

**14 Edward Grove
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**Telephone: 020 8441 6908
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**Mr Hugh Robertson MP
Minister for Sport,
House of Commons,
London,
SW1A 0AA**

1st October 2012

Dear Mr Robertson,

UK ATHLETICS CHAIRMAN - MR ED WARNER OBE

With reference to your letter to the Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP dated 22nd August 2012, I presumed that if anyone was to be nominated for an OBE, someone somewhere would be singing that person's praises. The fact that nobody will admit to nominating Ed Warner brings the entire honours system into disrepute.

Your sports department has continually been shown to have a culture for secrecy. You are now complicit in this lack of transparency and in keeping Team GB's training methods hidden. These secret's have resulted in an extraordinary number of medals being won at the 2012 London Olympic Games. Your failure to force UK Sport to publish the progress reports received from UK Athletics casts an enormous shadow over the achievement of every athlete. The athlete's who have nothing to hide deserve better. Tax payers enabled Mohamed Farah to develop from an athlete who at the age of 25 could not qualify from the heats of the 5,000 metres at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, into a double gold medal winner in 2012. His dramatic improvement only occurred after he left the shores of Great Britain for the USA. It is therefore American training secrets you are protecting, paid for by British tax payers.

Mohamed Farah's athletics journey is testimony to the damage caused to British athletes by your quango UK Athletics. The employment of Kevin Tyler by UK Athletics and the continued involvement of Dr Ekkart Arbeit, the former East German drugs cheating guru, do nothing to inspire confidence. UK Athletics and UK Sport openly admit to keeping training methods a secret. UK Sport wrote on 31st March 2010 "it is accepted in the world of high performance sport that competitor nations will attempt to find out the sporting performance secrets of other nations who are seen to be successful on the world stage".

Such warped logic demands that this country's outstanding youth be forced into the shadows if they want to succeed. Good luck in keeping these concerns out of the public eye, because I am at loss to know how you will defend your position if you are required to do so in the future.

Even more disgraceful, if that is possible, is the question of why Richard Kilty was not selected to represent Great Britain at the 2012 Olympic Games in the 200 metres. He achieved the A qualifying standard twice, and was the only athlete eligible to take the third 200 metres place in the team. Richard Kilty received no public funding. He slept on the floor of a friend to be near his coach. He was even denied access to medical assistance from Team GB, because he was not a funded athlete. Despite this financial hardship, and no thanks to UK Athletics or UK Sport, he earned his place in the team to represent Great Britain in the 200 metres. Instead it was preferred to leave his place in the team blank!

What sort of system, and what sort of people would leave a 22 year old out of the Olympic team under such circumstance? I can only speculate that Richard's place in the relay squad would have allowed him access to the secrets that your department are so keen to hide.

In the past I have given the benefit of the doubt to the various Ministers for Sport (even Richard Caborne), in the belief they might not have been fully aware of what was taking place under their watch. You deserve no such benefit of the doubt. You have been made aware of all the concerns, and as an opposition spokesman you claimed to share these concerns.

In the absence of any information to the contrary, I presume that it was you who personally nominated Ed Warner for his OBE and gave the reason as "services to British Athletics". This reflects on your values, and the values of your government. By nominating Ed Warner for an OBE you have assumed responsibility for all the outcomes which have taken place under his watch. You can no longer blame the previous government, useless though they were.

Dwayne Chambers was never found with banned drugs in his system. He was convicted on the basis of witness statements and a paper trail which was uncovered in the USA. Lance Armstrong has also now been convicted by witness statements and a paper trail in the USA. Such evidence is not limited by the short number of hours that it takes for banned substances to clear through the body.

The actions of the US Anti Doping Agency allow for the hope that the dark shadow cast by UK Sport and UK Athletics over the performances of all the British Athletes at the 2012 Olympics will one day be lifted.

When that day comes, the successes of the 2012 British Olympians will be properly celebrated, and hopefully a future Minister for Sport will not be so nervous about admitting to nominating a "sports administrator" for an OBE.

Yours sincerely

C.Zacharides

Ed Warner OBE

Full correspondence seeking to establish how Mr Warner came to be nominated for an OBE for his services to Athletics:

- 4) Freedom of information request to Cabinet Office
- 5 - 7) Cabinet Office Response
- 8) Letter to Member of Parliament
- 9) Reply from Member of Parliament
- 10) Reply from the Minister for Sport

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**Mr. Gary Rogers
Cabinet Office
Honours And Appointments Secretariat
Admiralty Arch South
The Mall
London
SW1A 2WH**

9 July 2012

Dear Mr Rogers,

The Queen's Birthday Honours List 2012

I would be grateful if you would provide the following information in accordance with the freedom of information act 2000:

1. On 16th June 2012, Mr Edmond William Warner was awarded an OBE "For services to British Athletics".
2. Please provide all information relating to the nomination for this award:
 - a) Who nominated Mr Warner for the award.
 - b) What reasons or citation were submitted to accompany this nomination.
 - c) What investigations of Mr Warner's services to British Athletics were carried out prior to approving the nomination.
 - d) Please provide names of all individuals who supported this nomination with the reasons for the support.

