



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.defra.gov.uk

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Our ref: RFI 5724
Date: 22/08/2013

Dear [REDACTED],

INFORMATION REQUEST: MONITORING STAFF IN BADGER CULL ZONES

I am replying to your request for information sent to AHVLA about the number of AHVLA staff undertaking monitoring in each cull zone, which was received on 5 August 2013. We have handled your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

The EIRs apply to requests for environmental information, which is a broad category of information defined in regulation 2 of the EIRs. Public authorities are required to handle requests for environmental information under the EIRs. They give similar access rights to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

The information you requested specifically relating to AHVLA staff is being withheld as it falls under Regulation 12(5)(a) of the EIRs, which relates to International relations, defence, national security and public safety.

I can however, advise you that there are currently a maximum of 30 staff who may be involved in the field part of the humaneness work, or who will provide management support in the field. Further identifying information about these staff-members such as the Agency they work at is withheld as disclosure would identify the level of individual agency involvement and would lead to attention from animal rights activists as detailed further below.

In applying this exception, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosure. We recognise that there is a public interest in disclosure of information concerning badger control, as there is an interest in transparency and accountability in controversial policy areas.



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

On the other hand, there is a strong public interest in withholding this information. Previous experience of some of those involved has included intimidation by animal rights activists, threats made to individuals, their places of work or their families.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. I also attach an annex giving contact details should you be unhappy with the services you have received.

Yours sincerely,

Defra TB Programme
Ccu.correspondence@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex
Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Mike Kaye, Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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