

QUARTER 1 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION RESPONSES

Year	Month	FOI Reference	Topic
2017	Jan	FOI/17/003	Outbound calling
2017	Jan	FOI/17/006	Northern Irish Prisons – Annual reports for 1990/91 and 1994/95
2017	Jan	FOI/17/008	Seizure of dogs in Northern Ireland
2017	Jan	FOI/17/011	Access to Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry (HIAI) Report
2017	Feb	FOI/17/001	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) enforcement
2017	Feb	FOI/17/002	Sir Quentin Thomas - Report on Options for Amnesty from 2001
2017	Feb	FOI/17/004	Information relating to the murder of Robert McCartney
2017	Feb	FOI/17/005	Video conferencing technology
2017	Feb	FOI/17/009	Troubles-related death legislation
2017	Feb	FOI/17/010	National Union of Students (NUS) payments
2017	Feb	FOI/17/013	ICT services
2017	Feb	FOI/17/014	Access to archival records – strip searches and prison rules
2017	Feb	FOI/17/015	Stevens Inquiries reports
2017	Feb	FOI/17/016	Compensation for victims of child abuse
2017	Feb	FOI/17/019	Airbnb accommodation
2017	Feb	FOI/17/021	Justice and Securities (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 - policies and guidance regarding children
2017	Feb	FOI/17/025	Policy on the age of child viability
2017	Mar	FOI/17/007	Access to archival record – CJ 4/3108
2017	Mar	FOI/17/020	Brexit-related staffing
2017	Mar	FOI/17/022	Victims Liaison Unit and Victims Unit meetings 1998 - 2002
2017	Mar	FOI/17/023	Proposed legislation
2017	Mar	FOI/17/024	Instant messaging systems
2017	Mar	FOI/17/026	Pensions for severely injured victims of the Troubles
2017	Mar	FOI/17/027	IT system vulnerabilities
2017	Mar	FOI/17/028	Personal injury compensation
2017	Mar	FOI/17/029	Access to archival record – government reward scheme

2017	Mar	FOI/17/030	Patient labelling complaints
2017	Mar	FOI/17/031	Investment strategy and procurement plans

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/003
Month Issued	January 2017
Request	<p><i>My request relates to outbound calling conducted by the department both in-house and with agencies, and the type of technology you or your agencies use to facilitate those calls.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Does the department make use of predictive dialling equipment for outbound calling – by both in-house staff and through agencies?</i> 2) <i>The number of calling agents using dialling equipment across the department including agencies?</i> 3) <i>The abandoned call rate of predictive diallers in your department including agencies?</i> 4) <i>If answer-machine detection is used in any of the departments outbound contact centres including agencies?</i>
Response	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Northern Ireland Office does not make use of predictive dialling equipment for outbound calling by either in-house staff or through agencies 2. Not applicable 3. Not applicable 4. Not applicable

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/006
Month Issued	January 2017
Request	<i>Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 I would like to request a copy of the annual report for prisons in Northern Ireland for the years 1990/1991 and 1994/1995.</i>
Response	We do not hold any information within the scope of your request however the Public Records Office (PRONI) may hold this information. The PRONI website details are as follows: www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/008
Month Issued	January 2017
Request	<i>Can you provide the data on dogs seized in Northern Ireland under the DDA and also under BSL since 1991 and specify areas.</i>
Response	We do not hold any information within the scope of your request however each local council in Northern Ireland should hold this information. Belfast City Council may be in a position to help you with your request and advise you of the areas each of the councils deal with. They can be contacted at dogwarden@belfastcity.gov.uk

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/011
Month Issued	January 2017
Request	<i>Can you let me know where I can purchase a copy of the Hart report on Institutional Abuse at the former Kincora Boys' Home [20 Jan 2017].</i>
Response	We do not hold any information within the scope of your request however you can access this information on the HIAI website, please see link below: https://www.hiainquiry.org/historical-institutional-abuse-inquiry-report-chapters

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/001
Month Issued	February 2017
Request	<i>Could you please tell me how many times your organisation/department have enforced the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 in the last five years? Could these figures also be broken down for each year? By "enforced" I mean actually used.</i>
Response	<p>The Department neither confirms nor denies that it holds information falling within the scope of your request. The duty in Section 1(1) (a) FOIA does not arise, by virtue of Section 24(2) and Section 31(3) of FOIA. This should not be taken as an indication that the information you requested is or is not held by the Department.</p> <p>Section 24(2) Section 24(2) provides that the duty to confirm or deny does not arise if, or to the extent that, exemption from section 1(1) (a) is required for the purpose of safeguarding national security. Section 24 is a qualified exemption and so we have considered whether it would be in the public interest for us to confirm or deny whether we hold the information. In this case, we have concluded that the public interest favours neither confirming nor denying whether the requested information is held.</p> <p>When assessing whether or not it was in the public interest to confirm whether or not we hold the information, we took into account the following factors:</p> <p>Public interest considerations in favour of confirming or denying: There is a public interest in knowing how public funds are spent and how resources are used in areas such as national security. There is also a public interest in knowing how often and for what purposes the techniques authorised under RIPA, including intrusive techniques, are used, particularly as these techniques may engage individuals' privacy rights under Article 8 of the ECHR. To confirm whether information exists relating to a specific RIPA technique or purpose for using RIPA would provide the general public with information about NIO's use of RIPA. In the current climate of cuts and with the call for transparency in public spending, as well as concerns about infringement of privacy rights, this could enhance the public debate.</p>

Public interest considerations in favour of neither confirming or denying.

