

**FOI DOF/2025-0579**

**Request**

Follow on from FOI DOF/2025-0524

Please see below refined questions for the time period 1 August - 1 September 2025.

1. Under FOI please provide all documents regarding who took the decision to implement the revised hybrid working policy across the NICS.
2. Please provide all documentation regarding consultation with TUS and landlords of rented NICS buildings.
3. All documentation regarding the business reasons for the implementation of the revised hybrid working policy.
4. All documentation where environmental and climate aspects were considered.
5. Was EQIA done and if so please provide.

**DoF Response**

I can confirm the Department holds some of the information requested.

1. No information is held for the period requested.
2. No information is held. Consultation on matters which are relevant across the NICS, including HR policies is held through formal Central Whitley structures. No consultation is undertaken with landlords of rented NICS buildings.
3. Communication issued to all NICS staff on 7<sup>th</sup> August provides information regarding the reasons for the review of the Hybrid Working policy. It is attached for your information (Annex B).
4. A Rural Needs Impact Assessment was completed in March 2025 to consider the impact of the reviewed Hybrid Working Policy. Whilst this is outside of the period requested, it is attached for your information (Annex C).

Please note some personal information has been withheld because it is exempt under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section

40(2) exempts personal information from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would contravene one of the data protection principles in schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act.

Having considered all the information contained within the Legitimate Interest Test – also known as a Lawful, Fairness and Transparency Test - (attached as a separate document – Annex D), the department has established that, on balance, there is no lawful basis for the disclosure of third-party personal data falling within the scope of the request of which the requester is not the data subject. Making an unrestricted disclosure of personal data for private interests could constitute a disproportionate and unwarranted level of interference with the individuals' rights and freedoms – particularly their right to privacy and family life under the Human Rights Act 1998

5. An Equality Impact Assessment was completed outside of the period requested however it is recognised that you may wish to have a copy. This information is being withheld as it is exempt under Section 21(1) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 21 applies to information that is already reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. Section 21 is an absolute exemption, and the department is not required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information. For ease of reference, the document is available at [EQIA - Hybrid Working Policy Screening](#).