

We were asked:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I seek the following information on the number of meetings the:

- (a) Secretary of State, and other
- (b) Ministers in the Department,
- (c) their staff
- (d) and senior civil servants,

had with representatives of

- (1) Christian charities,
- (2) campaign groups with links to Christianity, or
- (3) Christian faith leaders,
- (a1) during the leadership of the coalition Government, and
- (b2) under Prime Ministers Gordon Brown.

We replied:

I can confirm that the department holds some of the information falling within the scope of your request but it is already in the public domain. We are not obliged to provide information if it is reasonably accessible to you by other means (section 21(1) of the Act). The terms of this exemption in the Freedom of Information Act mean that we do not have to consider whether or not it would be in the public interest for you to have the information.

The department publishes information on ministers' meetings with external organisations on a quarterly basis and can be found at the following web page:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?keywords=external+meetings&publication_filter_option=all&topics%5B%5D=all&departments%5B%5D=wales-office&official_document_status=all&world_locations%5B%5D=all&from_date=&to_date=&commit=Refresh+results

In regards to the other parts of your request the department have estimated that the remainder of your request will cost more than the appropriate limit to comply with your request.

Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information. We estimate that it will take in excess of 3.5 working days to determine appropriate material and locate, retrieve and extract the information in reference to your request. Therefore, your request will not be processed further.

You may, however, choose to refine your request to take it below the £600 limit and by doing so; the department may be able to provide the information free of charge. Any reformulated request the department receives from you will be treated as a new FOI request.