

Reference: 2026-084

Thank you for your email in which you requested the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA):

- 1. The total number of external whistleblowing reports/disclosures received by your organisation**
- 2. If you can provide us a second, separate, number that includes whistleblower reports from employees of companies in your regulatory remit (i.e. prescribed persons) then please provide that.**
- 3. Please provide a breakdown of reports categorised by the nature of the concern raised in the whistleblower report.**

If possible, please provide the information broken down by individual years for the last five years with a year end of June 30. If this is not possible, please use any other year end used by the organisation.

Response

We can confirm that the SFO holds the total number of whistleblowing disclosures received over the last five years. This information is already published, and the figures and links to the relevant publications are set out below.

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Total	156	250	182	167	335
Source	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26

Question 1, 2, 3

While the SFO holds the information you have requested, due to the scope of the questions we are unable to provide the requested information as it is exempt under section 12 of the FOIA.

How the exemption is engaged

Under section 12 of the FOIA, a public authority does not have to comply with a request for information if complying with the request would exceed the appropriate cost limit, which has been set at £600. A flat rate of £25 per person, per hour, is given for determining whether information is held, finding and retrieving records and extracting the requested information. This means the appropriate limit of £600 will be exceeded if more than 24 hours are required to complete the work, which would be the case in this instance.

The SFO does not hold the information requested in a readily searchable format. Whistleblowing reports are held on a case-by-case basis, and the information needed to answer your questions, such as whether a report came from an external source, whether it came from an employee of a company within the SFO's regulatory remit as a prescribed person, and the nature of the concern raised, is not separately recorded or categorised in a way that could be extracted automatically.

To answer your questions, each individual whistleblower report would need to be located and reviewed manually by a member of staff, in order to determine the source of the report and the nature of the concern raised, before this could be recorded and collated into the breakdown you have requested. Given the volume of reports held, we estimate that this exercise would take up to one month for two members of staff to complete. It would therefore take significantly longer than 24 hours to locate, retrieve and extract the information needed to answer your request, exceeding the appropriate limit of £600.

Section 12 is an absolute exemption and therefore does not require a public interest test.

We recognise that under section 16 of the FOIA, we have a duty to provide reasonable advice and assistance. Therefore, you may wish to consider submitting a refined request with a narrower scope, which may enable us to respond within the cost limit.