



The National Archives

### **Temporary return of documents to transferring government department**

Request for information about the movement of a file between The National Archives and the transferring government department

#### **Information provided:**

By virtue of section 4(6) of the Public Records Act all records deposited at The National Archives may "be temporarily returned at the request of the person by whom or department or office from which they were transferred."

The National Archives holds an electronic record of document orders. This record extends back as far as 1992. The National Archives does hold earlier records detailing the movement of files. However, these records are in paper form and cannot be searched. This is because the paper records are arranged in date order, not by piece number. The records provide details regarding the movement of every record held by The National Archives, including productions of open records within the reading rooms. Each year The National Archives produces over 500,000 records on site. We have therefore estimated that it would take in excess of three working days to search these records to establish earlier dates showing when a particular file was returned to the transferring department.

Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act we do not have to respond to requests for information if providing a response would cost more than a set limit.

The limit has been set at £600, which represents approximately three days work.

Date of disclosure: 24 September 2007