

Date: 5th May 2021

Our Reference: FOIA-2021-046

RE: Your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

I write in response to your Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('FoIA 2000') request, dated **20/04/2021**, in which you requested:

'1) what guidance was given to College of Policing staff, following the death of the Duke of Edinburgh, as regards observing / respecting any period of mourning . Especially what guidance was given to staff to restrict / delay sending email correspondence

2) A copy of the Code of Ethics covering Honesty and Integrity and Respect for Others that College staff are expected to follow'

On **21/04/2021** you provided clarification:

'By "guidance" i mean any guidance from whatever source that was given to staff following the death of Prince Phillip that altered or was likely to have altered normal working practices during the "mourning" period.

In particular guidance that normal / routine correspondence should be restricted during the mourning period OR delayed until after the funeral'

Decision

When a request for information is made under the FoIA 2000, a public authority has a general duty under section 1(1) of the Act to inform an applicant whether the requested information is held. There is then a general obligation to communicate that information to the applicant.

In line with section 1(1) of the FoIA 2000, I can confirm the College **does hold information** relevant to your request.

1. Guidance given to College staff

At disclosure document 1, please find relevant extracted sections from three emails sent to College staff. It is identified on the document whether these were internal or external originating emails.

Please find government guidance for the period of national mourning, which was sent to the College by an external organisation, at disclosure document 2.

2. A copy of the Code of Ethics

The College's Code of Ethics is publicly available, and can be found here:

<https://www.college.police.uk/ethics/code-of-ethics>

Your rights are provided at the bottom of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Kaufman | Legal Advisor

Information Management and Legal Team

College of Policing

Email: FOI@college.pnn.police.uk

Website: www.college.police.uk

Your right of review

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you have a right to request an internal review if you are dissatisfied with our handling of your request. Review requests should be made in writing (by email or post) within **40 working days** from the date of our original response. We will aim to respond to your review request within **20 working days**.

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

If, after lodging a review request you are still dissatisfied, you may raise the matter with the ICO. For further information you can visit their website at <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/official-information/>. Alternatively, you can contact them by phone or write to them at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Phone: 0303 123 1113

Relevant information from email 1 (originated internally)

We have lowered our flags at Harperley Hall and at Ryton and, in line with protocol, will pause all external communications. We've been advised by the Home Office that this should be for approximately 8-10 days.

Relevant information from email 2 (originated internally)

In essence, normal business activity (daily contact with people in policing, emails etc.) can continue, but more significant or wider communications of a non-essential nature (e.g. general newsletters, circulation of new work that will be made or could be made public, social media posts etc.) should be paused. I would expect most of this type of activity to flow through the comms team anyway, but the warning has been included as other areas of the organisation also own and control public channels.

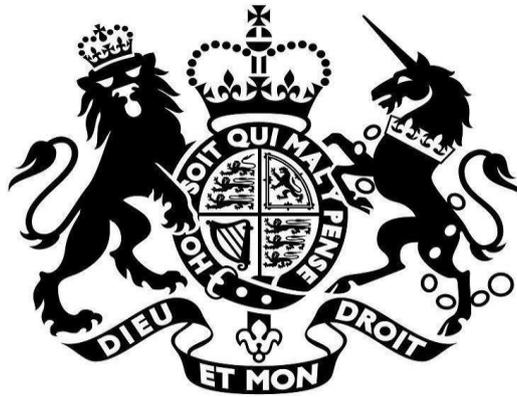
We have already put a pause on any non-COVID related comms activity going out on our corporate channels over the next few days and will be further reviewing wider plans on Monday morning. We will be in touch with any changes that may impact your work.

Public-facing activity - domestic

1. The overall principle is that only essential public-facing activity (including international business) should be undertaken during this period, both in terms of content and timing. This is particularly pertinent on the day of death and the day of the funeral.
2. Any public health advice or information that is important to public safety should continue to be made in a timely fashion. All statutory releases should also continue as normal.
3. With the exception of essential public health announcements connected to COVID-19, officials should in the first instance seek guidance from their Permanent Secretary on the application of this principle. The Permanent Secretary may consult the Propriety & Ethics team in the Cabinet Office.
4. Announcements that do go ahead should also be agreed with the NCC, which is coordinating Government communications in relation to the funeral and will also engage with No.10 Communications.
5. Directors of Communications should personally approve updates to official websites and social media channels during the period of National Mourning to ensure due sensitivity.

Relevant information from email 3 (originated externally)

Whilst core government business will continue, discretion will be required in terms of public announcements and significant public facing activity (including social media). You should therefore review any scheduled public announcements that you are due to make in the mourning period (the next 8-11 days) including scheduled social media posts. The expectation will be that all will be cancelled. Exceptions should be rare and discussed with us first.



**HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH
10 JUNE 1921 – 9 APRIL 2021**

**GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE FOR THE PERIOD OF NATIONAL
MOURNING**

Released on 09-04-2021

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the responsibilities of Government Departments during the mourning period.

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Introduction

1. Following Buckingham Palace's announcement of the death of His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, a period of National Mourning has started and will continue until the morning after the funeral.
2. **FINAL DECISIONS HAVE NOT BEEN MADE BY THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD ON THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S FUNERAL PLANS. PLEASE DO NOT ACTIVATE YOUR FULL DEPARTMENTAL PLANS AT THIS STAGE.**
3. Departments are requested to undertake immediate actions in their plan that are specifically in line with public health advice. For example, please lower flags but do not put out books of condolence. Please make sure your colleagues, and all of the staff you are responsible for - including those in your arms-length bodies - are aware of this guidance.
4. The purpose of this document is to provide an outline of the responsibilities of central Government Departments during the mourning period. It provides some basic information and principles to follow. This document should be read in conjunction with current public health advice and any activity should be in line with that health advice.
5. This document is intended to cover all UK Government civil servants working in any part of the UK. There is bespoke guidance available for Scottish Government officials, Welsh Government officials and the Northern Ireland Civil Service. This guidance will be issued by the relevant Permanent Secretary or Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service.
6. The Royal Household will announce details of the ceremonial events associated with the funeral service of The Duke of Edinburgh. Following this announcement, the Cabinet Office will publish separate National Mourning Guidance to the public,

industry and business to provide direction for observing National Mourning, including information on online books of condolence for the public and public services. The National Mourning Guidance will be available as soon as possible on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Background

7. The National Mourning period has commenced and will end on the morning after The Duke of Edinburgh's funeral.

Day of the Funeral

8. Confirmation on the date and timing of the funeral will be made by the Royal Household. Until the Household has communicated the details, Government cannot confirm the arrangements and should direct enquiries to the [Royal Website](https://www.royal.gov.uk) and [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) for further information.

Government Response

9. The Cabinet Office is responsible for central coordination of the Government's response in order to:
 - maintain strategic oversight of the Government's responsibilities;
 - provide a regular flow of information between the Palace and Government;
 - support the Prime Minister and other Ministers as required;
 - manage cross-cutting issues and share situational awareness; and
 - coordinate media relations and briefings from a Government perspective.
10. Those Departments and devolved administrations with responsibilities for delivering events during the mourning period are as follows:

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

- Communication and engagement with foreign and commonwealth

governments and British Overseas Territories.

Ministry of Defence

- Notification and deployment of military personnel for any ceremonial activity.
- Gun salutes.

Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport

- Providing guidance for the public on the half-masting of flags.

Department for Health and Social Care and Public Health England / Scotland / Wales / NI

- Providing detailed guidance to the Government and public in respect of public health guidance and safeguarding against the spread of COVID-19.

Home Office

- Overseeing assurance of policing in England and Wales and security operations across the UK including robust assessments of threat and risk and protective security.

Department for Transport

- Oversight of UK aviation and road, rail and buses in England.
- Pass information between transport providers and central Government.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

- Oversight of advice including mourning guidance to Local Authorities outside London across the rest of England.

Northern Ireland Office

- Oversight of aspects in Northern Ireland.

Scottish Government and Welsh Government

- Oversight of devolved aspects in Scotland and Wales.

11. Each Government department has a Bridges operational lead that will be the

main source of advice. Departmental leads should be the first point of contact and will raise any issues by exception with the Cabinet Office.

12. The Cabinet Office is also coordinating the Government's communication with the public and media through the News Coordination Centre (NCC). The NCC is responsible for overseeing all Government communications activity in relation to the mourning period and for coordinating media and public information and any Government announcements relating to the death, working with a wide range of partners inside and outside of Government.

Guidance for Government and Public Bodies

Responsibilities

13. Permanent Secretaries should make sure all civil servants working in their Department are aware of this guidance and will be responsible for making decisions about issues arising, in consultation with the Cabinet Office, where necessary. Ministers should consult their Permanent Secretaries on the application of the Mourning Guidance on Departmental business during the Mourning Period.

14. Departments are expected to convey the Government Mourning Guidance to civil servants working in their associated Executive Agencies, non-departmental public bodies and non-Ministerial Departments. Separate National Mourning Guidance will be issued once details of the funeral service are confirmed.

