

**FOI Release**  
**Information released under the Freedom of Information Act**

**Title:** Unauthorised disclosures of official information and whistleblowing.

**Date of release:** 6 May 2015

**Information request:**

Whistleblowing.

- (1) Please provide details of the number of individuals who have raised concerns regarding alleged breaches of the Civil Service Code in your organisation between the following dates: 01/01/2010 to 09/01/2010 and 01/01/2014 to 31/12/2014.
- (2) in particular:
  - i. Please provide details of whether each individual raised the concern on an anonymous, confidential, or self-identified basis.
  - ii. Please indicate whether the concern was raised to a line manager or nominated officer (an individual tasked to receive whistleblowing concerns as identified in the Civil Service Code).
  - iii. Please provide a brief summary of the types of concerns raised.
  - iv. Please indicate whether or not the matter complained of was subsequently referred to the Civil Service Commission or a regulatory or enforcement organisation.
  - v. Please identify (if appropriate) whether any subsequent action was taken.

Disclosure of Official Information without Authority.

- (3) If instances of disclosures of official information without authorisation (commonly referred to as 'leaking' i.e. to a journalist or other any other individual outside of the organisation who should have access to the information in question) are recorded by your organisation, please disclose the number of instances of unauthorised disclosure between the dates: 01/01/2010 to 31/12/2014.
- (4) Please disclose the number of inquiries conducted into disclosures of official information without authority between the dates: 01/01/2010 to 31/12/2014.
- (5) Please disclose any policy guidance/ guidelines for the handling of instances of unauthorised disclosures
- (6) If possible, please identify the number of employees in your organisation who have been subject to disciplinary action or dismissal for the disclosure of official information without authority.

Confidentiality agreements.

- (7) Please identify whether or not individuals working for your organisation are required to sign a confidentiality agreement. If so, please disclose a blank copy of this agreement.

Official Secrets Acts.

- (8) Please identify whether or not individuals working for your organisation are required to sign the Official Secrets Act(s). If, so please disclose a blank copy of this agreement.

Authorisation to disclose official information.

(9) If your organisation has policy guidance/ procedures for individuals (in particular employees or former employees of your organisation) to seek authorisation to disclose official documents (as indicated by s.7 Official Secrets Act 1989) please disclose this.

**Information released:**

Questions 1 to 6 - The answers are 'nil' from the Intellectual Property Office.

Question 7 - Individuals are not required to sign confidentiality agreements, but we do undertake enhanced checks (developed checks) for some areas of our Office, such as our patents directorate and IT support area, because of the need for absolute respect for confidentiality of patent applications and for IT security reasons.

Question 8 - Reference to the Official Secrets Act is contained within the terms and conditions in the contract of employment which the individual is required to sign to confirm acceptance.

Question 9 - we do not have a policy on authorised disclosure.