



30 November 2022

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FOI: 71943

Dear Requester,

We write further to our letter of 11 October, with regard to your letter of 21 September, in which you further refined your Freedom of Information request of 29 June, for information about the Independent Review of Prevent. In your most recent request, you specifically ask:

- a. *Emails from the to the Independent Reviewer or the Independent Review Team relating to the request for an extension to the deadline for the submission of the report of the Independent Reviewer from 1 April 2022 to present.*
- b. *The dates and times of meetings between the Independent Reviewer (Sir William Shawcross) or members of the Review Team and the Home Secretary, Home Office ministers and/or other senior Home Office officials regarding the Prevent Review from 26 January 2021 to present.*

Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

With regard to point (a), we confirm that we hold the information you have requested, and have provided some of this information in the attached at **Annex B**. However, after careful consideration we have decided that some of the information is exempt from disclosure under Sections 24(1), 38(1) and 40(1) of the Act. These sections of the Act pertain to National Security, Health and Safety, and Personal Information respectively. Sections 24(1), and 38(1) are qualified exemptions, which require the consideration of the Public Interest Test. You can find this in the attached at **Annex A**. Section 40(1) is an absolute exemption, which requires no consideration of Public Interest Test.

With regard to point (b), we confirm that we hold the information you have requested, and have provided this information in the attached at **Annex C**. Further information can also be found at Home Office: ministerial gifts, hospitality, travel and meetings at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/home-office-ministers-hospitality-data>

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to

FOIRequests@homeoffice.gov.uk, quoting reference FOI: 71943. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff who were not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely

**Freedom of Information  
Home Office**

## **ANNEX A - Public Interest Test (PIT)**

### **The response**

Full disclosure of emails relating to the request for an extension to the deadline for the submission of the report of the Independent Reviewer, would compromise the health and safety of key officials, thereby prejudicing the UK's national security objectives. The public interest would be best served by withholding some of the information under the exemptions detailed below.

### **Public Interest Test**

Some of the exemptions in the FOI Act, referred to as 'qualified exemptions', are subject to a public interest test (PIT). This test is used to balance the public interest in disclosure against the public interest in favour of withholding the information, or the considerations for and against the requirement to say whether the information requested is held or not. We must carry out a PIT where we are considering using any of the qualified exemptions in response to a request for information.

The 'public interest' is not the same as what interests the public. In carrying out a PIT we consider the greater good or benefit to the community as a whole if the information is released or not. The 'right to know' must be balanced against the need to enable effective government and to serve the best interests of the public.

The FOI Act is 'applicant blind'. This means that we cannot, and do not, ask about the motives of anyone who asks for information. In providing a response to one person, we are expressing a willingness to provide the same response to anyone, including those who might represent a threat to the UK.

### **Section 24(1) – National Security**

24(1) of the Act States:

***24(1) Information which does not fall within section 23(1) is exempt information if exemption from section 1(1)(b) is required for the purpose of safeguarding national security.***

### **Section 38(1) – Health and Safety**

38(1) of the Act States:

***(1) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to —***

***(a) endanger the physical or mental health of any individual, or***

***(b) endanger the safety of any individual.***

### **Considerations in favour of disclosing the information**

The Home Office recognises there is a general public interest in transparency and openness in government, which increases public trust in, and engagement with the Government. In the context of this request, there is a public interest in the full disclosure of relevant emails relating to the request for an extension to the deadline for the submission

of the report of the Independent Reviewer. Full disclosure of the requested information could enhance the openness of government, and help the public understand in greater depth, the processes of the Independent Review of Prevent.

### **Considerations in favour of withholding the information**

Full disclosure of relevant emails relating to the request for an extension to the deadline for the submission of the report of the Independent Reviewer, is likely to have an impact on the delivery of national security objectives. In addition, safeguarding the health and safety of UK citizens is of paramount importance. Disclosing redacted information would potentially put the well-being, and physical safety of individuals and their families at risk.

Moreover, the disclosure of redacted information would allow key officials to be identified and targeted for access to information that is used to safeguard national security, and the interests and safety of UK citizens. Disclosure would place these individuals and their families in a high threat situation, as well as expose the public to a higher level of risk of harm.

This may impact negatively on the delivery of Prevent, and on the range of activities deployed to prevent terrorism.

### **Balance of the public interest test**

We consider that there is an overriding public interest in withholding the information you have requested. We consider that safeguarding national security interests, and the safety of individuals are of overriding importance, and that in this instance, the public interest is best served by the non-disclosure of this information under Sections 24(1), and 38(1).

