

**FOI 23/374**

Dear

Thank you for your request of 02 July, under the Freedom of Information Act. We apologise for the delay in this reply.

You requested:

To clarify my request please supply information regarding ex-employees who have worked for the MHRA over any timeframe, that have returned as contractors within the last 5 years.

We do not hold all the information you have requested; we do not hold records of those employed as contractors before 2019. Your request for 5 years of data from 02 July 2023 would take us to July 2018.

With that said, we judge that Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act would apply to your request if we were to focus on the date range that we do hold records for (from 2019 to 02 July 2023). Section 12 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.

In the context of your request it is important to note that Contractors are usually recorded on our systems as a Company, not the names of the individual(s) that subsequently undertake the work. The act of appointing a service provider, either a consultant or contractor, would involve outlining an outcome or services we expect to be delivered rather than a named individual to do them – the instances where a Senior Responsible Officer is looking for a specific ex-employee are generally exceptional cases and we do not have any means to identify such cases.

In order to comply with your request we judge that we would need to review all paperwork we hold for any contracting arrangements of the type described above, to establish if any names are held. If they were not then we'd need to identify and refer to the specific business area to see if they can provide names of the individual(s) that were employed via that contract. Please note the timeframe of this request pre-dates our restructure in 2021/22, meaning some teams and business units may no longer exist as they did in 2019/2020. We would then need to compare those names, if we are able to retrieve them, against our list of staff who have been employed by us (at any point) to establish if there are any matches.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date you receive this response and addressed to: [info@mhra.gov.uk](mailto:info@mhra.gov.uk)  
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**

Communications and engagement team

Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency

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