The techniques authorised under RIPA are used in order to protect the public, including to safeguard national security. To confirm whether RIPA has been used, and if so to provide the detail of specific types of RIPA authorisations or uses could reveal covert investigative activity that may or may not have taken place and could highlight to terrorists and individuals intent on damaging national security, the nature and extent of covert activity. This would ultimately increase the risk of harm to the general public and significantly undermine any ongoing or future operations to protect the security or infrastructure of the United Kingdom, thereby increasing the risk of harm to the public.

Taking into account the current security climate and threat levels within the United Kingdom, no information (such as the citing of an exemption which confirms information pertinent to this request is held, or conversely, stating 'no information is held') which might aid a terrorist or other person intent on damaging national security should be disclosed.

Section 31(3)

Section 31(3) provides the duty to confirm or deny does not arise if, or to the extent that compliance with section 1(1)(a) would or would be likely to, prejudice any of the matters mentioned in subsection (1) specifically 31(1)(f) the maintenance of security and good order in prisons or in other institutions where persons are lawfully detained. Section 31 is a qualified exemption and so we have considered whether it would be in the public interest for us to confirm or deny whether we hold the information. In this case, we have concluded that the public interest favours neither confirming nor denying whether the requested information is held.

When assessing whether or not it was in the public interest to confirm whether or not we hold the information, we took into account the following factors:

Public interest considerations in favour of confirming or denying:

There is a legitimate public interest in disclosing information that holds public authorities to account and increases transparency about how they perform their functions. There is a public interest in knowing how public funds are spent and how resources are used in relation to law enforcement. And as with Section 24, there is a public interest in knowing how often and for what purpose investigative powers are used under RIPA given that they may engage individuals' rights to privacy under the ECHR.

Public interest considerations in favour of neither confirming or denying.

There is a strong public interest in protecting the law enforcement capabilities of public authorities. Confirming or denying whether information is held in relation to the use of RIPA powers, could over time reveal the use of particular investigative

	<p>techniques which would then prejudice the work of the agencies involved in using those techniques. The powers that can be used RIPA are there to enable public authorities to protect the public, fight crime and uphold law and order. To confirm whether RIPA has been used over a certain period of time by an individual public authority could reveal covert investigative activity that may or may not have taken place and could highlight to those individuals intent on committing criminal offences, the nature and extent of covert activity. This would ultimately increase the risk of harm to the general public and significantly undermine any ongoing or future operations undertaken by those law enforcement agencies.</p> <p>Additional Information Independent oversight of the use of RIPA powers in the UK is an important aspect of the overall legislative framework. The following reports are freely available and provide</p> <p>The Interception of Communications Commissioner’s publications: http://www.iocco-uk.info/sections.asp?sectionID=1&type=top</p> <p>The Office of Surveillance Commissioners’ publications: https://osc.independent.gov.uk/about-us/annual-reports-2/</p> <p>The Intelligence Services Commissioner’s publications: http://intelligencecommissioner.com/content.asp?id=19</p>
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/002
Month Issued	February 2017
Request	<p><i>Under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) I hereby request the following information:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. A copy of Sir Quentin Thomas’s report on options for amnesty from 2001, referred to in a letter dated 4 May 2001 sent by the Secretary of State John Reid to the Prime Minister.</i>
Response	<p>I can confirm we do hold the information requested, however this information is exempt under Section 21 (Information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means). The information is available at:</p> <p>http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/northern-ireland-affairs/Downey-disclosure-papers.pdf</p> <p>The relevant pages are 320-397.</p>

You can find out more about Section 21 by reading the extract from the Act and some guidance points we consider when applying this exemption, attached at the end of this letter.

EXPLANATION OF FOIA - SECTION 21 – INFORMATION ACCESSIBLE BY OTHER MEANS

We have provided below additional information about Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act. We have included some extracts from the legislation, as well as some of the guidance we use when applying it. We hope you find this information useful.

The legislation

Section 1: Right of Access to information held by public authorities

(1) Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled—

(a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and

(b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to him.

Section 21: Information accessible to applicant by other means

2) For the purposes of subsection (1)—

(a) information may be reasonably accessible to the applicant even though it is accessible only on payment, and

(b) information is to be taken to be reasonably accessible to the applicant if it is information which the public authority or any other person is obliged by or under any enactment to communicate (otherwise than by making the information available for inspection) to members of the public on request, whether free of charge or on payment.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (1), information which is held by a public authority and does not fall within subsection (2)

(b) is not to be regarded as reasonably accessible to the applicant merely because the information is available from the public authority itself on request, unless the information is made available in accordance with the authority's publication scheme and any payment required is specified in, or determined in accordance with, the scheme.

