

Independent Climate Change E-mails Review

Notes of Interview with Brian Summers, Registrar and Secretary

Interviewers: Sir Muir Russell & David Eyton

Interview carried out at UEA on 26 March 2010.

Background

1. Sir Muir Russell and David Eyton briefly summarized progress on the Review. The terms of reference required the Review to consider among other things management and governance structures. This sequence of interviews was aimed at exploring the framework for the management of research within the University: what staff take on; what the university expects them to deliver, subject to what requirements on quality, standards, processes and procedures; what are the associated financial disciplines; and how all this is communicated to staff. A number of references had been made to the whistleblowing procedure, under which concerns were generally routed through Mr Summers. This interview had been arranged to enable us to hear at first hand what the experience had been.
2. Mr Summers said that whistleblowing had never been used for any research related issue. (It had been used a couple of times in all, in relation to other matters.)
3. He referred to the research misconduct procedure, which had been used on only a few occasions, mainly in relation to individuals' doctorate or master's theses. There were many safeguards in respect of the publication of mainstream research papers, in addition to the integrity of the scientists themselves, including peer review and co-authorship. If the sort of complaint that would be regarded as an allegation of research misconduct came from an external source and was in writing, he would envisage putting it into the first stage of the misconduct procedure.

Muir Russell

27 April 2010