

**PUBLIC AUDIT AND POST-LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**POST LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY - FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (Scotland) ACT 2002**

**SUBMISSION FROM : National Library of Scotland**

The Library welcomes and supports the principle of freedom of information as promoted by FOISA. The right of access to publicly-held information in FOISA s. 1(1) is complementary to the Library's function of making our collections accessible to the public (National Library of Scotland Act 2012 s. 2(2)). Actively making available information and reactively responding to requests for information have long been central to the Library's functions, as indeed these activities are to all publicly-accessible libraries. FOISA has overall been welcome support to these long-standing functions.

The boundaries of exempt information as set out by part 2 of FOISA have also been helpful to the Library. These provide a useful framework to the structuring of core Library activities, in particular by helping to inform clear understanding (within the Library, and among our users and collection contributors) as to what information from our collections may and may not be made available to the public. This relates in particular to the Library's archival holdings, which may contain information exempt from disclosure under FOISA.

Considering our operational functions, as opposed to our core collection functions, FOISA can present minor operational challenges. Although the Library proactively publishes information through a publication scheme and does not receive a high number of requests under FOISA, the handling of requests do come at a cost.

We have no specific requests or recommendations for changes to the legislation.

Anthony Gillespie, Director of Business Support

Fred Saunderson, Rights and Information Manager