Condolence Messages and Wreaths

15. Condolence messages will be conveyed to Her Majesty The Queen by: the Prime Minister; the Cabinet Secretary; the Secretary of State for Defence; the Permanent Under Secretary of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office; and the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service. The First Ministers of Scotland,

Northern Ireland and Wales will also convey a condolence message.

16. Official wreaths will be sent by: the Prime Minister; the Cabinet Secretary; the Secretary of State for Defence; the Permanent Under Secretary of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office; and the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service. The First Ministers of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales will also send official wreaths.

Books of Condolence

17. A Book of Condolence will be available online at the [Royal Website](#). Unfortunately, in order to comply with nationwide restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 outbreak, and to prevent the spread of infection, Books of Condolence will not be available in public buildings for people to sign in person.

Royal Photographs in Official Buildings

18. Details of the arrangements for changing photographs or pictures of His Royal Highness, which may be displayed in official buildings, will be announced following the lifting of public health restrictions. These photographs should remain displayed until further notice.

Government Business

19. Departments will be providing support to the Royal Household during the mourning period, core Government business and service delivery is expected to continue under the current restrictions. Staff will not be required to return to their offices, and should continue to work from home unless their work has been deemed essential to be in a particular office or establishment. Departments should cascade this information to their agencies and public bodies as necessary.

Public-facing activity - domestic

20. The overall principle is that only essential public-facing activity (including international business) should be undertaken during this period, both in terms of content and timing. This is particularly pertinent on the day of death and the day of the funeral.

21. Any public health advice or information that is important to public safety should continue to be made in a timely fashion. All statutory releases should also continue as normal.

22. With the exception of essential public health announcements connected to COVID-19, officials should in the first instance seek guidance from their Permanent Secretary on the application of this principle. The Permanent Secretary may consult the Propriety & Ethics team in the Cabinet Office.

23. Announcements that do go ahead should also be agreed with the NCC, which is coordinating Government communications in relation to the funeral and will also engage with No.10 Communications.

24. Directors of Communications should personally approve updates to official websites and social media channels during the period of National Mourning to ensure due sensitivity.

Public-facing activity - international

25. The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office will issue guidance to posts about sensitivities in relation to official business and events overseas during the period of National Mourning.

26. The Ministry of Defence will issue guidance for HM Armed Forces. Other departments should offer support to their sectors in adjusting to the period of National Mourning.

Ceremonial activity preparations

27. Buckingham Palace will announce details of the programme of ceremonial activities. More detail about the specific ceremonial activities will be published on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Parliament

28. Both Houses will be informed of demise. Further announcements will be made by Parliament on activity during the mourning period.

Conduct and formal marks of respect

29. Permanent Secretaries should consider the following:

Flags

30. Guidance in relation to flags (on Government buildings) will be issued by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Please refer to the DCMS section of [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) for full guidance. Local Authorities will be encouraged to follow this guidance.

31. The devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales will issue instructions for the flying of official flags on buildings within their estate. In Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Office will issue instructions for those buildings covered by the Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000.

Gun Salutes

32. A number of gun salutes will take place throughout the period of National Mourning. More information will be provided by the Ministry of Defence and made available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) as soon as possible.

Dress

33. Civil servants and Ministers involved in ceremonial or other public facing events associated with the demise should wear appropriate mourning dress. This includes:

- dark coat, suit, or day dress; a dark hat and gloves are optional if appropriate for the weather; or
- dark lounge suit with black tie; dark overcoat if appropriate for the weather.

34. All other civil servants who are working in an office at this time are expected to wear their normal business attire.

Correspondence

35. Departments communicating directly with the Royal Household should use black-edged stationery during the period of National Mourning on matters relating to demise. All other Government communications should be conducted in the usual format.

Public Services

36. The public should remain able to access information and services including online services as usual.

37. Departments and public bodies should consider the appropriateness of the content on their digital channels, including social media. [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) will link to information provided by the Royal Household and carry the message of sympathy from the Prime Minister. Departments should avoid making statements or releasing information about events, referring any queries to the NCC.

Public Information

38. It is to be expected that many people will look to the Government for information during the mourning period, including the funeral. The [Royal Website](https://www.gov.uk) will be the primary source of information about the death and the funeral arrangements.

39. [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) is linking to a number of partners, who will carry regularly updated public information about the events of the coming days.

40. Businesses or other organisations wishing to pay their respects by half-masting flags or holding silences are invited to follow the guidance available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

41. As many organisations are engaged in crucial work in relation to the COVID-19

pandemic, there is no expectation that businesses will close during the mourning period unless they wish to. This is a decision for individual organisations.

Further Information

42. Each department has a Bridges contact who should be the first point of contact for further queries.
43. For the most up to date information, please refer to the events page on [GOV.UK](#). This page will go live today.