows:

- If the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit set in the Fees Regulations.
- If the request is vexatious or repeated.



## FOI Absolute Exemptions

- s.21 Information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means
- s.23 Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters
- s.32 Court records
- s.34 Parliamentary privilege
- s.36 Prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs (but only absolute in relation to information held by the Commons or House of Lords)
- s.40 Personal information
- s.41 Information provided in confidence (but only if this would constitute an actionable breach of confidence)
- s.44 Prohibitions on disclosure

## FOI Qualified Exemptions subject to the public interest test

- s.22 Information intended for future publication

- s.24 National security
- s.26 Defence
- s.27 International relations
- s.28 Relations within the UK
- s.29 The economy
- s.30 Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities
- s.31 Law enforcement
- s.33 Audit functions
- s.35 Formulation of government policy, etc.
- s.36 Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs
- s.37 Communications with Her Majesty etc. and honours
- s.38 Health and safety
- s.39 Environmental information
- s.42 Legal professional privilege
- s.43 Commercial interests

## EIR Exceptions subject to the public interest test

**reg. 12 (4) (a)** Does not hold that information when an applicant's request is received

**reg. 12 (4) (b)** Is manifestly unreasonable

**reg. 12 (4) (c)** Is formulated in too general a manner (provided assistance has been given to the applicant with a view to re-framing the request)

**reg. 12 (4) (d)** Relates to unfinished documents or incomplete data

**reg. 12 (4) (e)** Would involve disclosure of internal communications

And if disclosure would adversely affect:

**reg.12 (5) (a)** International relations, defence, national security or public safety

**reg.12 (5) (b)** The course of justice, fair trial, conduct of a criminal or disciplinary inquiry

**reg.12 (5) (c)** Intellectual property rights

**reg.12 (5) (d)** Confidentiality of public authority proceedings when covered by law

**reg.12 (5) (e)** Confidentiality of commercial or industrial information, when protected by law to cover legitimate economic interest

**reg.12 (5) (f)** Interests of the person who provided the information

**reg.12 (5) (g)** Protection of the environment

NB If the information requested is information on emissions, exceptions 12(5)(d) to (g) cannot be used

**reg.13** Personal data

## 13. The response process – the 8 ‘R’s

**1. Read:** Read correspondence and decide whether it constitutes a request or not and if you actually hold the information, what it relates to and whether or not it needs to be transferred to another part of your public authority. If so, don’t delay!

**2. Record:** Maintain a formal system of logging requests and record all key actions. You will need an accurate and complete audit trail for each request, particularly if a request for an internal review is subsequently received.

**3. Retrieve:** You need to retrieve and consider all the relevant information.

**4. Refer to others:** Where necessary, consult with others both within your public authority and externally. Remember to seek views on the disclosure of information and the balance of public interest.

**5. Redact:** As the legislation refers to the release of information rather than documents it may be appropriate to release just some of the information within a document. Any potentially sensitive information not relevant to the request or for which disclosure was not authorised should be removed or “redacted” in the copy sent to

the applicant. This will involve going through a document line by line.

**6. Review:** Once the response to a request has been prepared, this will need to be reviewed by someone who has the necessary authority to release or refuse to disclose information. The process for authorising disclosure of information should be specified in local instructions. The use of exemptions to withhold information should be approved at the appropriate level in your organisation.

**7. Reply:** Once the necessary authority has been secured, the reply can be sent to the applicant. Replies must be in writing and public authorities are advised to develop template letters. Ensure the reply is filed, along with an exact copy of any enclosures.

**8. Release to Publication Scheme:** Consider whether or not the information provided is likely to be of general public interest. If so, consider whether it should be included in your public authority’s Publication Scheme or in a simultaneous releases page on your website.



## 14. Requests for Information – Key Dos and Don'ts

### DO's

✓ **DO** respond quickly – replies must be sent promptly but in any event not later than 20 working days from the date of receipt by your public authority. The Information Commissioner could take enforcement action if any authority regularly exceeds this limit.

✓ **DO** remember that a request for personal data about the applicant is a Subject Access Request and must be answered in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

✓ **DO** record receipt of the request in a formal recording system and ensure the progress of the request is tracked to completion.

✓ **DO** inform the applicant as soon as possible if the need to assess the balance of public interest means that a substantive reply is likely to take longer than 20 working days. Specify a reasonable date and ensure that it is met.

✓ **DO** remember that requests for environmental information can only be extended for a further 20 working days if the request is both large and complex.

✓ **DO** give a clear explanation of any exemptions or exceptions claimed for information withheld and the reasons why the balance of public interest is against disclosure.

✓ **DO** maintain an audit trail of information sources consulted, any redactions made and a copy of what is finally sent to the applicant.

✓ **DO** remember that public authorities are under a duty to provide advice and assistance to the applicant.

✓ **DO** contact your FOI expert if you have any questions regarding FOI or EIR.

✓ **DO** follow the rules – your authority will back up your actions provided you have complied with current policy and guidelines.

✓ **DO** consider the readability of your reply; use a sensible text font and size, avoid abbreviations or jargon, draft in plain English and remember you cannot assume that applicants will have background knowledge of the subject matter.

✓ **DO** think about the wider implications of disclosing or withholding information. Is there a need to alert anyone else in your organisation.

✓ **DO** consider the implications of disclosing information which is either held on behalf of or may affect other public authorities. In such cases, it is good practice to consult those who may be affected.

✓ **DO** keep a record of what was released, including correspondence which provides an audit trail of the decision-making process and full and redacted versions of any information disclosed.

## DON'Ts

✗ **DON'T** withhold information without clear justification under one or more of the exemptions or exceptions allowed by the legislation. Unjustified withholding will only undermine the reputation of your authority in the eyes of the public and the Information Commissioner.

✗ **DON'T** wilfully destroy or alter any original documents that are the subject of a request. Under the legislation this will be a criminal offence for the individual official responsible (not the authority), carrying a potential fine of up to £5,000. Any document for destruction must be handled in accordance with your public authority's record management arrangements.



## 15. Useful links and contacts      Your Contacts

This booklet provides a summary of how to deal with EIR and FOI requests. For more detailed guidance and advice the links below should prove useful.

**Defra's EIR pages** <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/opengov/eir/index.htm>

**Environmental Information Regulations Code of Practice** <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/opengov/eir/cop.htm>

**Environmental Information Regulations Guidance** <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/opengov/eir/guidance/index.htm>

**Directgov Environmental Information Regulations** [http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving/Greenerlivingaquickguide/DG\\_068192](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving/Greenerlivingaquickguide/DG_068192)

**Directgov Freedom of Information** [http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/RightsAndResponsibilities/DG\\_4003239](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/RightsAndResponsibilities/DG_4003239)

**Information Commissioner's Office**  
<http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

**Information Tribunal**  
<http://www.informationtribunal.gov.uk/>

**Ministry of Justice Freedom of Information Act and Section 45 code of practice**  
<http://www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/guidancefoi.htm>

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