



Vehicle & Operator Services Agency

**From: Information Access**  
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Our Ref: **F0003126**

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> January 2011

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Dear

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000**

I refer to your correspondence of 17<sup>th</sup> January 2011 via DfT's online FOI request form, which has been forwarded to VOSA for response. We have dealt with your request under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

For ease of reference, I have replied to each question in the same order as in your original e-mail.

- 1) How many vehicles failed the MOT due to illegal registration plates?

A comprehensive list of all MOT tests and outcomes, since the MOT system was computerised in 2005 was published via the data.gov.uk website in November 2010. This information includes details of all failure items (RfR's - Reasons for Rejection) recorded at a vehicle's MOT test; you will be able to extract the information you require from this dataset. A link to the relevant page is provided below;

[http://data.gov.uk/dataset/anonymised\\_mot\\_test](http://data.gov.uk/dataset/anonymised_mot_test)

Please note that the Reasons for Rejection relating to registration plates were introduced into the MOT scheme in April 2009.

- 2) How many vehicles were given an advisory in the MOT due to illegal registration plates?

The data contained in the information published on the data.gov.uk website also details all the advisory notices issued at MOT.

- 3) How many testing stations have been investigated for failing to act accordingly, ie turned a blind eye, to illegal registration plates?

VOSA has no business requirement to collate the reasons why a Vehicle Testing Station (VTS) may be investigated or disciplined. As such, in order to obtain this information VOSA would have to manually search approximately 20,000 VTS enforcement files for the required information.

It has been estimated that the time taken to locate, retrieve, collate and provide this information is a minimum of 20,000 hours (approx. 1 hour / VTS file). The total cost of this activity, rated at £25 per hour based on the minimum of 20,000 hours is £500,000.

It is considered that Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act (*Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit*) applies in this instance:

Section 12 (1) Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 set the appropriate limit at £600 for a central government Department or Agency.

VOSA is therefore refusing the requested information under Section 12(1) on the basis that the estimated cost of complying with this request would exceed the appropriate limit of £600.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us, quoting reference **F0003126**.

If you are unhappy with the response provided, you may ask for an internal review. To request an internal review, please write to:

VOSA Corporate Office,  
Berkeley House,  
Croydon Street,  
Bristol,  
BS5 0DA

or email [vosa.corporateoffice@vosa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:vosa.corporateoffice@vosa.gsi.gov.uk)

giving the reasons for your dissatisfaction. It will help us if you quote the reference number for your case.

If you do not agree with the outcome of the internal review, you may lodge an appeal with the Information Commissioner ([www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)). The Information Commissioner is an independent official appointed by the Crown to oversee the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

The Information Commissioner can consider complaints about any aspect of the way in which requests for information have been handled. Please note: the Information Commissioner would be unlikely to consider your complaint if you have not first requested an internal review.

You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

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

Yours sincerely

VOSA Information Access