

# Information Rights:

## A signal flare for the public and all responsible professionals

It does not matter that you do not personally rely on the Freedom of Information Act to obtain information about the state. Your chosen media, public interest organisations and accountability organisations do. And you naturally feel the benefits. If you ever choose to rely on it, it is there for you

With this structural understanding in mind, it may now be understood why the GRC / ICO / Upper Tribunal situation is *extremely* dangerous for civil liberties

Originally, The Good State Project (though its Lead Principal) went to the GRC regarding an information request as a means to raise a flag on the general lack of inquiry and interest being shown by the ICO with regards to a pattern of conduct of a police force that (as experienced professionals) was deeply concerning. In fact, it was supposed to have ended at the ICO. This was a small step in a broader movement to a judicial review at the Administrative Court regarding management practices of Kent Police generally. It was an early opportunity to raise flag on an oversight body (the ICO) that was very much caught asleep at the wheel

We had no intention of battling with the tribunal system itself. It was not in our interests to press this hard and this far in the lower levels of the judiciary itself. However, what we found was an affront to the UK public - an almost total disregard for the rights of citizens to be provided basic information about the state, and no regard for the prevention of falsehoods by public authorities. It was clear early on in the GRC proceedings in summer 2025 that the GRC had very little intention of genuinely fact-finding, and instead was setting up shop to favour and cover for the public authorities

This behaviour became more pronounced when we obtained evidential contracts, and warned the GRC that Administrative Court proceedings were pending imminently to encourage more neutral behaviour. We recused a judge for poor quality judgement and bias, and caught the Chamber President grossly misrepresenting in writing. We caught the registrar and the replacement judge flat out lying (as seen when comparing written court orders to copies of official audio recordings). We even caught the police admitting to tampering with our evidence in writing. These aforementioned events are facts, evidenced with notes, emails, copies of audio recordings and even (bizarrely) written admissions to wrongdoing

At each turn, the GRC appears to have done the only thing that it knew how to do : silence, omission and pretending like it never happened. The ICO was too afraid to turn up to its own hearing. The "Questions" document was never discussed in the hearing and the GRC failed to obtain answers to those basic questions

When the subject matter itself relates to a decades long scheme by the police to prosecute members of the public based on faulty cameras, the judges, Chamber President and ICO did not stop to consider the stakes. Neither of those three parties stopped to consider their actions when the stakes were described repeatedly in written submissions and verbally in the hearing itself

What increases the toxicity level of this eco-system is - as described in our letter to the Upper Tribunal dated 24 February 2026 - the Upper Tribunal flat out refused to engage with the case, the conduct of the GRC and the clear errors in law in proceedings. Instead, it committed a fatal constitutional failure in demonstrating that it did not even understand the scope of what the GRC was supposed to be doing, and therefore misapplied the legislation of the FOIA to its own refusal of permission notice

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It has now been revealed to us that the UK's information rights eco-system resembles a very self-contained, toxic eco-system in which there is little to no interest in providing information to the public, and officials seek to favour and cover for other public authorities even when the record demonstrates false and potentially criminal conduct

We have the detailed records on judges, registrars, Chamber President, ICO case officer and ICO legal representatives, and a judge of the Upper Tribunal. This is going to take time, though this toxic pond is in need of clearing

Due to current caseload, we are going press hard in 2027 for judicial reviews into the operational fitness of the GRC and ICO with the documented evidence that we have compiled, whilst also raising the almost total failure of oversight of the Upper Tribunal

When a system resembles this form, it does something very disturbing : it chokes the public's right to have any meaningful information at all, whilst it protects other parties within its own eco-system. We must never allow the system that gatekeeps our access to information to manifest in this manner

**That is why we will be pursuing this problem long-term until we have proper resolution or reform**

Further information here : <https://thegoodstateproject.org/toxicity-%3A-uk-info-rights>