Section 21 exempts information from the right of access under the Freedom of Information Act if that information is reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means.

Section 21 is aimed at preserving intact all existing laws providing access to information. The Freedom of Information Act is not designed to subsume other legal access rights, nor to give alternative routes of access where existing regimes are already available. The Freedom of Information Act access rights build on, but do not replace, previous access rights. Those existing

	<p>rights, and the separate procedural regimes which are tailored to them, continue in place, and the Freedom of Information Act observes corresponding limits to its role.</p> <p>Section 21 also confirms that the Freedom of Information Act does not provide alternative means of access to information which is already freely available, either through commercial publishing operations or through existing publicly funded provision. The Freedom of Information Act rights are designed to supplement, and not to duplicate, the usual flow of information to the public through the commercial electronic and print media, and through existing library and archive services.</p> <p>Section 21 is an absolute exemption, which means that no consideration of the public interest test is required to withhold information.</p>
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/004
Month Issued	February 2017
Request	<i>I would like to request all documents relating to Robert McCartney murdered by the IRA on 30th January 2005, between the dates of 1st February 2005 and July 31st 2008.</i>
Response	<p>Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). The law allows us to decline to answer FOI requests when we estimate it would cost us more than £600 (equivalent to 3.5 working days' worth of work, calculated at £25 per hour) to identify, locate, extract and then provide the information that has been asked for.</p> <p>In this instance the search facility of our records management software is unable to comply with your request as it can only pick up words in the title of records as opposed to the text of the documents. To comply with the request and to enable us to identify whether we hold any such material, officials would be required to open and read a large amount of records individually. You should not infer from this that the Northern Ireland Office holds a large amount of information relating to the subjects you have asked about, only that we would need to search through a large amount of records in order to find out whether we hold <i>any</i> information relevant to your request.</p> <p>You can find out more about Section 12(1) by reading the extract from the Act and some guidance points we consider when applying this exemption, attached at the end of this letter. You can also find more information by reading the full text of the Act, available at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/12.</p> <p>Although we cannot answer your request at the moment, we might be able to answer a refined request within the cost limit. As we have already advised, you may wish to consider for example providing a series of key phrases for us to search, accepting</p>

that this would only capture where that phrase appears in the title. You might also wish to specify a shorter timeframe for the request. Please note that, as in this instance, a refined request may still not fall within the FOIA cost limit.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT SECTION 12(1)

We have provided below additional information about Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act. We have included some extracts from the legislation, as well as some of the guidance we use when applying it. We hope you find this information useful.

The legislation

Section 1: Right of Access to information held by public authorities

- 1) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and
- 2) If that is the case, to have that information communicated to him.

Cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

(2) Subsection (1) does not exempt the public authority from its obligation to comply with paragraph (a) of section 1(1) unless the estimated cost of complying with that paragraph alone would exceed the appropriate limit.

(3) In subsections (1) and (2) “the appropriate limit” means such amount as may be prescribed, and different amounts may be prescribed in relation to different cases.

(4) The Secretary of State may by regulations provide that, in such circumstances as may be prescribed, where two or more requests for information are made to a public authority—

- a) by one person, or
- b) by different persons who appear to the public authority to be acting in concert or in pursuance of a campaign,

the estimated cost of complying with any of the requests is to be taken to be the estimated total cost of complying with all of them.

(5) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision for the purposes of this section as to the costs to be estimated and as to the manner in which they are to be estimated.

The appropriate limit

The 'appropriate limit', for the purposes of section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act has been set at:

- £600 for central government and Parliament.
- The hourly rate is set at £25 per person per hour.

	<p>The following activities may be taken into account when public authorities are estimating whether the appropriate limit has been exceeded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determining whether it holds the information requested • locating the information or documents containing the information • retrieving such information or documents • extracting the information from the document containing it.
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/005
Month Issued	February 2017
Request	<p><i>I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information from the committee:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We request contact details of all chief decision makers regarding your technology and innovation through your organisation.</i> • <i>We would like to know if you are currently using Video Conferencing technology</i> • <i>What Video conferencing hardware have you invested in?</i> • <i>Do you use Video software?</i> • <i>What video software are you using?</i> • <i>Do you have a current contract in place to supply you video conferencing hardware?</i> • <i>Do you have a current contract in place to supply you video conferencing software?</i> • <i>If applicable, when does your current contracts end?</i>
Response	<p>The Northern Ireland Office can neither confirm nor deny that it holds the information you requested as the duty in section 1(1)(a) of the FOI Act does not apply, by virtue of both section 24(2) that relates to national security and section 31(3)(a) that relates to law enforcement and the prevention of crime. However, this should not be taken as conclusive evidence that the information you have requested exists or does not exist.</p> <p>Section 24 is a qualified exemption and so we have considered whether it would be in the public interest for us to confirm or deny whether we hold the information. In this case, we have concluded that the public interest favours neither confirming nor denying whether the requested information is held.</p> <p>Section 31 is a prejudice based exemption and is subject to the public interest test. With regard to your request, we recognise the public interest in knowing whether the government holds particular information. Balanced against this, is the public</p>

