

Subject: Re: Response from Highways England - Request for Information: Fires & Spills (Ref: 766,518)

Dear Ops Dst,

Dear Highways England Company Limited,

For the year to date, please send me in an excel format records of all fires, spills, causes, costs and repair methods.

Yours sincerely,

-----Original Message-----

Dear

I am writing regarding your further request for information, received on 05 October 2018. In that request, you asked us for the cause, costs and reinstatement procedures for fires and spills that occurred in December 2017.

Highways England is committed to the wider government transparency and open data agenda and is committed to help people obtain the information they are looking for. Unfortunately, in this case the amount of information you have requested is substantial. Gathering it together would therefore be likely to involve a significant cost and diversion of resources from the authority's other work. This could mean that we might have to refuse the request under the exceptions in the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 covering requests that are manifestly unreasonable or formulated in too general a manner.

As stated in my previous response, dated 07 September 2018, Highways England does not assess what has caused each incident. We are required to aid the appropriate emergency services to clear the incident site and ensure that the road is opened safely and promptly. I am, therefore, unable to provide this information.

Similarly, with regards to the requested cost information, our maintenance contracts are structured so that our service providers are paid a "lump sum" for a wide range of general maintenance duties. 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 you have requested, and therefore exact repair costs cannot be extracted.

The best way that we can help you, with regard to the 'reinstatement procedure for December 2017' aspect of your request, is to ask you to consider whether you could narrow down your request further, to focus on the precise information that you are seeking. In December 2017 there were nearly 400 fires and spills logged on our incident management system; please see attached spreadsheet. Our maintenance teams have reported that it would take up to 30 minutes per incident, on average, to extract reinstatement procedure/repair method information. It would,

therefore, be helpful if you could limit your request to a maximum of 35 incidents, from the list that makes up the December 2017 data. It would also be helpful if you could describe what level of descriptive 'reinstatement procedure' detail you require.

If you are unable or unwilling to narrow down your request we will, of course, consider it in accordance with our obligations under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. If you wish to discuss any of the above, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number 766,518 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Operations - Directorate Services Team

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