



Treasury
Solicitor's
Department

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Our reference: BVFOI/127/14 re Joseph Hackett

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request

You asked for the following information from the Treasury Solicitor's Department ("the Department"):

I am wondering whether you can check your records to see whether steps have been made to resolve the estate and what the value of the late Mr Hackett's estate is so we may consider our options as regards to legal action.

Your request will be dealt with by the Bona Vacantia Division ("the Division") under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Division holds some of the information that you have requested.

The Division does not hold information in relation to what steps have been made to resolve the estate. Administrator details have been provided to you.

I am withholding information in respect of the value of the estates as it is exempt from disclosure under section 31(1)(a) of the Act. Section 31(1)(a) provides that information is exempt from disclosure if that disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. We believe that disclosure of the requested information to any member of the public would, or would be likely to, help enable the commission of fraud or other criminal activity. In applying the exemption, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information.

There is a strong public interest in ensuring that the Division's activities are conducted in an open, transparent and honest way. However, disclosure of the exempt information could help enable the commission of fraud which would be likely to result in a loss to the public purse. There is a strong public interest in protecting the public purse and it is therefore considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption in section 31(1)(a) in this case outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.