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Flawed judgment could place many civil servants at increased risk

PCS fears hundreds if thousands of civil servants could be placed at increased risk following a Court of Appeal decision that officials should not routinely have their names redacted from evidence papers

As [reported by Civil Service World](#), civil servants could soon be identified by name in documents submitted to the High Court for judicial reviews of controversial government decisions – losing the anonymity that presently protects them.

Current government practice is to redact names of departmental staff from papers unless those officials are part of the senior civil service. But a Court of Appeal judgment has said there is no justification for the redaction of names “as a matter of routine”.

In the judgment, which was handed down 2 February, Lord Justice David Bean said routinely redacting the names of civil servants below SCS level was “inimical to open government and unsupported by authority”.

PCS General Secretary Fran Heathcote said: “This judgement is as disappointing as it is unsatisfactory because ‘junior’ civil servants, who make up the vast bulk of PCS members, have little to no say in policy decisions.

“This flawed judgement could place hundreds of thousands of civil servants at increased risk, exposing their names and job roles to the public, when all they will have been doing is their job – carrying out the instructions of the elected government.”