

AIC decision on appeal #11

**CASE NUMBER AI0963
FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE RECORDS OF AN INDIVIDUAL
WORLD BANK STAFF MEMBER**

(Decision dated July 29, 2011)

1. On June 2, 2011, the World Bank (“Bank”) denied the public access request for the financial disclosure forms of an individual World Bank staff member on the basis that the financial disclosure forms are covered by the “Personal Information” exception of the Bank’s Access to Information Policy (“Policy”). The denial also notified the applicant that the summary of such financial information for the reporting year 2010 would be disclosed through the World Bank Annual Report when it becomes available on the Bank’s external website.

2. On June 29, 2011, the applicant filed the attached application (“Application”) appealing, on public interest grounds, the Bank’s decision to deny access to the staff member’s financial disclosure forms. The Application states, in relevant part, the following:

The financial holdings of [the staff member] have now become a matter of serious public controversy at the international level. Aggregated forms, such as those referred to in the response to our request for records, will not suffice to clarify the questions that now surround the business conduct of [the staff member] in his [former capacity], before entering the employ of the bank.

It is therefore incumbent upon the bank to set aside the exemption in this case and disclose the holdings of [the staff member].

(Text in brackets replaces identifying personal information concerning a Bank staff member.)

Findings and Decision of the Access to Information Committee

3. The Access to Information Committee (“AIC”) considered the Application in accordance with the Policy. Under the Policy, a requester who is denied access to information by the Bank may file an appeal on public interest grounds if “the requester is able to make a public interest case to override the Policy exceptions that restrict the information requested (limited to those exceptions set out in paragraph 15 (Corporate Administrative Matters), paragraph 16 (Deliberative Information), and paragraph 17 (a), (b), and (c) (relating to certain Financial Information) of [the Policy] statement.)” (Policy at paragraph 36(b).)

4. In this case, the requested documents are the financial disclosure forms of an individual Bank staff member. The financial disclosure forms reflect the staff member’s personal financial information. The documents are, therefore, restricted from public disclosure under the Personal Information exception of the Policy. As the Policy explains, the Bank’s Principles of Staff Employment require the Bank to

establish and maintain appropriate safeguards to respect the personal privacy of staff members and protect the confidentiality of personal information about them (see Policy at paragraph 8). In view of this requirement, the Policy does not allow the restriction of information pursuant to the Personal Information exception to be appealed on public interest grounds (see Policy at paragraph 36(b)). The Application is, therefore, not properly before the AIC.

5. For the above reasons, the Application is dismissed for appealing a matter that the AIC does not have authority to consider.