

Reference: 2025-137

Thank you for your email in which you requested the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA):

Please provide the following aggregated data in relation to the most recent Case Controller recruitment campaign run by the SFO:

- 1) The total number of internal applicants for the most recent Case Controller campaign.**
- 2) The total number of internal applicants who were shortlisted for interview.**

Response

The SFO holds this information. We can confirm that both numbers are below ten. However, the specific numbers are exempt from release under section 40(2) of the FOIA, as this information constitutes personal data relating to identifiable individuals.

Section 40(2) states that personal data which is not the personal data of the requester (i.e. third-party personal data) should not be disclosed if this would contravene the data protection principles. This would constitute a breach of the first data protection principle outlined in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which states that “personal data shall be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject”.

How the exemption is engaged

The SFO is a relatively small organisation and the pool of people likely to apply for this specialist position and be shortlisted for interview is extremely small. Coupled with some other information, that could be drawn from your own knowledge of current staff or information in the public domain, we assess that releasing this figure could make some of these individuals identifiable.

We also maintain that releasing information about the number of internal applicants could not reasonably be interpreted as “fair” processing because the Data Subject would have a reasonable expectation that their personal data would not be disclosed in this way.

Section 40(2) of the FOIA is an absolute exemption and we are therefore not required to consider the public interest in releasing the information requested.