



Homes England

Date: 11 March 2024

Our Ref: RFI4633

Tel: 0300 1234 500

Email: infogov@homesengland.gov.uk

[Redacted]
By Email Only

Dear [Redacted]

RE: Request for Information – RFI4633

Thank you for your request for information which was processed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You requested the following information:

QUESTION 1:

Please advise how many Data Subject Access Requests (hereafter referred to as SARs) you received and responded to in 2021, 2022 and 2023 relating to employees (past or present) and other requests (e.g. customers, general public, service users etc).

	Number of SARs requests in 2021	Number of SARs requests in 2022	Number of SARs requests in 2023
Employees (past and present)			
Other (e.g. customers, general public, service users)			

The next few questions relate to the SARs process which includes collating (pulling the data together from across your organisation/department), redacting the data, pulling the information/ data together into a response and checking the information before issuing it to the requestor.





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QUESTION 2:

When responding to SARS do you manage the process in-house, or do you outsource the whole or part of the process? And if conducted in house please specify the name of the team/function that is responsible for this part of the process (eg Data Privacy, HR, etc).

If for example you outsource one type of SAR (e.g. employee) but complete others (e.g. citizen/customer) inhouse, please provide details.

	In house (please specify)	Outsourced
Collating the data (pulling the data together from across your organisation/department),		
Redacting the data		
Pulling the information/ data together into a response		
checking the information before issuing it to the requestor		

QUESTION 3:

Approximately how many working hours does it take to pull together a typical SARs response, this includes the time taken to collate and redact the information, and putting the information together for issuing?

QUESTION 4:

What is the estimated percentage of handwritten documentation within a typical SAR response?

Response

We can inform you that we do hold the information that you have requested. However, to comply with your request would exceed the appropriate limit for the cost of compliance. We therefore rely on section 12, exemption where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit under the FOIA.





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The full text of the legislation can be found on the following link and we have quoted section 12 below for ease.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents>

Section 12 - Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

(1) Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

(2) Subsection (1) does not exempt the public authority from its obligation to comply with paragraph (a) of section 1(1) unless the estimated cost of complying with that paragraph alone would exceed the appropriate limit.

(3) In subsections (1) and (2) “the appropriate limit” means such amount as may be prescribed, and different amounts may be prescribed in relation to different cases.

(4) The Minister for the Cabinet Office may by regulations provide that, in such circumstances as may be prescribed, where two or more requests for information are made to a public authority:

(a) by one person, or

(b) by different persons who appear to the public authority to be acting in concert or in pursuance of a campaign, the estimated cost of complying with any of the requests is to be taken to be the estimated total cost of complying with all of them.

(5) The Minister for the Cabinet Office may by regulations make provision for the purposes of this section as to the costs to be estimated and as to the manner in which they are to be estimated.

We have considered the current wording of your request and in its current scope we have determined that to establish where all elements of the information is held, to locate the information, retrieving the information and extracting the information would exceed the appropriate limit in terms of timeframes.

Under the terms of the act, we are not obliged to provide any information compiled in the course of our searches prior to concluding section 12 is engaged.





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Advice and Assistance

In compliance with the Section 45 Code of Practice (Paragraph 2.10) and to offer advice and assistance under section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, you may wish to consider narrowing the scope of your request.

We can advise that the cost limit is reached particularly due to the request in Question 1 in relation to "employee SARs". We can confirm that we do not hold this information in an easy to retrieve way therefore, we would need to interrogate each individual Data Subject Access request received over the 3-year time period in order to determine whether or not the request related to a member of staff or a general customer.

We can confirm that we would need to search through approximately 853 files to collate all the information which falls within the scope of your request which currently exceeds the 18-hour limit for compliance.

You might wish to consider refining your request by specifying a smaller time period for which the information is held, for example between 1 January 2021 and 31 June 2021. Whilst this would still be manual work, there would be fewer records in scope of your request to search through and it would bring your request within the cost limit for compliance. However, please note that due to the broad scope of your request we cannot confirm that any further request would not also exceed the section 12 cost limit at this time.

Right to Appeal

If you are not happy with the information that has been provided or the way in which your request has been handled, you may request an internal review. You can request an internal review by writing to Homes England via the details below, quoting the reference number at the top of this letter.

Email: infogov@homesengland.gov.uk

Information Governance Team
Homes England
Windsor House

6th Floor
Windsor House
42 - 50 Victoria Street, Westminster
London, SW1H 0TL

0300 1234 500
@HomesEngland
www.gov.uk/homes-england





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6th Floor
42-50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL
United Kingdom

Your request for review must be made in writing, explain why you wish to appeal, and be received within 40 working days of the date of this response. Failure to meet this criteria may lead to your request being refused.

Upon receipt, your request for review will be passed to an independent party not involved in your original request. We aim to issue a response within 20 working days.

You may also complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) however, the Information Commissioner does usually expect the internal review procedure to be exhausted in the first instance.

The Information Commissioner's details can be found via the following link:

<https://ico.org.uk/>

Please note that the contents of your request and this response are also subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Homes England may be required to disclose your request and our response accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

The Information Governance Team
For Homes England

