



# Freedom of Information

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## Four more bodies to be included in FOI regime

The Ministry of Justice has announced that four new bodies are to be brought within the Freedom of Information Act.

The new additions are the Association of Chief Police Officers; the Financial Ombudsman Service; Academy Schools; and UCAS.

The organisations will now consult with the government directly, with the intention of implementing the extension in the next Parliamentary session.

The expansion is substantially less far reaching

then proposals in the government's 2007 consultation paper.

In that paper, the government indicated that it would extend FOI to contractors working for public authorities. Addressing this recently, the government said "no general expansion of FOI in relation to contractors is appropriate at the present time." The government acknowledged significant issues of practicality and principle raised by the original proposals, including the administrative and economic burden that FOI applicability would place

on private entities, and the negative impact on cost-efficiency, commercial incentive, and competition.

However, the government has stated that it intends to "keep under review" whether FOI should be extended to cover contractors. It singled out prisons, detention centres, foster care homes, utilities, and transport companies.

Charles Brasted, Senior Associate at Lovells LLP, told *Freedom of Information* "the proposed extension of FOI to the Finan-  
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## 'Step change' in BBC culture of salary disclosure

The BBC is preparing for the unscheduled early release of the further salary and expenses details of its lower level executives after the recent release of expenses data about its executive board members.

The latest move comes after criticism that the expenses data released by the BBC about its executive board did not go far enough, particularly because it failed to

show the money being spent through the BBC's central system (i.e. those expenses not being claimed individually).

According to Patricia Barratt, Lawyer at Clifford Chance LLP, the latest announcement by the BBC represents a "step change" in the BBC's attitude to its disclosure of salary information.

Earlier this year, BBC

Director General, Mark Thompson, announced that the BBC would release regular information about the salaries and expenses of the BBC's key decision and policy makers, in addition to headline figures in relation to expenditure on "top talent."

The announcement by the BBC came in the wake of a string of Freedom of Information  
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