

23 May 2023

IC-229787-D8K9

Request

On 28 April 2023 you asked for information held about internal processes in relation to handling complaints about the removal or anonymisation of articles or stories online naming individuals.

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the FOIA). As you are probably aware, this legislation provides public access to recorded information held by a public authority unless an appropriate exemption applies.

Response

I can confirm that we hold some information in scope of your request.

Our delisting criteria can be found online via the links provided below, and is therefore technically exempt from disclosure under section 21 of the FOIA. This applies to information that is reasonably accessible to the applicant through means other than a request under the FOIA.

<https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/online/internet-search-results/>

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/search-result-delisting-criteria/>

Our removal criteria depends on the request, the content, and the context of the removal. We do not have a set procedure; complaints are handled on a case by case basis.

This concludes our response to your request.

No-index tabs

You asked whether the ICO would consider pages that do not have a no-index tab as sharing personal data with third parties when they're subsequently indexed by search engines. I have consulted internally and have been provided with the following advice:

- Any organisation handling personal information (including posting or hosting it online) needs to have appropriate technical and organisational security measures in place.
- Even if a page is tagged to show that it shouldn't be included in a search query there's no guarantee that it will never be indexed by a search engine – especially if it's information that's publicly available.

FOI review procedure

If you are dissatisfied and wish to request a review of our decision or make a complaint about how your request has been handled you should write to the Information Access Team at the address below or e-mail icoaccessinformation@ico.org.uk.

Your request for internal review should be submitted to us within 40 working days of receipt by you of this response. Any such request received after this time will only be considered at the discretion of the Commissioner.

If having exhausted the review process you are not content that your request or review has been dealt with correctly, you have a further right of appeal to this office in our capacity as the statutory complaint handler under the legislation.

To make such an application, please write to our Customer Contact Team at the address given or visit our website if you wish to make a complaint under the FOIA.

Your information

Please note that our [Privacy notice](#) explains what we do with the personal data you provide to us and what your rights are. This includes entries regarding the specific purpose and legal basis for the ICO processing information that people that have provided us with, such as an [information requester](#).

The length of time we keep information is laid out in our retention schedule, which can be found [here](#).



Yours sincerely



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see our [privacy notice](#)**