	interest in not releasing information that would aid a criminal intent on launching cyber-attacks on the Department's IT systems. In this case we consider that the wider public interest lies in neither confirming nor denying that information, which may have been disclosed in an unauthorised manner, is held.
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/009
Month Issued	February 2017
Request	<p><i>I would like to access, under freedom of information legislation, the following records held by the Northern Ireland office:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1) All correspondence sent or received by the department over the last year and a half relating to legislation to protect veterans from being investigated for killings during the Troubles</i> <i>2) All correspondence between the NIO and the Northern Ireland Office, the office of the first and deputy first minister of Northern Ireland, and the Irish government on the possible legislation.</i> <i>3) Any internal briefing notes on the possibility of passing such a law, in particular any examination the department has carried out on whether or not such legislation would comply with the Stormont house agreement.</i>
Response	<p>I can confirm that the NIO holds information on legislation to establish the new institutions set out in the Stormont House Agreement to investigate Troubles-related deaths that falls within the scope of your request. However the information that we hold has been withheld under the exemption provided for by section 35(1) (a) of FOIA. Section 35(1) (a) protects information relating to the formulation or development of government policy. The information you have sought in this case engages this exemption.</p> <p>The exemption at section 35(1) (a) is a qualified exemption so we have given due consideration to whether the public interest in disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in withholding the information.</p> <p>In this case, we recognise that there is public interest in prosecutions related to killings during the Troubles.</p> <p>The UK Government is committed to the full and faithful implementation of the Stormont House Agreement and has engaged extensively with the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government to prepare legislation which would establish the legacy bodies proposed in the agreement. However, this policy is still under development. Publishing documents at this stage which revealed specific details about the formulation of the policy and underpinning legislation would undermine its continuing development. As a consequence, we consider that the public interest lies with withholding the information.</p>

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/010
Month Issued	February 2017

Request	<p><i>I am writing to obtain information held about payments made by the department to the National Union of Students (NUS) and its subsidiary organisations including, but not limited to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>· National Union of Students (United Kingdom)</i> <i>· NUS Holdings Ltd</i> <i>· NUS Services Ltd</i> <i>· NUS Media Ltd</i> <i>· Epona Ltd</i> <i>· National Students' Union Charitable Services</i> <i>· NUS Scotland</i> <i>· NUS Scotland Charitable Services</i> <i>· NUS Wales</i> <i>· NUS - USI</i> <p><i>To outline my query as clearly as possible, I am requesting a breakdown of payments made to any of the entities listed above or other entities that are part of the National Union of Students. Please provide:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>· The date of any payments</i> <i>· The amounts of any payments</i> <i>· The purpose of the payment. Whether it was a grant for a specific project, a payment for goods or services restricted, unrestricted etc.</i> <p><i>Please include any information held that covers any of the department's Executive Agencies, Non-Departmental Public Bodies and other public bodies, making clear if the funds came from the core department or otherwise</i></p>
Response	The NIO does not hold any information that falls within the scope of your request.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/013
Month Issued	February 2017
Request	<p><i>I am looking for information addressing provision of services contracted from Microsoft to your institution. This is a request made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.</i></p> <p><i>Please send me the information you hold on the following IT structure points:</i></p>

	<p>a) <i>licence fees paid for the operating system Windows (all versions) over the last 10 years</i></p> <p>b) <i>licence fees paid for Microsoft office suite programmes (all versions) over the last 10 years</i></p> <p>c) <i>licence fees paid for Microsoft server software (all versions) over the last 10 years</i></p> <p>d) <i>expenses paid for support and training for Microsoft products of all kind</i></p> <p>e) <i>expenses paid for security updates for windows 8, XP and older versions, for which regular update services are no longer provided by MS</i></p> <p>f) <i>if available, the “Total Cost of Ownership” per user and year</i></p> <p>g) <i>Who supplies the outsourced or managed service for your data centre, how much does it cost and when does the contract expire?</i></p> <p>h) <i>Who supplies the outsourced or managed service for your service desk, how much does it cost and when does the contract expire?</i></p> <p>i) <i>How many desktop PCs, laptops/notebooks or tablet PCs does this institution hold and across the country (specify if England or UK etc. and please include all information available)?</i></p> <p>j) <i>How many physical servers do you have on site and which server operating systems do you use?</i></p> <p>k) <i>What supplier provides the maintenance (out of warranty) support on your desktops and servers and when does the contract expire?</i></p>
Response	<p>In relation to aspects a – h and j – k of your questions the Northern Ireland Office receives managed ICT services from IT Assist (ITA), which is a service provided by Enterprise Shared Services, a body within the Department of Finance, Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The information requested is, therefore, not held by this Department. This information may be available from the Department of Finance, Northern Ireland who can be contacted at foi@finance-ni.gov.uk</p> <p>In relation to aspect i of your questions the Northern Ireland Office at present has 165 laptops, 2 desktop PC’s and 3 tablets held in the UK.</p>

