



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Animal and Plant Health Agency
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Our Ref: ATIC1592

[REDACTED]
{By Email}

14 February 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

PROVISION OF REQUESTED INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information on retrospective CITES import permits which we received on day month year. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI).

The information you requested and our response is detailed below:

'Please can the APHA provide me with data on how many retrospective CITES import permits it has issued in each year for the past 10 years. Please also provide data on what goods and controlled species the permits were provided for (eg. rosewood guitars, etc).'

In line with APHA File retention policy we only keep scanned files for 5 years. IT systems do not record whether a permit was issued retrospectively or not. To be able to check whether a permit was issued retrospectively each individual permit would have to be inspected. For example in 2008 records show we had over 17,000 permits which we would have to look at individually to determine if any were issued retrospectively. This information has been exempted from release applying Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Section 12

We want to be as open as possible in answering requests for information. The FOIA itself also requires us to provide reasonable advice and assistance to those seeking to make such a request. Unfortunately, your request would require APHA to interrogate each individual entry to determine whether it was retrospective or not (the system does not indicate this) and apportioning relevant spending according to your request would cover an enormous amount of information. The information would require an extensive search of our systems to determine whether it is held. Gathering it together would therefore involve a significant cost and diversion of resources from the Agencies other work.

Section 12(1) of the FOIA allows us to refuse a request for information if we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit, which currently stands at £600. On the basis of our estimates, we consider that the cost would exceed this limit and, as such, we are refusing your request.

Section 12(2) also provides that we are not required to confirm whether APHA holds the information requested if by doing so we would exceed the appropriate cost limit of £600. This is the case for the information that you have requested, and so please note that this response should not be taken as confirmation that the information is held by APHA.

APHA's scanned local records within the retention period from 2013 to 2018 show that over the last 5 years 16 retrospective import permits have been issued.

2013

- 1 Antique item with elephant ivory and tortoise shell – *Loxodonta Africana/Cheloniidae*
- 1 Live snake *Boa constrictor*
- 1 Python skin bag – *Python reticulatus*
- 1 Scientific samples for *lion Panthera leo*

2017

- 1 *Euphorbia antisyphilitica* wax
- 7 *Dalbergia Latifolia* – rose wood musical instruments
- 3 *Dalbergia sissoo* – rose wood musical instruments
- 1 *Dalbergia spp* – rose wood musical instrument.

Information disclosed in response to this FOI request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOI and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on GOV.UK, together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

I attach an Annex which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you and contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the Access to Information Team at the email address below or postal address at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

ACCESS TO INFORMATION TEAM

Email: enquiries@apha.gov.uk

Annex

Copyright

The information supplied to you is Crown copyright, unless otherwise stated, and is protected by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for the purposes of news reporting. You can find details on the arrangements for re-using Crown copyright information at:

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Complaints

If you are unhappy with the result of your request for information you may request an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this letter.

If you wish to request an internal review, please contact: The Access to Information Team at enquiries@apha.gsi.gov.uk or at the postal address at the top of this letter, who will arrange for an internal review of your case.

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. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted APHA's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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