

INFORMATION RELEASED UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Information released title	ALRB and CSR info request (Arms Length Body Review and Comprehensive Spending Review)
Original request	<p>Dear Sir/Madam,</p> <p>Under the Freedom of Information Act, please provide me with:</p> <p>(a) All documents - including emails - submitted by your organisation to central government departments and/or government ministers, as part of the Coalition Government's Comprehensive Spending Review since 12th May 2010.</p> <p>This would include any letters, briefings or option papers prepared by your organisation outlining the impact that changes and/or reductions to its budget(s) may have on the service(s) you deliver.</p> <p>(b) All documents - including emails - submitted by your organisation to central government departments or government ministers, as part of the Coalition Government's Public Bodies Review since 12th May 2010.</p> <p>This would also include any letters, briefings or option papers prepared by your organisation outlining the impact that reform or abolition would have on the services you deliver.</p> <p>(c) Any revised business, explanatory papers, options papers or letters submitted by your organisation (including electronic communications) to central government departments or government ministers to accommodate changes to your organisation's budgets following this year's Comprehensive Spending review.</p> <p>(d) Any revised business, explanatory papers, options papers or letters submitted by your organisation (including electronic communications) to central government departments or government ministers to accommodate changes to your organisation's structure following this year's Public Bodies Review.</p> <p>(e) Any further correspondence (i) received by your organisation directly from ministers, or their offices, and (ii) sent to ministers, or their offices, regarding the affect of the (A) Comprehensive Spending Review and (B) Public Bodies Review on your organisation since 12 May 2010.</p> <p>This would also include any written or electronic correspondence that details the process your organisation should follow in order to make such submissions to these reviews.</p>

	<p>I understand that under the Act, I should be entitled to a response within 20 working days of your receipt of this email.</p> <p>Some parts of this request may be easier to answer than others. Should this prove to be the case, I would ask that you release available data as soon as possible - rather than hold up the entire request.</p> <p>I would prefer to receive this information electronically. If the decision is made to withhold some of this data using exemptions within the Act, please inform me of that fact and cite the exemptions used.</p> <p>If you need any clarification then please contact me at the number below or via email. Under your section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance I would expect you to contact me if you find this request unmanageable in any way.</p> <p>I would be grateful if you could confirm that you have received this request, and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.</p>
Date of release	20.01.2011
Requester type	Labour MP

Information released:

a.

We communicated the document entitled 'Creating a Sustainable Market for World Class Skills' on 4 November 2010 during a previous Fol request from you – which for the purposes of this request, this document is now exempt under section 21 of the Act: Information accessible to applicant by other means.

We appreciate that there is a genuine and strong public interest in understanding the Comprehensive Spending Review, however there is now a significant volume of information already in the public domain. Further information can be found here:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/spend_sr2010_documents.htm

Furthermore, the UK Commission will also be publishing its Business Plan in May, which may be of interest to you.

b.

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills is still under review as part of the Coalition Government's Public Bodies Review. The final outcomes are not yet known and are still being deliberated upon. Having considered the public interest test, I can confirm that information relating to this section of your request is exempt under the following sections of the Act:

Sections 36(2)(b)(i), 36(2)(b)(ii), 36(2)(c) – Prejudice to the Conduct of Public Affairs, and Section 43(2) Commercial Interests.

Please see below for the public interest arguments for both disclosure and non-disclosure

under sections 36 and 43 of the Act.

c.

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills has still yet to determine and finalise any changes in our organisations budgets following this year's Comprehensive Spending Review. The final outcomes are not yet known and are still being deliberated upon. Having considered the public interest test, I can confirm that information relating to this section of your request is exempt under the following sections of the Act:

Sections 36(2)(b)(i), 36(2)(b)(ii), 36(2)(c) – Prejudice to the Conduct of Public Affairs, and Section 43(2) Commercial Interests.

Please see below for the public interest arguments for both disclosure and non-disclosure under sections 36 and 43 of the Act.

d.

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills is still under review as part of the Coalition Government's Public Bodies Review. The final outcomes are not yet known and are still being deliberated upon. Having considered the public interest test, I can confirm that information relating to this section of your request is exempt under the following sections of the Act:

Sections 36(2)(b)(i), 36(2)(b)(ii), 36(2)(c) – Prejudice to the Conduct of Public Affairs, and Section 43(2) Commercial Interests.

Please see below for the public interest arguments for both disclosure and non-disclosure under sections 36 and 43 of the Act.

e.

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills is still under review as part of the Coalition Government's Public Bodies Review. The final outcomes are not yet known and are still being deliberated upon. Having considered the public interest test, I can confirm that information relating to this section of your request is exempt under the following sections of the Act:

Sections 36(2)(b)(i), 36(2)(b)(ii), 36(2)(c) – Prejudice to the Conduct of Public Affairs, and Section 43(2) Commercial Interests.

Please see below for the public interest arguments for both disclosure and non-disclosure under sections 36 and 43 of the Act.

Public Interest Test Arguments

In favour	Against
There is a public interest in allowing public access to information held by public authorities such as the UK Commission in the promotion of accountability and transparency.	It is in the public interest that members of the UK Commission should be able to exchange views/scenarios/advice/options papers internally, openly and candidly and to prepare briefings accordingly.
There is a public interest for access to be given to decisions taken by the Coalition Government and the basis on which they are made.	It is in the public interest that the UK Commission is able to express itself candidly in exchanges of correspondence between government departments or in meetings to enable the UK Commission to perform its role effectively
	It is in the public interest that the outcome of the Coalition Government's Public Bodies Review and the Comprehensive Spending Review is made public, however as the reviews are still underway for the UK Commission any information released could be commercially sensitive at this stage.
	Disclosure of any correspondence at this stage of the Coalition Government's Public Bodies Review and the Comprehensive Spending Review would, or would be likely to, prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs due to the un-finalised outcomes of both reviews for the UK Commission.
Overview of exemptions	
Section 36(2)(b)(i) – Prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs	Information to which this section applies is exempt information if, in the reasonable opinion of a qualified person, disclosure of the information under this Act would, or would likely to inhibit the free and frank provision of advice.
Section 36(2)(b)(ii) – Prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs	Information to which this section applies is exempt information if, in the reasonable opinion of a qualified person, disclosure of the information under this Act would, or would likely to inhibit the free and frank exchange of views for the purpose of deliberation.
Section 36(2)(c) – Prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs	Information to which this section applies is exempt information if, in the reasonable opinion of a qualified person, disclosure of the information under this Act would otherwise prejudice, or would be likely to prejudice, the effective conduct of public affairs.
Section 43(2) – Commercial Interests	Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to prejudice the commercial interest of any person (including the public authority holding it).