

Note of Zoom call - Wednesday 25th May 2022

In attendance: Nicola Johnston CAED, Jodi Smith CAED, [REDACTED] CAED, Valerie Noble NICS HR.

Subject of meeting: FOI request DOF/2022-0155 which asks for 'documents held by the Department setting out the role, responsibilities and duties of the current Head of the NI Civil Service.'

A response has been drafted directing the requester to the candidate information booklet available on the internet. Section 21 of FOI was applied.

NICS HR have contacted the FOI/EIR team this evening to advise further information contained within submissions has been discovered and is relevant to the request and is seeking advice.

Points discussed:

1. Further searches have uncovered information in relation to the role of HOCS is contained in submissions between the interim HOCS, Jenny Pyper and Jill Minne, Head of NICS HR
2. Not all the information contained in the submissions is on the subject matter of the role of HOCS, the relevant information should be extracted and provided in a separate document or redacted as not falling within the scope of the request.
3. Advice contained within a document from the DSO could fall within an exemption under section 42 of the FOIA – Legal Professional Privilege, it would be necessary to review the information and carry out a Public Interest Test.
4. The business area sought advice, given the response is due with the requester on Friday 27th May and they require time to consider the PIT. The FOI team advised that an extension letter should be issued, which would explain the situation to ensure full transparency.