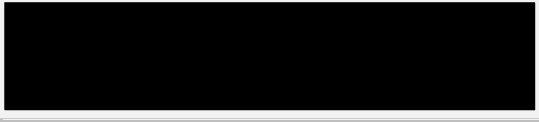


CEO's Office and Governance
4 Abbey Orchard Street
LONDON
SW1P 2BS

DX: 328 London
T: 020 7783 7000
F: 020 7783 7633

www.legalservices.gov.uk



Our ref: L&G/FOI(19)/ IS/AC/4427
Your ref: n/a
Our E-mail:
FOI.STAFF.CF@legalservices.gov.uk

Date: 11 August 2010

Dear 

RE: YOUR FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOI) REQUEST

Thank you for your e-mail of 16th July 2010 in which you made a request under the FOI Act 2000.

In your request, you asked for the following information:

How much legal aid has been paid out to firms representing defendants in each of the trials relating to Operation Overt which may have been funded under the VHCC arrangements? In particular, the trial(s) for:

- **Abdullah Ahmed Ali and Others (re-trial 2009, Woolwich Crown Court);**
- **Mohammed Usman Saddique (2010, Inner London Crown Court);**
- **Abdullah Ahmed Ali and Others (2008, Woolwich Crown Court);**
- **Ibrahim Savant and Others (2010, Woolwich Crown Court);**
- **Adam Khatib and Others (2009, Woolwich Crown Court);**
- **Abdul Muneem Patel (2007, Central Criminal Court); and**
- **Cosor Ali (2010, Inner London Court).**

In respect of the seven trials named in your request, I can confirm that the Legal Services Commission ("Commission") holds information in respect of the costs paid to defence teams representing defendants involved in six (6) of these trials under the Very High Cost Case (VHCC) Scheme. All trials have been concluded and defendants sentenced by courts.

The defence costs of Abdul Muneem Patel were not funded under the VHCC scheme.

Therefore, I can confirm that the actual amount paid out to date under the VHCC scheme is £13.1 million for the following six trials linked to Operation Overt:

- o Abdullah Ahmed Ali and Others (re-trial 2009, Woolwich Crown Court);
- o Mohammed Usman Saddique (2010, Inner London Crown Court);
- o Abdullah Ahmed Ali and Others (2008, Woolwich Crown Court);
- o Ibrahim Savant and Others (2010, Woolwich Crown Court);
- o Adam Khatib and Others (2009, Woolwich Crown Court); and
- o Cosor Ali (2010, Inner London Court).



I would like to explain that the information disclosed in this letter should be read in conjunction with the following explanation:

The figure of £13.1 million does not reflect the final and total costs for all six trials linked to Operation Overt. Further claims for payment are awaited and the Commission will assess these claims. This may result in additional payments and recoupments. The figure provided is therefore not definitive and merely represents the figure as of today's date.

The Commission's contract monitoring and payment system records all defence teams and their associated defendants in a case, but does not record individual trial details. Given that a number of defendants transferred their instructions to different firms at various stages of the proceedings; **it is not possible to attribute costs per defendant or per trial.**

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us at the above address. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future correspondence.

Yours sincerely,



Aleks Cvetkovic
Corporate Governance Officer

