



Treasury Solicitor's Department

Bona Vacantia Division (BVD)
PO Box 70165
London
WC1A 9HG

T +44 (0)20 7210 4700
F +44 (0)20 7210 3104

DX: 123240 KINGSWAY

www.gov.uk

Our reference: BVFOI/073/15 re Anne Marie Smith

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request

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

I am writing to ask and confirm if this estate is still unclaimed please?

Can you please confirm that the estate is solvent and the original value as recorded on The Treasury Solicitor (BV) list of Unclaimed Estates is correct?

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

The Division holds all the information that you have requested.

Although the Division does hold the information as to whether the estate is solvent, this information can be found on the Unclaimed Estates List on the Bona Vacantia website at www.gov.uk/bonavacantia which includes only solvent and claimable estates and is updated daily. The information is reasonably accessible to you by other means and is therefore exempt from disclosure under section 21 of the Act. This exemption confers absolute exemption from the requirement to provide information pursuant to section 1(1)(b) of the Act.

I am withholding the net value of this estate, 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.

The Information Commissioner, in case number FS50532521 agreed that information relating to the value of an estate should not be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act. A copy of the Commissioner's decision can be viewed by clicking on the link below:

https://ico.org.uk/media/action-weve-taken/decision-notice/2014/1021410/fs_50532521.pdf