## **Annex B – Point (a)**

*Emails from the to the Independent Reviewer or the Independent Review Team relating to the request for an extension to the deadline for the submission of the report of the Independent Reviewer from 1 April 2022 to present.*

**From:** <redacted>

**Sent:** Mon 08/08/2022 11:10

**To:** <redacted>

**Subject:** RE: Submission - Publishing timings for the Independent Review of Prevent

<redacted>

I said I would provide a further update on the Prevent review and likely timings for submission. The draft is very close to finalised, and barring any new issues emerging, there are just a few legal points we want to double check before it will be ready. However, <redacted> is concerned by that there is not yet clarity on the mechanism that will be used to lay the report before Parliament (which affects the level of Parliamentary Privilege it will attract. He is clear that it must be the Unopposed Return route and I think will feel more comfortable submitting his report once a decision on this has been taken. Separately, he is very keen to hear the Permanent Secretary's decision on whether it will be possible to publish the response at the same time as the report.

Best wishes,

<redacted>

**From:** <redacted>

**Sent:** 05 August 2022 16:21

**To:** <redacted>

**Subject:** RE: Submission - Publishing timings for the Independent Review of Prevent

<redacted>

I know we've not been working to an explicit deadline for submission of the report at this point but I wanted to let you know not to expect it today. <redacted> is still considering a few final issues and needs a little more time to do this. I'll update as soon as I can next week on likely timings.

Best wishes,

<redacted>

**From:** <redacted>

**Sent:** Mon 01/08/2022 09:21

**To:** <redacted>

**Cc:** <redacted>

**Subject:** RE: Independent Review of Prevent

Hi <redacted>,

Apologies for the short notice but unfortunately we need to extend <redacted> appointment again – to the end of August. We have a further delay for last-minute amendments and legal checks. I'd be grateful if you and the team could put this in motion – happy to discuss.

<redacted>

**From:** <redacted>

**Sent:** 28 July 2022 11:37

**To:** <redacted>

**Subject:** RE: Submission - Publishing timings for the Independent Review of Prevent

<redacted>

We've been working on finalising the draft of the IRP to send to you on Friday but unfortunately <redacted> has decided that there are some further issues he needs to consider before he is able to submit it. <redacted> hasn't indicated a new date for submission but I think the earliest we can realistically expect to have it ready is the end of next week.

Happy to discuss.

<redacted>

**From:** <redacted>

**Sent:** Fri 01/07/2022 15:49

**To:** <redacted>

**Cc:** <redacted>

**Subject:** RE: Submission: Publishing the Government Response to the Independent Review of Prevent (follow up advice)

All,

Following meetings with counsel this week, <redacted> has reluctantly concluded that there is not enough time to resolve the outstanding legal issues with the draft and provide the Home Secretary with a final version in time for you to lay the report before Parliament before recess. He has asked me to thank everyone for their work on trying to make this possible over the past few weeks.

I will be in touch again with a date for submission of the final draft but we are working towards resolving the legal and other outstanding issues as quickly as possible.

Best wishes,

<redacted>

**[enquiries@preventreview.independent.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@preventreview.independent.gov.uk)**

**<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-review-of-prevent>**



**Independent**  
Review of  
Prevent

**From:** <redacted>  
**Sent:** Tue 21/06/2022 13:30  
**To:** <redacted>  
**Cc:** <redacted>  
**Subject:** RE: Contracts for <redacted> and <redacted>

<redacted>

Yes. We should collectively discuss given we won't be publishing until at least Sept now what <redacted> and your thinking is for Aug-Oct

<redacted>

**From:** <redacted>  
**Sent:** 21 June 2022 12:58  
**To:** <redacted>  
**Cc:** <redacted>  
**Subject:** Contracts for <redacted> and <redacted>

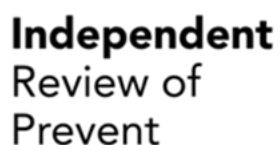
<redacted>,

When you last saw <redacted> we all agreed that <redacted> and <redacted> contracts needed to be extended to the end of June. Given the Home Secretary's decision on timing, and the fact that we are not meeting counsel to discuss the legal advice until 30 June, are you happy as budget holder if I put things in motion to extend them both to the end of July?

Happy to discuss.

