

Our ref: 763,368

Your ref:

Operations Directorate Services Team
Manager
9th Floor
The Cube
199 Wharfside Street
Birmingham B1 1RN

04 July 2018

Dear

Freedom of Information request: roadkill procedure & costs

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 7 June 2018, asking for information relating to the procedures and costs associated with removing roadkill.

I am dealing with your request under the terms of the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004. This is because the information requested concerns measures and activities affecting or likely to affect elements of the environment or affect factors such as noise, pollution discharges and other releases into the environment.

In your request you asked for the following information:

- *What is the common procedure in place to dispose of roadkill?*
- *Who is responsible for handling and removal of the dead animal, where is it transported, and what are the associated time frames and costs?*
- *Is there a cost estimate for how much is spent on roadkill removal each year?*

Highways England is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving England's strategic road network which comprises approximately 4,300 miles of motorways and all-purpose trunk roads. The motorways and major roads in England that are managed by the Highways England can be viewed on our network management map:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/roads-managed-by-highways-england>

Other public roads in England are managed by local authorities. Roads in Scotland are managed by Transport Scotland <http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/> and in Wales by the Welsh Government: <http://gov.wales/?skip=1&lang=en>

All roadkill is logged and recorded to enable us to identify hotspot locations and assess potential mitigation measures. Dead animals are usually categorised in three ways:

- 1) Small, badly damaged wildlife animals which do not pose a safety issue are left to decompose in situ e.g. a hedgehog or pheasant. Slightly larger animals which may form a driver distraction, such as a fox, are removed away from the road and disposed of out of sight down the highways verge and are left to nature, as long as

they do not adversely affect any watercourses. Some larger or protected wildlife such as otters, owls or birds of prey are removed, documented and stored, before sending (if required) for scientific study to the appropriate wildlife authority. Badger and deer roadkill in a TB zone are removed from the network, as they are required for analysis by the Animal and Plant Health Agency for testing.

- 2) Small domestic animals (such as dogs and cats) are removed from the network and logged. Attempts are made to repatriate them with their owner, by the use of a microchip scanner or by other identification methods (ie a collar or tattoo) or liaison with local authorities and/or the police. If identification is not possible, due to lack of details or the poor condition of the animal, then they are stored in freezers for a short period of time (between one and six weeks) in case a member of public gets in touch and wants to collect their pet for burial. After this time, they are removed by a specialist contractor.
- 3) Larger animals (such as livestock) are removed from the network and attempts are made to repatriate with the owner. If this is not possible or successful, then they are removed by a specialist contractor.

The responsibility for handling and removal of dead animals varies, depending on the type of maintenance contract in place. Generally a maintenance response team operative will remove dead animals from the network. Domestic animals and larger livestock animals, not identified or collected by their owners, are removed at regular intervals by other supply chain partners, eg an animal cemetery contractor.

Our maintenance contracts are structured so that our service providers are paid a 'lump sum' for a wide range of general maintenance duties such as general repairs, cleaning duties (including roadkill duties) and repairing potholes. These activities are performed on both a routine and ad-hoc basis to meet contractual requirements. We do not disaggregate the budget and spend on the individual types of activities and so exact costs for removing roadkill from our network cannot be provided.

Safety is our key imperative and we take steps to try and prevent animals getting onto our roads. As a result, the proportion of incidents involving animals on our roads is extremely low considering that 4 million drivers use our roads each day.

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review. Our internal review process is available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>

If you require a print copy, please phone the Information Line on 0300 123 5000; or e-mail info@highwaysengland.co.uk. You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number 763,368 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Email: Ops_dst@highwaysengland.co.uk