

## Action on receipt of information requests by MPS personnel checklist

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For all MPS Personnel - Action on information requests - determining if they are either business as usual (BAU) or Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) requests.

All Actions are Mandatory.

How to determine business as usual (BAU) or FoIA information requests

Does request meet criteria for Business as usual (BAU) information requests?

BAU information requests:

- Can be made by anyone in the World and in any form [including verbal];

If the information requested is routine/ non-sensitive in nature, it can be freely released into the public domain; e.g. Police station opening hours; how to report a crime, SNT leaflets and what we publish on the MPS website. You can also refer callers [if it is appropriate] to the MPS Publication Scheme to access what they are looking for - [MPS Publication Scheme](#).

You can treat a request as BAU and respond directly if:

- It does not indicate that it is a request under FoIA;
- All the information requested can be provided with no applied exemption [so nothing would be refused]; and
- All the information requested will be provided within 20 working days.

Remember that there is a general duty to assist under the Act. You must provide reasonable help and assistance to callers who wish to submit information requests. For example:

- If age is a factor [both young and old];
- A disability/ impairment is apparent [e.g. eyesight, hearing is an issue etc.]; or
- Where language causes difficulties.

If necessary seek advice from Data Rights relating to the duty to assist.

Confirm FOIA request is valid. For information requests under FoIA to be valid the following conditions should apply:

- It must be made in writing [but in any format - letter, email, social media etc.] AND
- Must clearly describe the information being sought;

- Must be legible; and
- Must contain the name of the applicant and a return address.

Additionally, case law and other guidance has established that FoIA information requests can be:

- Made from anywhere in the World; and
- Made by either an individual or an organisation [known as 'non-natural persons'].

Please note - To be valid under FoIA, requests do not:

- Have to be written on a special form;
- Need to mention the Act or refer to 'freedom of information' in any way; but if they do mention FoI or FoIA it cannot be treated as BAU.

If it is a valid information request under FoIA you [or whoever receives the request] must forward this immediately to Data Rights, Data Office, Strategy and Governance by scanning in / sending the request by internal email to [DataRights@met.police.uk](mailto:DataRights@met.police.uk)

Data Rights will record the FoIA request on the CycFreedom system and handle all actions from that point forward.

Please note - It is important that the FoIA information request is sent promptly through to Data Rights due to the statutory time limit to answer requests within 20 working days.

Data Rights | Data Office | Strategy and Governance | Metropolitan Police Service, is the unit tasked with answering all MPS data rights requests, including those as defined by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).

Members of the public can be invited to send any FoIA information requests [that cannot be answered locally as BAU], direct to Data Rights – [Enquiries mailbox](#)