ANNEX A

FOI DOF/2026-0473

Request

RE: DP Operations trawl – IRC 320459

1. Please provide any recorded information confirming whether panel members marked candidates individually before any moderation or consensus discussion took place.

2. For each panel, please provide the number of interviews where individual panel member scores differed prior to moderation.

3. NICS Recruitment and Selection policy requires panel members to agree lead questions, indicators of positive performance and arrangements for supplementary / probing questions before interviews commence. Please confirm:
    a. Whether such meetings took place;
    b. Whether they were held jointly for all panels or separately;
    c. What measures were taken to ensure consistency across panels.

4. Please confirm whether supplementary and probing questions were agreed in advance for all panels.

5. Please confirm whether:
    d. The same supplementary/probing questions were available to all panels;
    e. Panels had discretion to rephrase or use alternative supplementary questions.

6. Please confirm whether panel members were permitted to ask supplementary or probing questions that were not included in any pre-agreed list or guidance.

7. Please provide any recorded guidance issued to panel members regarding the use of supplementary or probing questions where candidates had not fully demonstrated the required criteria.

8. Please provide any recorded guidance on the number or extent of supplementary/probing questions that panel members could use when assessing a candidate against each criterion.

DoF response

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

1. It is standard practice for this to be the case; panel members are expected to record their individual panel marks in each Candidate Interview Assessment Booklet (CIAB) prior to any panel discussion to agree on a panel mark.

2. The department can confirm that it holds some information that would fall within the scope of the request. However, it is unable to provide the information you requested as it considers this to exceed the fees threshold. Under Section 12 of the FOIA, the department has estimated that the cost of complying with your request is in excess of £756.25. This exceeds the appropriate limit of £600 as set out in the Fees Regulations.

   The breakdown of costs has been supplied below:

Number of files to extract and review	Estimate of time per file to review	Number of hours (Documents x time to review)	Total estimated cost - hours x £25/hr.
363 (121 interviewees x 3 panel members)	5 mins	30.25 hrs	£756.25

   Unfortunately, given the scope of the request and the way in which the Department holds the information; refinement of the request is not possible, in such a way that would bring it within the statutory limit.

   If you require any clarification, believe that any part of your request has been overlooked, misunderstood or misinterpreted please contact us via the following email address: foi@finance-ni.gov.uk

3. Interview questions and supplementary questions were supplied to HRConnect in advance of interviews by the department, NICS HR cannot comment on any meetings that may have taken place in the department regarding the agreement of these.

   Standard indicators of positive performance were used in line with the competency framework.

   To ensure consistency across panels all panel members are expected to follow the standard interview process, using the same lead questions, indicators of positive performance, bank of supplementary questions and have completed the appropriate NICS Recruitment and Selection training.

4. Please see response to question 3 above.

5. The Candidate Interview Assessment Booklet (CIAB) was used by all panels and detailed the supplementary questions.

   It is permitted for panels to rephrase or use alternative supplementary questions.

6. Please see response to question 5 above.

7. Guidance is provided to panels by HR Connect relating to the completion of the CIAB. This guidance has been provided at **Appendix A**. Panel members receive information regarding the use of supplementary or probing questions as part of their Recruitment & Selection Training.

8. Please see response to question 7 above.