

Prioritisation decision making

The aim of the prioritisation framework is to ensure that those cases with the highest public interest factors are fast tracked through our casework processes. The first stage of this is to make a decision about those cases that are a priority. Around 10-15% of cases should be prioritised at any one time.

You will use the information available on the case to decide if a case should be prioritised. The primary source will be the request itself. Secondary will be any explanation the requester has provided in their submissions to us. This could be in the request or the internal review request correspondence with the PA.

The Criteria



The Process

Consider the criteria from the top down. In summary the 4 criteria are:

- the public interest in the information requested,
- the impact the information has on people,

- the requester’s ability to enhance transparency by sharing the requested information, and
- regulatory or operational benefits.

These are detailed in the table below. Under each of the primary criteria are helpful scenarios that provide more detail. These are not exhaustive and will adapt and update as we embed the prioritisation framework. We have also included some real case examples and will continue to add to this list to maintain consistency.

Use this as your first port of call for making the prioritisation decision. If it is not immediately obvious that the case should be prioritised, you can seek advice from a more experienced colleague or manager. The need to do this should diminish as the framework beds in and we gain experience.

CRITERIA 1: Is there a high public interest in the information requested? Does it raise a new, unique or clearly high-profile issue that we should look at quickly?		
suggested case types		
Significant media interest – for example there are existing news reports related to the subject matter in the public domain	The case concerns an issue that is likely to involve a large amount of public money in the context of the size of the public body involved – for example, a local council contract for provision of services across its whole area or a nationwide central government spend	The requester needs the information to respond to a live and significant public consultation and the time for achieving resolution is reasonable to inform the decision-making process.
real request examples		
English channel small boat crossings request made just after a new govt policy introduced around deportation, also a regular item reported in national news.	Information on a funding agreement between two local councils, and agreements with the developer in relation to the funding of the proposed Site MU1 link road (a large scale development covering multiple council areas)	A specific govt department's response to Lord Faulk’s independent review into the Judicial Review Process made to obtain information to submit to the government consultation on Judicial Review reform. Request made in Nov 2020 and consultation deadline April 2021
CRITERIA 2: Are any groups or individuals likely to be significantly affected by the information requested?		
suggested case types		
Information which covers policies, events or other matters that potentially have a significant impact on	Information that has a high potential impact or harm on a proportionately substantial number of people in relation to the information requested	Information that may directly affect the health or another personal issue of the requester or others, that means they need a swift resolution (eg, it may

vulnerable people or groups		impact on treatment or is about a live court case).
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real request examples

Information from a meeting with the chief medical officer in which he received the recommendation for RAPID C-19 on a particular drug. Made by a representative of a campaign group on behalf of immunocompromised people - the forgotten 500k	Information on the names and locations of high rise buildings recorded as having cladding systems which do not comply with building regulations.	Information regarding a recent whistle blowing concern regarding patient safety and the actions undertaken by the NHS Trust in respect of that concern.
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CRITERIA 3: Does the requester have the ability and desire to use the information for the benefit of the public?

suggested case types

A requester with a clear aim of raising awareness around a topic of significant public interest and the means or contacts to do so.	A requester with access to a suitable platform to allow the public at large to use the requested information to scrutinise the decisions made in the public sector (and the intention to share the information requested if disclosed).	
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real request examples

Information from a meeting with the chief medical officer in which he received the recommendation for RAPID C-19 on a particular drug. Made by a representative of a campaign group on behalf of immunocompromised people - the forgotten 500k		
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CRITERIA 4: Would prioritisation have significant operational benefits, or support those regulated?

suggested case types		
Is the request novel, or could provide the basis for guidance or support for other regulated bodies.	Is the request part of a round robin request or otherwise linked to other requests or appeals.	
real request examples		
	Request to all police forces for information on a specific counter terrorism policing initiative.	

Admin Tasks

Once you have reached your decision you will update the CASE : INFORMATION tab.

If you decide the case meets the criteria you will mark it as priority by selecting yes in the Priority Case field.

Select no if you decide that the case does not meet the criteria.

Leaving the field blank tells us that it hasn't been assessed for priority.

Once you select 'Yes' the Priority banner will appear on the case.

CASE : INFORMATION ▾
IC-200837-T3G3 ☰

▾ Summary

Function	Complaint
Received Channel	Email
Security Classification	Official
Sector	Central Government
Subsector	Government Department
Summary	Home Office [REDACTED]
Priority Case	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> Yes No </div>