

Home Office
Head of Freedom of Information Act Section
Direct Communications Unit
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 4DF

Friday 19 March 2010

By e-mail to public.enquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
And by hard copy

Dear Sir/Madam

**re: Questions to the Home Office Freedom of Information Act Section -
Involvement by the Home Office with the McCanns regarding a possible review
or re-investigation into the disappearance of Madeleine McCann**

During the past two weeks, several newspapers have referred to the following matters in relation to the Madeleine McCann case:

- a) one or more meetings between Home Secretary Alan Johnson and the McCanns
- b) several meetings between the McCanns and staff of the Home Office
- c) the commencement of a 'scoping exercise' to evaluate what form any review or re-investigation into Madeleine's disappearance may take
- d) the appointment of the Chief Executive of the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre, Mr Jim Gamble, to advise the Home Office as to which police force should carry out any review or re-investigation
- e) the reported decision by Jim Gamble and the Home Office to appoint West Yorkshire Police to carry out a review or re-investigation.

It is evident that there remains huge public interest in and beyond the U.K. in what really happened to Madeleine McCann, which was described as recently as 19 February by the McCanns' chief public relations adviser, Mr Clarence Mitchell, as 'a complete mystery. The clear public interest will therefore be served by your section providing full answers as soon as possible to the following questions under the Freedom of Information Act. We would add that the answers to these questions must be readily available to officials and so the cost of providing them should be minimal. Here are the questions:

1. On what date or dates has the Home Secretary Alan Johnson had meetings with one or both of the McCanns?
2. Who else was present at these meetings: in particular, was any lawyer or other adviser for the McCanns present?
3. On what dates did meetings take place between one or both of the McCanns and staff of the Home Office?
4. Please identify all the staff who met with the McCanns and again identify whether the McCanns had legal or other representatives with them.
5. On what date did the McCanns first approach the Home Office asking for a review or re-investigation by a British police force into Madeleine's disappearance?

6. Is the Home Office carrying out what the Daily Telegraph called 'a scoping exercise' to evaluate what form any review or re-investigation into Madeleine's disappearance may take' and, if so, on what date did that scoping exercise commence?
7. Why, according to the press, was Chief Executive of the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre, Mr Jim Gamble, given the role of advising the Home Office as to which police force should carry out any review or re-investigation?
8. On what date did the Home Secretary ask Mr Gamble to perform this role?
9. On what date did Mr Gamble make his recommendation?
10. Did he, as reported, recommend West Yorkshire Police to carry out a review or re-investigation?
11. Has West Yorkshire Police, as reported, been asked to carry out a review or re-investigation into the disappearance of Madeleine McCann?
12. If so, what is the brief or remit that the Home Office has given to West Yorkshire Police?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely