

DETI PUBLICATION SCHEME

1. Background – the FOI Act

The [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#) was fully implemented in January 2005 to promote a culture of openness and transparency in the administration of public affairs. The Act, which applies to a wide range of public bodies including DETI,

- gives members of the public a general right of access to recorded information held by public authorities (subject to certain exemptions)
- imposes obligations on public authorities as to how they should respond to written requests for information, and
- requires public authorities to adopt and maintain a Publication Scheme.

It also established the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) with responsibility for ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Act. Further information on the FOI Act can be found on the [ICO's website](#)

2. What is a Publication Scheme?

A '**publication scheme**' is essentially a guide to the types of information a public authority makes available **pro-actively** to the public by, for example, publishing on its website or by otherwise making documents routinely available on demand without the need to engage the formal FOI written request procedure. Upon adopting a scheme approved by the Information Commissioner, a public authority has a commitment to make available those classes of information identified within the scheme.

Following a review carried out by the ICO, a [Model Publication Scheme](#), was produced, setting out 7 broad categories of information that all public authorities are expected to consider for publication. The ICO has further

refined this model scheme by producing a related [Definition Document for NI Government Departments](#) which gives examples of the types of information within each category that it would be good practice for departments to make available routinely. This Model Scheme has been adopted by DETI with effect from January 2009.

3. Guide to published information.

Most of the information we make routinely available is accessible, free of charge, directly from DETI's website. There are a number of ways to navigate our website and we have produced the following guide explaining how best to find the information you are looking for, [DETI Online - Guide to Information](#).

Published information may also be obtained in hard copy. In keeping with our commitment to promoting equality of opportunity DETI will also be make available on request, as a minimum, an executive summary of key published information in other formats such as Braille, disc, audiocassette, local regional or minority languages and the languages of the minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland. Certain very large documents or manuals may be made available for viewing by arrangement, however where practicable we will endeavor to supply sections of these documents by other means to meet specific needs.

Exceptionally, some published information may attract a fee and where this is the case details of charges and how to obtain the information will be clearly stated in the relevant section of the website

If you cannot find information online that you feel ought to be routinely available under our Publication Scheme, then please make use of the 'Contacts' option on our website to get in touch with the relevant Departmental business area. Alternatively, e-mail us at information@detini.gov.uk or telephone 028 9052 9555.

4. **Accessing other information**

Remember that, under the FOI Act, you also have a 'general right of access' to request other information held by the Department that is not included in this Publication Scheme. For guidance on this see "[Making a Request for Information under FOI](#)".

5. **Re-use of Information**

The supply of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not give the recipient the automatic right to re-use it in any way that would infringe copyright. This may include, for example, making multiple copies, publishing and issuing copies to the public. The copyright in some material has been waived, meaning you can reproduce this material freely. However permission to re-use certain information must be obtained in advance from the Controller of HMSO who has responsibility for the licensing of Crown copyright material. Further details on how to apply for a licence can be found on the [Office of Public Sector Information](#) website.

6. **Your feedback**

Our publication scheme will be reviewed from time to time and we would value your assistance in identifying ways to improve it. If you have any comments, suggestions or complaints to make about the presentation, content or implementation of the scheme, please forward these in writing to the Departmental Information Manager at our headquarters address, or by e-mail to foi@detini.gov.uk.

Handling of complaints. We have an obligation to make information available in the manner described within this scheme. Should we receive any complaints about failure to do so, these will be investigated in the first instance by the Departmental Information Manager who will reply within 15 working

days. If you are not satisfied with this reply, you can write to the Director of Human Resources and Central Support who has overall responsibility for Freedom of Information within DETI. Again you will receive a response within 15 working days. In all cases your complaint will be fully investigated and treated in confidence. If we have not resolved the issue to your satisfaction you are entitled to refer your complaint to the Information Commissioner who will make an independent judgment on the matter.