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/014
Month Issued	February 2017
Request	<i>I am writing to request 2 documents. These are 'Armagh Prison Strip Searching: The Facts' published by the Northern Ireland Office 1985 and 'Northern Ireland Prison Service Prison Rules' 1982.</i>
Response	<p>We believe the information you request to be accessible by other means namely The National Archives which is covered by Section 21 of the act. To be helpful the files we believe to be relevant are –</p> <p>- CJ 4/5778</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CJ 4/4824 - CJ 4/6551 - CJ 4/6550 <p>There is a possibility that some relevant information is held by us but this is covered by Section 22 of the act, Section 22 exempts information requested by an applicant if it is intended for future publication. The file in question is CJ 4/7596 which is intended for transfer to The National Archives by April 2017.</p> <p>I am required to look at the balance of public interest and although there clearly is a public interest in government papers being released to the public in this case interfering with the transfer process could delay the opening of several hundred files which is clearly not in the public interest so on balance I feel the public interest is best served by withholding the papers for this short time.</p>
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/015
Month Issued	February 2017
Request	<i>Lord Stevens wrote 3 Reports in Northern Ireland. Please could you release the first two reports redacted if necessary</i>
Response	<p>I can confirm that the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) does not hold the information that you have requested. To establish whether the information was held I conducted a thorough search.</p> <p>When assessing whether or not information was held, adequate and reasonable searches for the requested information were made of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic records, on our electronic records management system (TRIM), were searched. • Hardcopy files were checked. • Checks were made with policy officials within the NIO responsible for legacy casework. <p>If the information was held by the NIO it would have been revealed from the above searches. It may help if I clarify that the information being requested is not held by NIO because there is no legal or business requirement for NIO to do so.</p> <p>However, you may wish to contact the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) as they may hold some of the information you have asked for.</p>

You can contact the PSNI at the following website: https://www.psn.police.uk/advice_information/freedom-of-information/

Please be advised that the FOIA does not oblige a public authority to create information to answer a request if the requested information is not held. It does not place a duty upon public authorities to answer a question unless recorded information exists and is held by that authority. The FOIA duty is to only provide the recorded information held.

You can find out more about information held for the purposes of the Act by reading some guidance points we consider when processing a request for information, attached at the end of this letter.

You can also find more information by reading the full text of the Act, available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents>.

EXPLANATION OF INFORMATION HELD FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE ACT

We have provided below additional information for information held for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act. We have included some of the guidance we use when considering requests for information. I hope you find this information useful.

Is the information 'held' for the purposes of the Act?

A person may request any information 'held' in any recorded form by a public authority (or held by another on behalf of a public authority).

If the requester is asking for an opinion on an issue or asking for information that is not already held to be created, this is not a Freedom of Information Act request.

Information covered by the Act

All recorded information 'held' by a public authority is within the scope of the Freedom of Information Act. It includes files, letters, emails and photographs and extends to closed files and archived material.

Recorded information

The right of access applies to information recorded in any form. This includes:

- information that is held electronically (such as on a laptop computer or an electronic records management system)
- information that is recorded on paper (such as a letter, memorandum or papers in a file)
- sound and video recordings (such as a CD or videotape)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hand-written notes or comments, including those written in note pads or on Post-it notes <p>Is the information 'held' under the Freedom of Information Act?</p> <p>'Holding' information includes holding a copy of a record produced or supplied by someone else. However, if a public authority only holds information on behalf of someone else, for example a department holding trade union information on their computer system, then that public authority may not have to provide the information in response to a Freedom of Information Act request.</p> <p>In some cases, it may not be clear whether information which is physically present on your premises or systems is properly to be regarded as 'held' by your public authority, for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • private material brought into the office by ministers or officials • material belonging to other people or bodies • trade union material • constituency material • material relating to party political matters.
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/016
Month Issued	February 2017
Request	<p><i>Please could you tell me how much compensation has been paid out over the past 5 years to child abuse victims (sexual and physical) who were abused in local authority schools and children's homes?</i></p> <p><i>Please show the total number of victims for each calendar year and where possible the individual amounts paid to each victim.</i></p> <p><i>Please break down the figures for each calendar year, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012.</i></p>
Response	<p>We do not hold any information within the scope of your request; however the Department of Health may be in a position to provide you with this information. The Department of Health Freedom of Information team can be contacted at the following email address: FOI@dhsspsni.gov.uk</p>

