

FOI 23/278 - Importation of Unlicensed Medicines

REQUEST

12 April 2023

It appears the MHRA have stopped publishing the quarterly summary reports for the importation of unlicensed medicines, with the last one published in Dec 2018, therefore please can I request the following information for the periods 2021 & 2022;

- Number of import notifications received.
- How many imports did you receive notifications from.
- List of exporting countries and number of notifications per country.
- List of the top 50 frequently notified products and number of notifications
- List of the products claiming UK product shortages and number of notifications.

I look forward to receiving this information in due course.

MHRA RESPONSE

27 April 2023

Dear

Thank you for your email.

I can confirm that the MHRA does hold some of the information that you have requested. However, we have also determined that the information is exempt under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act and we cannot process your request any further.

Section 12 of the Act allows public authorities to refuse requests where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 24 working hours in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information and to amalgamate with this one would take us over 24 working hours.

The Import Notifications System quarterly reports stopped being published as they were very resource intensive to the MHRA. In light of increasing workloads and reduced resources generating these reports manually became unmanageable for us.

If you disagree with how we have interpreted the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in answering your request, you can ask for an internal review. Please reply to this email, within two months of this reply, specifying that you would like an Internal Review to be carried out.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you were to remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal review, you would have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please bear in mind that the Information Commissioner will not normally review our handling of your request unless you have first contacted us to conduct an internal review. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

Yours sincerely

MHRA Customer Experience Centre

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