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Our ref: FOI2025/00138
28 January 2025

(Redacted)

Dear ,

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: XL Bully exemptions and their changing numbers

Thank you for your request for information of 4 January 2025 about XL Bully exemptions and their changing numbers. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Your information request and our response are set out below.

From November 2023 until now:

- 1. How many XL Bully exemptions have been issued in total?*

The information that you have requested in part 1) is available at the following site:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/xl-bully-dogs-foi202411863>

As the information is reasonably accessible to you by other means, section 21 of the FOIA exempts Defra from providing a copy of the information with this response to your request.

- 2. How many XL Bully exemptions have been removed due to the exempt dog dying?*

Approximately 900 exempted XL bully breed type dogs issued with certificates of exemption have died, as of 5 January 2025. An approximate figure has been provided as we are currently verifying this data.

- 3. How many XL Bully exemptions have been void due to failing to neuter their dog on time?*

The information that has been requested is not held. We are still processing neutering forms for XL Bully dogs. This includes working with owners who made minor errors on their forms to ensure all the necessary information is provided and their dog remains exempt.

- 4. How many XL Bully exemptions have been void due to failing to renew dogs trust insurance on time?*

XL Bully dog owners with a certificate of exemption must have third-party public liability insurance and this must be renewed annually for the lifetime of the dog.

From 5 December 2024, owners no longer need to send proof to Defra that they have renewed their insurance each year. Instead, owners are required to send Defra proof of valid insurance (within 5 working days) if asked. Owners have been advised to keep a copy of their insurance safe and easily accessible in case they are asked to send it.

In response to part 4) of your request, as of the 5 January 2025, no XL Bully owners are recorded as in breach of the public liability insurance conditions.

5. How many XL Bullies need/needed neutering for the June 2024, December 2024 & June 2025 deadlines?

As of 5 January 2025, the total number of XL Bully dogs recorded on the index that needed to be neutered by 30 June 2024 is 44,245, by 31 December 2024 is 6,279, and by 30 June 2025 is 5,785.

Please note that these figures are subject to change as dogs that have died, and duplicate records, are removed from the system.

Information disclosed in response to this FOIA request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on [GOV.UK](https://www.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.

We attach Annex A, explaining the copyright that applies to the information being released to you, and Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

(Redacted)

Information Rights Team

InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk

Annex A

Copyright

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Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Vanessa Drury, Head of Information Rights, via email at InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk and they will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our website.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure.

The ICO can be contacted using the following link:

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/official-information-concerns-report/official-information-concern/>