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/019
Month Issued	February 2017
Request	<i>I write with a request for information under the FOIA. My request is as follows:</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please disclose whether any of your staff have claimed for Airbnb accommodation since 2014. If so, please disclose in each case where they stayed and the cost.
Response	The NIO does not use Airbnb for accommodation and therefore does not hold any information that falls within the scope of your request.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/021
Month Issued	February 2017
Request	<p>a. Records of all consideration given to including in the Code specific protections and / or provisions relating to the use of the s.21 and/or s.24 power in relation to children.</p> <p>b. Records of all consideration given to including in the Code specific protections and / or provisions relating to the use of any of the powers under sections 22 to 32 of the Justice and Security (NI) Act 2007 in relation to children.</p> <p>c. All policies / guidance dealing with how the powers under s.21 and/or s.24 of the Justice and Security (NI) Act 2007 should be exercised when dealing with children.</p> <p>d. All policies / guidance dealing with how the powers under sections 22 to 32 of the Justice and Security (NI) Act 2007 should be exercised when dealing with children.</p>
Response	<p>Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). Please find below the responses to each of your questions</p> <p>a. The NIO does not hold any information within the scope of this request.</p> <p>b. The NIO does not hold any information within the scope of this request.</p> <p>c. This information is exempt under S21 (Information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means). Information exempt under S21 and can be found at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/6/section/21. The information you require is included in the Code of Practice, the specific mention of children is at 6.11 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-for-the-exercise-of-powers-in-the-justice-and-security-northern-ireland-act-2007.</p> <p>d. This information is exempt under S21 (Information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means). Information exempt under S21 and can be found at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/6/section/21. The information you require is included in the Code of Practice https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-for-the-exercise-of-powers-in-the-justice-and-security-northern-ireland-act-2007.</p> <p>The PSNI may hold other relevant information; they can be contacted at the following email address: foi@psni.pnn.police.uk</p>

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/025
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Month Issued	February 2017
Request	<i>I am writing to you to request a copy of the health service in Northern Ireland's policy on the age of child viability. Can you confirm if the policy differs any from that of the mainland.</i>
Response	Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). We do not hold any information within the scope of your request; however the Department of Health may be in a position to provide you with this information. The Department of Health Freedom of Information team can be contacted at the following email address: FOI@dhsspsni.gov.uk

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/007
Month Issued	March 2017
Request	<p><i>I am browsing the National Archives when I came across the following record that has been retained by the government department. I am writing in to request for the record.</i></p> <p><i>The record I am requesting:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For file reference no.: CJ 4/3108</i> • <i>(Date: 1978 Jan 01 - 1980 Dec 31)</i> • <i>Description " Sinn Fein and Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA)"</i>
Response	<p>I can confirm that the Northern Ireland Office does hold the information requested, however this file is to be withheld in full under section 23 or 24 of the Act in the alternative.</p> <p>Section 23(1), exempts information held by a public authority if it was directly or indirectly supplied to the public authority by, or relates to, any of the bodies specified in section 23(3) of the Act. Section 23 is an absolute exemption and, if it were engaged in this material, the department would not be required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information.</p> <p>Section 24 exempts information from disclosure if its exemption is required for the purpose of safeguarding national security. We cannot say which of the two exemptions is actually engaged, but to the extent that S24(1) might be engaged, we acknowledge the public interest in openness and transparency, but consider that there is a stronger public interest in protecting national security.</p> <p>Sections 23(1) and 24(1) are being cited in the alternative as it is not appropriate, in the circumstances of the case, to say which of the two exemptions is actually engaged so as not to undermine national security or reveal the extent of any involvement, or not, of the bodies dealing with security matters. Section 23 is an absolute exemption and, if it were engaged in this material, the NIO would not be required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information.</p>

	Any information that is not exempt from disclosure under section 23(1) could be exempt under section 24(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, which exempts information from disclosure if its exemption is required for the purpose of safeguarding national security. We cannot say which of the two exemptions is actually engaged, but to the extent that S24(1) might be engaged, we acknowledge the public interest in openness and transparency, but consider that in the circumstances of this case and in the absence of any alternative countervailing factors there is a stronger public interest in protecting national security.
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/020
Month Issued	March 2017
Request	<p><i>I would be grateful if you could provide the following information under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>How many civil servants (full-time equivalents) in the department are engaged in work relating to the process of leaving the European Union and the consequences of EU withdrawal?</i> 2. <i>What is the total bill for salaries for civil servants engaged in work relating to the process of leaving the European Union and the consequences of EU withdrawal?</i> 3. <i>What estimates have been made of changes in staffing numbers which will be required after the UK leaves the EU?</i>
Response	<p>Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are nine FTE staff who are engaged solely on matters relating to the EU Exit but information is not held in relation to the work carried out by a range of other officials whose work also covers aspects of the EU Exit in part, or who are required to contribute indirectly to work relating to the EU Exit. It is therefore not possible to provide a comprehensive response with regard to the FTE working on EU Exit related work. 2. This information is not held 3. This information is not held.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/022
Month Issued	March 2017
Request	<i>It would be useful to see files that contain notes of meetings between the Victims Liaison Unit and the Victims Unit around about the time both units worked together i.e. 1998 until approximately 2002.</i>
Response	A search of our records under 'victim liaison' has not uncovered information relevant to your request. The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) may be in a position to assist you with your enquiry as this matter became a