<redacted>

**[enquiries@preventreview.independent.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@preventreview.independent.gov.uk)**  
**<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-review-of-prevent>**



**Independent**  
Review of  
Prevent

**From:** <redacted>  
**Sent:** Fri 29/04/2022 17:35  
**To:** <redacted>  
**Cc:** <redacted>  
**Subject:** Independent Review of PREVENT

Dear <redacted>

Congratulations on completing your review and thank you for submitting it. I am sorry I have not been in touch earlier but have been on leave after a period of working for the Home Secretary as her Principal Private Secretary.

I understand that you and <redacted> have already discussed the next stage in the process and that you are planning to meet <redacted> next week, but do let me know if you have any questions or concerns about what happens next. It sounds as if it should be feasible to deal with any comments or requests from the department by the end of May. Do you agree?

Have a lovely Bank Holiday weekend and take care.

<redacted>

**From:** <redacted>  
**Sent:** 25 April 2022 15:59  
**To:** <redacted>  
**Cc:** <redacted>  
**Subject:** FW: Independent Review of Prevent

Hi <redacted>,

Thanks again for this and please see my amended version attached. The Perm Sec has already written to <redacted> on timing and so I think that point has been made clearly for the moment – and in any case, better to keep this letter for the detail of his reappointment and tackle any further timing issues discreetly through more senior channels if necessary.

I'm happy for this to be issued now. Good idea to keep PO copied in.

Best wishes,

<redacted>

**From:** <redacted>  
**Sent:** 20 April 2022 12:15  
**To:** <redacted>  
**Cc:** <redacted>  
**Subject:** RE: Independent Review of Prevent

All,

I've just spoken to <redacted> who has told me that he will send us the draft of the report by the end of the week. As you know, HOLA then need 5 days for legal checks before we can formally send it on to the department, though I am also happy to share the most relevant sections as soon as possible after receiving it – in particular the recommendations – as previously agreed with <redacted>.

<redacted> has requested that his IT access be maintained at least until the end of May in order to work respond to any comments from the department (and other WH departments)



on the draft. Based on the consensus from security and DDAT on the chain below it sounds as if the only way to do that would be to extend his appointment. <redacted> was at pains to make sure everyone was aware that he does not want to draw further public money, but **my suggestion would be that we extend him on 1-day a week through to the end of May (including April retrospectively).**

<redacted> **also requests that <redacted> appointment be extended to the end of May so that she can work with him on any amendments.**

**SpAds/PS Home Sec/PS Perm Sec – I'd be grateful for your response on these two requests so that I can relay it to <redacted>.** I do not think these requests are unreasonable and they are in line with what we originally anticipated before the deadline was extended, but I would suggest formalising any new arrangement only once the draft has arrived so that it's clear that this period is for work on the next phase and not another rolling extension to the deadline for the draft.

<redacted> has separately asked for a meeting with <redacted> which I have suggested should take place once <redacted> has had a chance to take a first look at the report so that it can be used to discuss process and timings for any comments from the department. <redacted> – **let's discuss this separately but grateful for your views on what would be most useful.**

Best wishes,

<redacted>

**From:** <redacted>

**Sent:** 13 Apr 2022, at 12:08

**To:** <redacted>

**Subject:** Re: Independent Review of Prevent

<redacted>

I hope that you are well and that you are making good progress on the final amendments to your Review. As you will be aware from <redacted> letter yesterday, the Home Secretary is concerned by the delay to the Review and is starting to come under significant pressure from HASC, amongst others. She asked to see the draft as soon as possible and I hope that you are now in a position to finalise it very quickly. Please let me know if there is anything further that you need from me, <redacted>, or the team to facilitate this.

Please let me know if it would be helpful to discuss any of this over the phone. As you know, <redacted> (copied) has leave booked this week but is back in London and ready to log on if needed.

<redacted>

## **ANNEX C – Point (b)**

The dates and times of meetings between the Independent Reviewer, or members of the Review Team and the Home Secretary, Home Office Ministers and/or other senior Home Office Officials regarding the Prevent Review from 26 January 2021 to present.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
09.02.2021	12:30 - 13:30
10.03.2021	11:30 - 12:00
11.03.2021	10:15 - 11:15
03.08.2021	15:00 - 15:45
20.09.2021	13:00 - 14:00
21.10.2021	15:00 - 15:30
28.10.2021	10:00 - 10:30
23.11.2021	09:00 - 09:30
06.05.2022	11:00 - 12:00
19.05.2022	09:30 - 10:30
20.07.2022	11:15 - 11:45
20.07.2022	13:40 - 14:00
18.08.2022	14:30 - 15:00