

From: [redacted] [redacted]

Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 9:49 AM

To: NRS : [redacted]<[redacted]>

cc: [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted];
[redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted];
[redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted];
[redacted] [redacted]

Subject: RE: Cabinet Records - Email Enquiry from Alex Salmond

Hi [redacted],

Happy new year – I hope you a lovely break.

Many thanks for letting us know. I'm copying in colleagues for awareness.

[redacted]

[redacted] [redacted]

[redacted] [redacted]

Cabinet Secretariat

Communications and Ministerial Support Directorate

Email: [redacted] [redacted] | Mobile: [redacted] [redacted]

Please copy e-mails which concern Cabinet business to the [redacted] [redacted]

Please note I'm working flexibly and do not usually work on Friday afternoons. If you receive this outwith normal working hours please do not feel you need to pick this up outside of your own working pattern.

From: [redacted] [redacted] On Behalf Of NRS : [redacted] [redacted] **Sent:**

Wednesday, January 3, 2024 4:43 PM

To: [redacted] [redacted]

cc: [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]

Subject: Cabinet Records - Email Enquiry from Alex Salmond

Hi [redacted],

Hope you've had a good break over Christmas and the new year.

Just keeping you informed of an enquiry we've received from Alex Salmond today, asking to see any references in the cabinet records to a request he made to Sir John Elvidge regarding the Stone of Destiny (which was referenced in the Herald article: Alex Salmond allowed to keep part of Stone of Destiny | The Herald (heraldscotland.com)). The only reference is in the attached minutes (NRS ref: SCR14/71/63) which I'll send on to Alex Salmond.

With best wishes,

[redacted]

[redacted] [redacted] | she/her

Government Records [redacted]

National Records of Scotland | [redacted] [redacted] | West Register House | 17A Charlotte Square | Edinburgh | EH2 4DJ

Working from home | [redacted] [redacted] | www.nrscotland.gov.uk

Follow us on Twitter: @NatRecordsScot

Preserving the past | Recording the present | Informing the future
A' tasgadh na bh' ann | A' clàradh na th' ann | A' stiùireadh na bhitheas

From: [redacted] [redacted]

Sent: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 11:34 AM

To: NRS : [redacted] [redacted]

Subject: Re: NRS - 2024 File Release Press Preview - SHARED - Objective Connect Invitation

Dear Sir

My access to the Cabinet records was cancelled after one week as arranged in December.

However I have now had a press enquiry about information contained therein and subsequently published in the Herald newspaper.

Since it has already been published could you now send me the references in the records to a request apparently made by myself in 2008 to Sir John Elvidge about a fragment of the Stone of Destiny.

Please reply to this email.

Yours faithfully

Alex Salmond
Former First Minister

Sent from my iPad

On 13 Dec 2023, at 10:00, National Records of Scotland [redacted] [redacted]



Hello Alex,

**You have been invited to a Workspace by
National Records of Scotland.**

Workspace

NRS - 2024 File Release Press Preview - SHARED

Login

Owned by **[redacted]** **[redacted]**

Thank you

National Records of Scotland

Powered by

 **Objective** CONNECT

[Help](#) | [Acceptable Use Policy](#) | [Contact Us](#)

This email was intended for **[redacted]**.

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From: James Hynd <James.Hynd@gov.scot>

Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 2:29 PM

To: [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]

Cc: [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted];

[redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]

Subject: RE: Official Sensitive: Release of 2008 Cabinet Papers

Thanks [redacted]

Could I suggest a tweak as follows:

HES has no records from our predecessor organisation, Historic Scotland, relating to this about the purported fragment of the Stone of Destiny referred to in the 2008 Cabinet paper.

