

Freedom of Information Act: charging policy in Treasury Solicitor's Dept (Tsol)

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) allows greater access to information held by public authorities. The majority of costs for complying with requests will be met by the public sector. However, the right to access information needs to be balanced by the need of public authorities to continue to carry out their other duties. For this reason, the FOIA allows for public authorities to decline to comply with certain requests for information on the grounds of cost where these requests would be particularly expensive. It also allows for public authorities to charge for answering requests for information in certain circumstances.

The Ministry of Justice guidance on fees can be viewed at

<http://www.foi.gov.uk/practitioner/feesguidance.htm> TSol's policy is that:

1. Subject to 3 below, we will not seek to recover costs in responding to requests under FOIA that fall below the £600 limit set for Government departments.
2. We will not routinely provide information where the cost of doing so would exceed the £600 limit.
3. We will charge for photocopying, at 10p per page, for every page over 100 that we sent in response to a FOI request.

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