

If the Revenue has abused its powers in pursuing Osita ...

Published: January 13, 2026, 9:04 am

The [Guardian has just reported that](#):

Tax officials used intrusive investigative powers meant to catch serious criminals to try to prove that a whistleblower who uncovered a "sweetheart" deal with [Goldman Sachs](#) had spoken to the Guardian, it has emerged.

The belongings, emails, internet search records and telephone calls of the HM Revenue and Customs solicitor Osita Mba and the telephone records of his wife, Claudia, were examined by revenue investigators, according to previously undisclosed documents.

The powers, which are supposed to be used to combat large-scale criminal tax frauds, were used because the tax inspectors suspected that Mba had been in contact with the Guardian's former investigations editor, David Leigh.

Leigh's telephone numbers and email addresses were cross-referenced with Mba's, but investigators found no evidence of contact, documents show.

I'm shocked by this for two reasons. First, I know and like Osita Mba, who I consider to be a man of the highest personal ethics and who has, as far as I can see, acted with integrity in pursuit of genuine tax justice in this country.

Second, I am shocked by the the apparent abuse of powers on the part of HMRC.

HMRC should have welcomed Osita Mba's actions: he was drawing attention to a weakness in recovering tax due. If they've abused their powers in investigating him I have no hesitation in saying prosecutions should follow. And from the top, please.