James

James Hynd LVO
Director and Secretary of Commissions
Scottish Government
Room 4N:03
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh

From: [redacted] <[redacted]>

Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 2:21 PM

To: James Hynd <James.Hynd@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]>

Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]>; [redacted] <[redacted]>; [redacted] <

[redacted]>; [redacted] <[redacted]>; [redacted] <[redacted]>

Subject: RE: Official Sensitive: Release of 2008 Cabinet Papers

Hi James

I have now spoken to several people at HES, including Alex Paterson and Gareth at SG Press Office, and we are proposing replying to the Times with the following statement:

HES has no records from our predecessor organisation, Historic Scotland, relating to this fragment of the Stone of Destiny in 2008.

That fits with what SG press office is saying about their records to the same publication and hopefully stops us getting any more involved in the story. We weren't contacted by The National or the Telegraph, so I don't propose issuing anything to them.

If possible, can you let me know if this causes you any issues and if don't hear by 4pm, I'll proceed to issue to The Times.

Best wishes

[redacted]

From: James Hynd <James.Hynd@gov.scot>

Sent: 04 January 2024 12:35

To: **[redacted]**; **[redacted]**<**[redacted]**>

Cc: **[redacted]**; **[redacted]**

Subject: Re: Official Sensitive: Release of 2008 Cabinet Papers

Dear both

I will be online in a little while and will have a look.

James

From: **[redacted]**<**[redacted]**>

Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 12:25:58 PM

To: **[redacted]**<**[redacted]**>; James Hynd <James.Hynd@gov.scot>

Cc: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**>; **[redacted]**<**[redacted]**>

Subject: RE: Official Sensitive: Release of 2008 Cabinet Papers

Hi**[redacted]**,

James is also on leave but neither of us are aware of any fragment being given over to go into the Diamond Jubilee coach. Our Comms colleagues have been dealing with another media query around this fragment so I have copied in my colleagues **[redacted]** and **[redacted]** in case you need to liaise with one another.

Kind regards

[redacted]

[redacted] **[redacted]**

Head of Protocol and Honours Team

The Scottish Government

Mobile **[redacted]** or **[redacted]**

Email: **[redacted]** or **[redacted]**

Save a tree... ..don't print this e-mail unless you really need to

From: **[redacted]** <**[redacted]**>

Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 12:16 PM

To: James Hynd <James.Hynd@gov.scot>

cc: [redacted]<[redacted]>

Subject: RE: Official Sensitive: Release of 2008 Cabinet Papers

Hi

As further information, this piece has appeared in The National:

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/24026737.alex-salmond-denies-piece-stone-destiny/>

It would be handy if anyone was able to establish if the fragment given to Alex Salmond and sored by SG was the piece they then handed over to go into the Diamond Jubilee coach – I can't find anyone here today who is aware of us supplying a piece – everyone is on annual leave.

[redacted]

From: [redacted]

Sent: 04 January 2024 12:05

To: James Hynd <James.Hynd@gov.scot>

cc: [redacted]

Subject: RE: Official Sensitive: Release of 2008 Cabinet Papers

Hi

I hope you both had a lovely Christmas and a good start to 2024.

For awareness, we have had an enquiry from The Times – both print and radio about the Stone of Destiny with a 5pm deadline. I've pasted below and will share our lines before issue. We have turned down the request for a radio interview at 12.40, but can assume the story will feature as they are describing Alex Salmond as 'denying stealing parts of the Stone', so have put a real spin on what is in the Cabinet papers. It is slightly complicated by David Mitchell's absence, so I think we will be very brief in our response.

[redacted]

Hi, we're following up on reports that there is a fragment of the Stone of Scone that archival notes from 2008 show was handed to the first minister at the time, Alex Salmond, and not handed over to HES' predecessor.

Salmond has now denied possession of it and said: "I am not altogether certain that Historic Scotland was enthused by the idea of multiple fragments of the stone coming into official possession, as they had completed their own tests on the authenticity of the relic."

- Is HES aware of the location of this fragment?
- Is HES concerned that fragments of the stone may be missing?
- Does HES agree with the 2008 decision not to be handed over the fragment?
- What is the HES' response to Salmond's claim regarding fragments coming into its possession?