My understanding is that you are required under the terms of the act to respond within 20 days, and that a payment might be due from myself to cover the costs of providing this information.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully

C.Zacharides



FOI Reference: FOI316759
1 August 2012

C Zacharides
zac@cgsystems.co.uk

Ref: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

Dear Mr Zacharides

Thank you for your letter of 9 July in which you requested information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. You asked :

- a) *Who nominated Mr Warner for the award (of OBE)*
- b) *What reasons or citations were submitted to accompany this nomination*
- c) *What investigations of Mr Warner's services to British Athletics were carried out prior to approving the nomination*
- d) *The names of all individuals who supported this nomination with the reasons for the support*

We have considered your request in the light of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which gives a right of access to recorded information held by public authorities. I have checked our records and can confirm that we do not hold information in scope with regards to queries a,c and d. It may help if I explain a little about the honours nominations process. There are two routes by which people enter the honours system. Nominations can be made by members of the public direct to the Honours and Appointments Secretariat here; or we may receive nominations via government departments. The government department may have identified a candidate within its sphere of interest or candidates may be identified as a result of nominations sent to that department from public or private sources. (Further detail on the process is available at www.direct.gov.uk/honours.)

The Cabinet Office does hold a citation for Mr Edmond William Warner, which was submitted to us by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

The detail of the citation falls within section 37(1)(b), the conferring by the Crown of any honour or dignity. This section is not absolute but subject to the public interest test which we have considered in relation to your request.

We have weighed up whether the public interest is better served by release of this information or withholding it. There is of course a general public interest in disclosure of information and openness in government may increase public trust in and engagement with government. We recognise that the honours process is one in which there is public interest and we aim to increase transparency in the honours system, in terms of ensuring that the process of award of honours is clear. However, against that we have to consider the need for confidentiality with regard to individual cases. This includes releasing names of nominators and supporters, as well as the content of individual nominations. This includes the content of citations submitted to us by Government Departments.

Having considered all the circumstances of the case, we have concluded that the public interest is better served by withholding the citation .

We are, however, able to release certain factual details from the citation. These include

He has been Chair of UK Athletics (UKA) since 2007
He chaired London's successful bid to host the 2017 World Athletics Championship.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the FOI team. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request or wish to request an internal review, you should write to:

Roger Smethurst
Head of Knowledge and Information Management
Cabinet Office
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

email: foi.team@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk

You should note that the Cabinet Office will not normally accept an application for internal review if it is received more than two months after the date that the reply was issued.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by Cabinet Office. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. P." followed by a long, horizontal, wavy line that extends to the right.

FOI Team
Cabinet Office

**14 Edward Grove
New Barnet
Herts EN4 8BA**

**Telephone: 020 8441 6908
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**Mrs Theresa Villiers MP
Chipping Barnet Constituency
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA**

2nd August 2012

Dear Theresa,

UK ATHLETICS CHAIRMAN - MR ED WARNER OBE

On 16th June 2012, the Chairman of UK Athletics, Mr Ed Warner was awarded the OBE for "Services to British Athletics".

In recent years, I have reported to you the decline in athletics standards and participation levels. I wondered who would nominate MR Warner for such an award. I submitted a Freedom of Information request to find out.

Attached please find the reply to my request. My naivety continues to surprise me. If I were to have nominated an individual for such an award, I would have anticipated and welcomed every opportunity to sing the praises of the recipient from the roof tops.

Failure to do so reflects badly on the person receiving the award, the person making the award, and most depressingly, the awards system itself. The Cabinet Office do not feel able to release the citation provided by the Department for Culture Media and Sport. It does not smell right.

I would be grateful if you would request that the Department for Culture Media and Sport share the reasoning behind nominating, or supporting the nomination of, Mr Ed Warner for an OBE.

Thank you as always for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

C.Zacharides



The Rt. Hon. Mrs Theresa Villiers MP
Member of Parliament for Chipping Barnet
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA
T 020 8449 7345 F 020 8449 7346 theresa@theresavilliers.co.uk
www.theresavilliers.co.uk

13 August 2012

Dear Zac

Thank you for your letter dated 2nd August questioning the awarding of an OBE to Ed Warner, Chairman of UK Athletics.

I note that this nomination was made by the Department for Culture, Media & Sport. I also note the comments made by the FOI Team at the Cabinet Office in their response to you dated 1st August.

I am passing your letter on to the Minister for Sport, Hugh Robertson MP, asking him to address the issues you have raised. However, given the information provided by the Cabinet Office, I suspect that the Minister will be unable to add much more.

I will write to you again as soon as I receive a reply.

Regards

Mr Costos Zacharides
14 Edward Grove
New Barnet
Herts EN4 8BA

Reference (please quote if replying) TV/CC/CB2392

Your Ref: TV/CC/CB2392
Our Ref: 213632/CG/20



department for
culture, media
and sport

Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP

theresa@theresavilliers.co.uk

22 August 2012

Dear Theresa,

Thank you for your letter of 13 August, enclosing one from your constituent, Mr Costos Zacharides of 14 Edward Grove, New Barnet, Herts, EN4 8BA, about the award of an OBE to the Chairman of UK Athletics, Ed Warner, in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours List.

As you rightly indicated to Mr Zacharides, I have no further information to add to that already provided to him by the Cabinet Office Freedom of Information team.

Thank you, again, for writing, with all my very best wishes.

HUGH ROBERTSON MP
Minister for Sport and the Olympics