	responsibility of the Northern Ireland Civil Service since at least 1999. This link may provide you with some additional information - http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/victims/docs/victims_liaison_unit/vlu_newsletter_1199_2.pdf
	The OFMDFM Freedom of Information team can be contacted on the following email address foi@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/023
Month Issued	March 2017
Request	<i>Under the Freedom of Information Act, please provide me with a list of proposed legislation (including, but not limited to, new bills, changes to existing legislation, regulations, orders, etc.) in development within the department during the last Assembly mandate, up to 16th January, 2017</i>
Response	I can confirm that the Northern Ireland Office does not hold the information you request. I would advise you to contact the Northern Ireland Assembly FOI Team at the following email address foi@niassembly.gov.uk as they should be able to assist you with details of proposed legislation that were in development.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/024
Month Issued	March 2017
Request	<p><i>This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Could you please provide the following information:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Do you make use of any Instant Messaging clients/systems, such as group clients like Yammer, Slack, WhatsApp groups, Facebook or Twitter message groups or user-to-user Google Chat type services etc?</i> <p><i>If yes, please provide a list with details of each with its use, membership (to the extent it is disclosable, such as categories) and service as well as any 'service tier' information held and cost where applicable. This would include personal chat groups used in a way that would bring them into scope of the Freedom of Information Act. The following questions are conditional on the answer being yes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>For each of the above, are you the data controller? Is it a shared service (e.g. use of https://ukgovernmentdigital.slack.com/) or your own system?</i> <i>Where one of the above is a Slack or similar 'cloud' chatroom with a unique URL, please provide this link.</i> <i>Where one of the above has a specific membership criteria, please provide this.</i> <i>For each of the above, how long is information retained for and in what form?</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For each of the above, please provide copies of any relevant policies or procedures regarding records management, retention or FOI/EIR/DPA compliance.
Response	In relation to your questions the Northern Ireland Office receives managed ICT services from IT Assist (ITA), which is a service provided by Enterprise Shared Services, a body within the Department of Finance, Northern Ireland. The information requested is, therefore, not held by this Department. This information may be available from the Department of Finance, Northern Ireland who can be contacted at foi@finance-ni.gov.uk

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/026
Month Issued	March 2017
Request	<p><i>I would be grateful if the following information could be made available:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The dates in 2015 and 2016 on which discussions were held with the Northern Ireland Executive parties on a pension for the severely injured for which records are held.</i> <i>The names of those representing (a) the DUP and (b) Sinn Fein at those meetings.</i> <i>The dates of meetings to discuss the pension that HMG held with the DUP and SF together for which records are held.</i> <i>The composition of the Stormont House Implementation Group.</i> <i>Confirmation that the initial proposals prepared for the Stormont House Implementation Group for 6 July 2015 were tabled on that date.</i> <i>Whether HMG or the NIE was responsible for drawing up the initial proposals.</i> <i>The content of those initial proposals.</i>
Response	<p>Discussions about a pension for severely injured victims have been ongoing for some time and we do not hold a record of every occasion on which this issue of a pension was discussed. The policy responsibility for the pension sits with the Executive Office (formerly the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister). The Executive Office may hold the information you have requested; their FOI Team can be contacted at foi@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk.</p> <p>This department also had responsibility for overseeing the work of the Stormont House Implementation Group (SHIG) and the development of any proposals on the pension. We do not hold any information on the composition of the SHIG or the tabling of a paper on 6 July 2015.</p>

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/027
Month Issued	March 2017

<p>Request</p>	<p><i>I would like to know the following under the Freedom of Information act regarding the development of applications (both internal and customer-facing) and scanning for vulnerabilities.</i></p> <p><i>For information on what constitutes a vulnerability, as referred to in my request, please refer to the description on this website: http://www.veracode.com/security/application-vulnerability</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1) Concerning either the web applications developed by a third party provider or internally by the IT team in the department, how often do you scan for vulnerabilities (i.e. security flaws)? Yearly? Monthly? Daily? etc.</i> <i>2) Concerning either the web applications developed by a third party provider or internally by the IT team in the department, when scanning for vulnerabilities (i.e. security flaws) how many vulnerabilities are identified when scanned per month (on average)</i> <i>3) Concerning either the web applications developed by a third party provider or internally by the IT team in the department, when scanning for vulnerabilities (i.e. security flaws) how many vulnerabilities were identified when scanned over the past five years – please break this figure down per year (i.e. the number for 2016, the number for 2015, the number for 2014, the number for 2013, the number for 2012)</i> <p><i>Please note, I would not like to have information of the type of vulnerabilities discovered.</i></p>
<p>Response</p>	<p>In answering your question I have considered the three different aspects of your question. As your request has cyber security implications the Northern Ireland Office can neither confirm nor deny that it holds the information you requested as the duty in section 1(1) (a) of the FOI Act does not apply, by virtue of both section 24(2) that relates to national security and section 31(3) that relates to law enforcement and the prevention of crime. However, this should not be taken as conclusive evidence that the information you have requested exists or does not exist.</p> <p>Section 24 is a qualified exemption and so we have considered whether it would be in the public interest for us to confirm or deny whether we hold the information. In this case, we have concluded that the public interest favours neither confirming nor denying whether the requested information is held.</p> <p>Section 31 is a prejudice based exemption and is subject to the public interest test. With regard to your request, we recognise the public interest in knowing whether the government holds particular information. Balanced against this, is the public interest in not releasing information that would aid a criminal intent on launching cyber-attacks on the Department's IT systems. In this case we consider that the wider public interest lies in neither confirming nor denying that information, which may have been disclosed in an unauthorised manner, is held.</p>