Please respond by 5pm.

From: [redacted]_ [redacted];
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 2:25 PM
To: [redacted]_ [redacted]; First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>
Cc: David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Jeanette Campbell <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; Callum McCaig <Callum.Mccaig@gov.scot>; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted]_ [redacted]; James Hynd <James.Hynd@gov.scot>; [redacted]_ [redacted]; [redacted]_ [redacted]; [redacted]_ [redacted]; [redacted]_ [redacted]; [redacted]_ [redacted]; [redacted]_ [redacted];
Subject: RE: For awareness: The Telegraph, Stone of Destiny fragment

Hi FMPO,
The Times have approached us for a response on this and The National are also running a piece online. We've agreed with SpAds to reissue the below lines and sharing for the FM's awareness.
Thanks,
[redacted]

From: [redacted]_ [redacted];
Sent: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 8:05 PM
To: First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; [redacted]_ [redacted];
Cc: David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Jeanette Campbell <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; Callum McCaig <Callum.Mccaig@gov.scot>; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted]_ [redacted]; James Hynd <James.Hynd@gov.scot>; [redacted]_ [redacted]; [redacted]_ [redacted]; [redacted]_ [redacted]; [redacted]_ [redacted]; [redacted]_ [redacted];
Subject: RE: For awareness: The Telegraph, Stone of Destiny fragment

FMPO
For the benefit of the copy list
Officials confirmed that they are not aware of any fragments and we have issued the following line to The Telegraph.
A Scottish Government spokesperson said:
"We are not aware of any Stone of Destiny fragments in either St Andrew's House or Bute House."
Many thanks
[redacted]

From: [redacted] [redacted]; On Behalf Of First Minister

Sent: 03 January 2024 17:52

To: [redacted] [redacted]

Cc: David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Jeanette Campbell

<Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; Callum McCaig <Callum.Mccaig@gov.scot>; [redacted]

[redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; James Hynd <James.Hynd@gov.scot>; [redacted]

[redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted]

[redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted]

[redacted]; First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: For awareness: The Telegraph, Stone of Destiny fragment

[redacted],

Thanks for flagging the media query.

The First Minister has asked if we can please address Mr Salmond's claim, i.e. for us to be explicit that we are not aware of any Stone of Destiny fragments in either SAH or Bute House.

[redacted]

[redacted] [redacted];

Private Secretary to the First Minister

5th Floor | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

M: [redacted] [redacted];

From: [redacted] [redacted]

Sent: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 5:26 PM

To: First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>

Cc: David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Jeanette Campbell

<Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; Callum McCaig <Callum.Mccaig@gov.scot>; [redacted]

[redacted]; [redacted] [redacted] James Hynd <James.Hynd@gov.scot>; [redacted]

[redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted]

[redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted] [redacted]; [redacted]

[redacted]

Subject: For awareness: The Telegraph, Stone of Destiny fragment

Good evening FMPO,

We've received a query from The Telegraph on the fragment of the Stone of Destiny that is discussed in one of the recent Cabinet Papers released. The journalist has spoken to Alex Salmond, who claims he is not in possession of the fragment and it is 'squirreled away' in Bute House or SAH.

Policy and SpAds have agreed that we should issue the below lines, which were cleared as part of the sub and sharing for the FM's awareness.

Many thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted]_[redacted]

News | First Minister's Communications **[redacted]_[redacted]**

The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh

Mobile: **[redacted]_[redacted]** | Portfolio Media inquiries: **[redacted]_[redacted]**

www.gov.scot/news

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

"The Stone of Destiny is the responsibility of the Commissioners for the Safeguarding of the Regalia. The Commissioners have been advised about the content of the 2008 Cabinet paper. The Scottish Government understands that the Commissioners have simply noted the historical position."