Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

T: 03459 33 55 77
helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

[Redacted]
By email: [Redacted]

Our ref: FOI2026/25894
27 November 2026

Dear [Redacted]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Index of Exempted Dogs

Thank you for your request for information of 11 November 2026 about Index of Exempted Dogs. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Your information request and our response are set out below.

Please treat the following four questions as the full scope of my revised request, concerning England and Wales.

1. *Current Index figures*

Please provide the number of dogs currently recorded as holding a valid exemption, separately for:

- *Pit Bull Terrier;*

2023

- *Japanese Tosa;*

2

- *Dogo Argentino;*

30

- *Fila Brasileiro;*

0

- *XL Bully.*

52833

Please state the extraction date and whether these figures exclude dogs recorded as deceased or whose exemptions have been withdrawn, cancelled or revoked.

Extraction date: 10:00 17/11/2026. The figures given above include all dogs awarded a Certificate of Exemption. These figures exclude dead and withdrawn dogs.

2. *XL Bully withdrawal applications*

From the opening of the withdrawal scheme to the extraction date, please provide the number of applications:

a) *Received because the owner considers the dog is not an XL Bully.*

Our department holds no information within scope of this part of your request.

b) *Resulting in withdrawal of the certificate.*

1512

c) *Still pending.*

Our department holds no information within scope of this part of your request. Please be advised that no applications are pending, they are either rejected or accepted immediately.

d) *Refused, rejected or otherwise closed without withdrawal, broken down by recorded reason where held.*

Our department holds no information within scope of this part of your request.

Under section 16 of the FOIA, Defra has a duty to provide advice and assistance to applicants making requests for information. In this context, please note that the term “withdrawal scheme” does not refer to a formal scheme, but rather to the process by which a dog could be withdrawn. This process was required under the relevant legislation and has now been completed.

3. *Other removals and cancellations*

Please provide the number of dogs recorded as removed from the Index, or whose exemptions were cancelled or revoked, during October 2026, broken down by prohibited type and recorded reason:

a) *Death.*

Our department holds no information within scope of this part of your request.

b) *Failure to comply with exemption conditions.*

Our department holds no information within scope of this part of your request.

c) *Other reasons. Please exclude withdrawals covered by question 2 and changes covered by question 4.*

This question seeks recorded removal or cancellation events, rather than reconstruction of a historical Index snapshot. If the dates or reasons are not held, please identify which information is unavailable.

Our department holds no information within scope of this part of your request. The Index of Exempted Dogs is a live database. Records are updated when we are notified that a dog has died or an owner has failed to comply with the exemption conditions. As notifications are processed in the order received and historical figures are not recorded, we can only provide figures as they appear on the database at the time of the request.

4. *XL Bully to Pit Bull Terrier changes*

From the opening of the XL Bully exemption scheme to the extraction date, how many individual dogs previously recorded as XL Bully type have subsequently been recorded on the Index as Pit Bull Terrier type?

Our department holds no information within scope of this part of your request.

Please include identifiable cases involving either amendment of an existing entry or closure of an XL Bully entry and creation of a PBT entry for the same dog.

Our department holds no information within scope of this part of your request.

Of these dogs, how many had an application to withdraw their XL Bully exemption recorded before the change?

Our department holds no information within scope of this part of your request.

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, 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

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs or logos) can be also used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.

Most documents produced by Defra will be protected by Crown Copyright. Most Crown copyright information can be re-used under the Open Government Licence. For information about the OGL and about re-using Crown Copyright information please see The National Archives website.

Copyright in other documents may rest with a third party. For information about obtaining permission from a third party see the Intellectual Property Office's website.

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 [Redacted] 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 Commission'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/