

Sir Andrew Dilnot CBE
UK Statistics Authority
1 Drummond Gate
London
SW1V 2QQ

9 June 2016

By email to:
authority.enquiries@statistics.gsi.gov.uk

Dear Sir Andrew,

Publicly funded bodies and the referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union

Following the UK Statistics Authority's publication of a media statement on the use of official statistics by EU referendum campaigners on 27 May, I wanted to contact you to ensure that you are aware of the restrictions on publicly funded bodies set out in section 125 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act (PPERA) which apply between 27 May and 23 June. These restrictions apply to arm's length bodies such as the UK Statistics Authority.

The restrictions prevent the publishing of material (other than in response to specific requests for material, and subject to certain other exceptions which include issuing press notices) that:

- provides general information about the referendum;
- deals with any of the issues raised by the referendum question;
- puts arguments for or against any outcome; or
- is designed to encourage voting at the referendum

The Electoral Commission has responsibility under PPERA to will monitor and take all reasonable steps to secure compliance with the rules, including by providing advice and guidance on this matter. We do not have powers under PPERA to sanction bodies who do not comply with these restrictions.

The Electoral Commission
3 Bunhill Row
London EC1Y 8YZ

Tel: 020 7271 0500
Fax: 020 7271 0505
info@electoralcommission.org.uk
www.electoralcommission.org.uk

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We have published a factsheet that explains the Section 125 restrictions. The factsheet is available on our website at the link below:

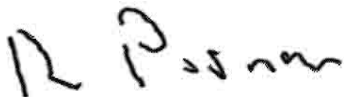
http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/194635/Public-Bodies-and-EU-Referendum-material.pdf

Further, we take it that the UK Statistics Authority are required to comply with the guidance recently issued by the Cabinet Secretary for UK Government departments, non-departmental public bodies and arm's length bodies. The document provides advice for arm's length bodies on how to comply with the restrictions and who to contact for more information. I have copied a direct link below for ease of reference:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/526184/e-u-referendum-guidance-for-uk-government-departments-on-activities-during-the-period-27-may-to-23-june.pdf

I trust that this information is helpful. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Electoral Commission's Party and Election Finance team on 0333 103 1928, or pef@electoralcommission.org.uk.

Yours sincerely



Bob Posner
Director of Party and Election Finance & Legal Counsel