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/028
Month Issued	March 2017
Request	<p><i>Under the Freedom of Information Act can I ask for the following information:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>For the last financial year 2015/16 and 2016/17 how much money was paid to staff as compensation for a) personal injuries b) after they brought or threatened legal action against your department? (If possible please EXCLUDE the legal fees that may have been paid in these cases so that the answer is just the compensation received by the injured parties).</i> <i>How many individual claims did this represent?</i> <i>For all payments in excess of £1,000 that were paid please state (i) the amount of compensation, (ii) the cost to the department of the legal fees associated with the case, (iii) if the employee was a civil servant, temporary member of staff and (iv) a one sentence description of the nature of the claim.</i> <p><i>I would prefer this data broken down by year please.</i></p>
Response	<p>I can confirm that the department holds information that you have asked for, but in this case we will not be providing it to you as it is exempt from disclosure.</p> <p>We are not obliged, under section 40(2) of the Act, to provide information that is the personal information of another person if releasing would contravene any of the provisions in the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). In this instance we believe that the release of this information would contravene the first data protection principle and therefore section 40 (2) is engaged. 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.</p>

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/029
Month Issued	March 2017
Request	<p><i>I am writing to request the release of information under the Freedom of Information Act.</i></p> <p><i>I am requesting information on the 'Government reward scheme' that offered financial rewards in exchange for information that helped with the government's counter-terrorism efforts. The scheme was begun on 8 March 1970, promising a reward to 'any person giving information leading to the apprehension and conviction of any person or persons on charges connected with acts of violence involving the use of explosives'. The terms of the scheme were amended on 6 April and 3 August 1970, and the scheme was terminated in 1974.</i></p> <p><i>I would like to receive all available information on:</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>how many payments were made under the scheme;</i> - <i>how many people payments were made to;</i> - <i>what amounts were paid out;</i> - <i>whether it was the police, the army or another organisation that the information provided under this scheme was given to by the informants;</i> - <i>how many convictions were secured as a result of the information provided under this scheme;</i> - <i>who was convicted as a result of information provided under this scheme;</i> - <i>and what those convictions were for.</i>
Response	The NIO does not hold any information that falls within the scope of your request. File number CJ 4/2064 is held by The National Archives. This record may hold some of the information you require.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/030
Month Issued	March 2017
Request	<p><i>Further to recent correspondence I would, as discussed, be grateful if you would please, as FOI Requests, let me have copies, over each of the last 10 years say of:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. All complaints made against Dalriada Urgent Care (DUC) either to DUC directly, to press, to radio, to the Department or to the Ombudsman together with a note of the eventual outcome and the time taken for the investigation? Complaints regarding their failure to listen, and their tendency to unfairly label targeted patients are particularly relevant in the present circumstances.</i> <i>b. The number of occasions on which (DUC) has been found to have falsely labelled a patients request for urgent help as inappropriate or has otherwise chosen to deny or postpone much needed care?</i> <i>c. The number of previous occasions on which the use of email photo technology has been suggested?</i> <i>d. A copy of any and all minutes board meetings where the topics of (1) increased use of technology to improve efficiency and reduce bureaucracy and (2) use of Noting or Filing Only was discussed or where participants themselves expressed frustration at current old style and outdated policies and practices? Details of extract phrases used are, in the situation and context of the current unfair labelling review, absolutely crucial.</i> <p><i>A copy of any exemptions which DUC may have granted from overall Note and File Only Requirements wold also be appreciated again as a FOI request?</i></p>
Response	The Northern Ireland Office does not hold any information within the scope of your request. The Department of Health may be able to assist you; their FOI team can be contacted at the following email address FOI@dhsspsni.gov.uk

FOI Request Reference	FOI/17/031
Month Issued	March 2017
Request	<p><i>We would like to request some data from yourselves:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Contract register in Open data format</i> 2. <i>Department Investment Strategy</i> 3. <i>Public Service Agreement</i> 4. <i>Procurement Innovation Plan</i> 5. <i>Estates/FM/ Property Management Plan</i> 6. <i>Asset Data</i>
Response	<p>Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The information is exempt under section 21 of the FOI Act because it is reasonably accessible to you, and I am pleased to inform you that you can access it via the following links: http://ccs-agreements.cabinetoffice.gov.uk for Crown Commercial Service contracts; and https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/articles/contracts-awarded-by-central-procurement-directorate https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/articles/details-current-pan-government-contracts-and-framework-agreements for contracts awarded by the Department of Finance's Central Procurement Directorate in Northern Ireland 2. We do not hold any information within the scope of this request. 3. We do not hold any information within the scope of this request 4. We do not hold any information within the scope of this request 5. We do not hold any information within the scope of this request, however the Government Property Unit may hold this information. They can be contacted at gpusecretariat@cabinetoffice.gov.uk 6. The information is exempt under section 21 of the FOI Act because it is reasonably accessible to you, and I am pleased to inform you that you can access it via the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nio-annual-report-and-accounts-2015-16