

Reference: 2026-070

Thank you for your email dated 25/08/2026 in which you requested the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA):

I am writing to request access to recorded information held by the Serious Fraud Office regarding its investigation into Bombardier Inc.. This investigation, which commenced in November 2020 and focused on suspected bribery and corruption relating to contracts and/or orders from PT Garuda Indonesia, was officially closed by the SFO in November 2024.

Specifically, I request the following information:

- 1. Case Closing Summary:** A copy of the formal decision notice, case review summary, or closing report compiled by the SFO Director or case team detailing the final rationale for closing the investigation into Bombardier Inc.
- 2. Inter-Agency Correspondence:** Copies of communications, agreements, or memorandum records between the SFO and overseas authorities—specifically the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the US Department of Justice (DOJ)—concerning the decision to defer prosecuting authority to those jurisdictions.
- 3. Total Case Costs:** A breakdown of the total public expenditure and operational costs incurred by the SFO over the four-year lifespan (2020–2024) of the Bombardier investigation.
- 4. Statistical Data:** The total volume of digital and physical documents processed during this investigation, alongside the total number of voluntary interviews conducted with Bombardier representatives or third parties.

Response

We have considered each part of your request individually and our response to each question is set out below.

Questions 1 and 4

The SFO neither confirms nor denies whether it holds information falling within the description specified in these parts of your request. The duty in section 1(1)(a) of the FOIA does not apply by virtue of section 30(3) of the FOIA. Nothing in this response should be taken as an indication that the information requested is or is not held by the SFO.

Section 30(3) provides that:

The duty to confirm or deny does not arise in relation to information which is (or if it were held by the public authority would be) exempt information by virtue of subsection (1) or (2).

Section 30(1) provides that:

(1) Information held by a public authority is exempt information if it has at any time been held by the authority for the purposes of—

(a) any investigation which the public authority has a duty to conduct with a view to it being ascertained—

(i) whether a person should be charged with an offence, or

*(ii) whether a person charged with an offence is guilty of it,
(b) any investigation which is conducted by the authority and in the circumstances may lead to a decision by the authority to institute criminal proceedings which the authority has power to conduct,
or (c) any criminal proceedings which the authority has power to conduct.*

How the exemption is engaged

Section 30(3) provides that a public authority is not required to confirm or deny whether information is held where, if it were held, it would be exempt under section 30(1) or section 30(2) of the FOIA.

The SFO is responsible for investigating and prosecuting serious or complex fraud, bribery and corruption. The exemption recognises the strong public interest in protecting information connected to criminal investigations and proceedings and, in appropriate cases, extending that protection to the confirmation or denial of whether such information is held.

Confirming or denying whether the SFO holds information falling within the scope of this request would be likely to reveal information about the existence, nature or extent of investigative activity undertaken by the SFO. This could disclose information about the SFO's investigative interests, capabilities or methods, and could enable individuals to draw conclusions about whether specific matters have been, or are being, considered for investigation.

Public interest test

Section 30(3) is a qualified exemption and requires consideration of whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exclusion of the duty to confirm or deny outweighs the public interest in disclosing whether the public authority holds the information. More information about exemptions in general and the public interest test is available on the ICO's website at www.ico.org.uk.

It is recognised that there is a general public interest in publicising the work of the SFO, so that the public knows that serious fraud, bribery and corruption are being investigated and prosecuted effectively ensuring that the public can be reassured about the general conduct of our organisation and how public money is spent. The SFO takes steps to meet this interest by publishing casework information on its website where appropriate.

However, it is also recognised that it is in the public interest to safeguard the investigative process and that investigating bodies should be afforded the space to determine the course of any investigation including decisions to close a case. On some occasions, releasing information about what is held or not held by law enforcement bodies would be detrimental to that process. To confirm or deny whether the information you have requested is held (if held) would, for reasons outlined earlier, be likely to prejudice the SFO's conduct of any criminal investigation/ability to tackle and prevent serious crime. This would not be in the public interest as the right of access to information should not undermine the investigation and prosecution of criminal matters.

Having considered the opposing arguments, it is clear that the benefits of confirming whether or not the information is held are outweighed by the disbenefits and thus the public interest favours maintaining the exclusion of the duty to confirm or deny whether information is held.

Question 2

The SFO neither confirms nor denies whether it holds information falling within the description specified in this part of your request. The duty in section 1(1)(a) of the FOIA does not apply by virtue of section 27(4) of the FOIA. Nothing in this response should be taken as an indication that the information requested is or is not held by the SFO.

27(4) 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).

How the exemption is engaged

Section 27(4) allows a public authority to neither confirm nor deny whether information is held where doing so would, or would be likely to, prejudice relations between the United Kingdom and another State or international organisation.

The SFO works closely with overseas law enforcement and prosecuting authorities in the investigation of serious and complex fraud, bribery and corruption. Confirming or denying whether information of the type requested is held would be likely to prejudice those relationships and could undermine the confidence required for the effective exchange of information between international partners.

Public interest test

Section 27(4) is a qualified exemption and therefore requires consideration of the public interest test. More information about exemptions in general and the public interest test is available on the ICO's website at www.ico.org.uk.

We consider that the stronger public interest lies in maintaining the exemption at section 27(4) of the FOIA. To confirm or deny whether the information you have requested is held (if held) would be likely to prejudice the effectiveness of the UK's relationships with international prosecution and law enforcement agencies. Given the potential risk and damage to existing relationship with the US and Canadian prosecuting authorities, the public interest in not disclosing the requested information in this case outweighs the public interest in disclosing it at this stage.

Question 3

The information you have requested is publicly available and can be accessed via the following link: [2026 - closed case costs - GOV.UK](#).