

9 January 2025

Case reference: IC-353202-B0Z2

We are now in a position to respond to your information request of 31 December.

Request

You asked us for the following:

"Please provide me with copies of all current FOI-related IA response templates. This should include response letters or similar (lines to take, standard wording etc), and standard FOI exemption wording used by the ICO when responding to FOI requests. I am trying to get an overview of how the ICO describe each exemption/explain how it is engaged.

I do not require any templates used for internal correspondence (e.g. section 36 QP opinion template)"

We have handled your request for recorded information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Our response

We understand your request to be for the letter templates used by our Information Access (IA) team to respond to FOIA requests where an exemption is being used. We have not included letter templates that are solely administrative and do not include an exemption.

With regards to your request for 'lines to take' in relation to FOIA exemptions, please refer to the FOIA guidance and resources area of our website [here](#). This guidance is available to both the public and ICO staff who handle FOIA requests.

Our [Request information from us](#) webpage includes the IA team's [Information access manual](#) which has a section on 'Applying exemptions – FOI requests' on pages 53 to 55.

Please find enclosed the FOIA exemption response letter templates used by the IA team. Some information has been redacted on page 30 as it is not in scope of the request. These templates are centrally held and are available internally to IA team members. The document titles are as follows.

FOI s12 Response - Cost of Compliance
FOI s14 Response - Grossly Oppressive Burden
FOI s14(1) Response - Vexatious for WDTK or X (formerly Twitter)
FOI s21 s22 Response - Information Accessible or for Future Publication
FOI s22 Response - Datasets
FOI s23(1) Response - Security Matters
FOI s23(5) s24(2) Response - Security Matters and National Security NCND
FOI s27 Response - International Relations
FOI s30 Response - Criminal Investigations (inc NCND)
FOI s31 Response - Law Enforcement (inc NCND)
FOI s31 Response - Withholding Internal Email and Phone Numbers
FOI s32 Response - Court Records
FOI s36 Response - Prejudice to Public Affairs
FOI s37 Response - Royal Correspondence (inc NCND)
FOI s40(2) Response - DC Requesting Correspondence From Complainant
FOI s40(2) s40(5B) Response - Personal Data (inc NCND)
FOI s42 Response - LPP - Advice or Litigation Privilege
FOI s42 Response - LPP - Advice Privilege inc PIT Example
FOI s43 Response - Commercial Interests
FOI s44 DPA s132 Response - Prohibitions on Disclosure
FOI s44(2) Response - Neither Confirm nor Deny

Please note, these templates form the basis for our response letters. Some wording, other than direct quotes from the legislation, may be amended or added to as required depending on the nature of the request. For example, the public interest factors for and against disclosure in qualified exemptions.

You can find the response letters to previous FOIA requests on our [disclosure log](#).

The published information within scope of your request is technically withheld under section 21 of the FOIA, which explains that we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is already reasonably accessible to you from another source.

This concludes our response to your request. We hope you found this information helpful.

Next steps

You can ask us to review our response. Please let us know in writing if you want us to carry out a review. Please do so within 40 working days. You can read a copy of our full [review procedure](#) on our website.

If we perform a review but you are still dissatisfied, you can complain to the ICO as regulator of the FOIA. This complaint will be handled just like a complaint made to the ICO about any other public authority. You can [raise a complaint](#) through our website.

Your information

Our [privacy notice](#) explains what we do with the personal data you provide to us, and sets out [your rights](#). Our [Retention and disposal policy](#) details how long we keep information.

Yours sincerely



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For information about what we do with personal data see our [privacy notice](#)