



NIO

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Freedom of Information Team

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REFERENCE: 12/55

Thank you for your email in which you requested information relating to data loss from the Northern Ireland office (NIO).

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). I can confirm that the department holds some information falling within scope of your request.

Please note that the NIO publishes records of data loss in the Departmental Annual Report and Accounts. You can access this information, (page 13) at the following link:

http://nionet/nio_annual_report_and_accounts_2010_11.pdf.

However in the interest of being helpful and providing more detail, I have expanded on the information contained within the Annual Report, and addressed each question in turn below:

1) What is your procedure for cases where copies of documents produced in your department – whether on paper or in an electronic format – are lost?

The NIO follows the HMG Security Policy Framework issued by the Cabinet Office.

We are not obliged to provide information if this is reasonably accessible to you by other means (section 21(1) of the Act. The terms of this exemption in the Freedom of Information Act mean that we do not have to consider whether or not it would be in the public interest for you to have the information. I can however, provide the following link to the Cabinet Office website where you can access this information:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/security-policy-framework>

2) In each of the past five financial years, how many such documents were recorded as having been lost?

As you may be aware, the devolution of policing and justice powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly took place on 12 April 2010. As these functions were previously under the remit of the Northern Ireland Office, their devolution had a significant impact on the size, shape and structure of the department. We are therefore only able to provide you with information from April 2010 onwards.

No documents were recorded as being lost during the period April 2010 – March 2011.



3) Please give as much detail as possible about each of the documents misplaced since April 2010, including its subject, the date it went missing, whether it was the only copy, and where it was thought to have been lost.

No documents have been reported as lost during the period April 2010 – March 2011.

4) What is your procedure for cases where copies of documents produced in your department are reported stolen?

Please refer to our response to question 1. The NIO follows the HMG Security Policy Framework issued by the Cabinet Office.

5) In each of the past five financial years, how many such documents were recorded as having been stolen?

There has been one incident recorded of a document being stolen during the period April 2010 – March 2011.

6) Again, please give as much detail as possible about each of the documents stolen since April 2010.

A theft from the Electoral Office Northern Ireland (EONI) occurred at their Belfast Area Electoral Office on Friday 18 March 2011. An encrypted laptop and some personal identity documents, confirming the identity of persons applying to be added to the Electoral Register, were taken. There was no data held on the encrypted laptop. Some of the identity documents were recovered by Police near the scene. This incident was reported to the Information Commissioner's Office which was satisfied that there was no breach of the seven key data protection principles.

