



Trust Headquarters
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28th May 2021

Email:

Dear,

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI 210527.

You requested the following information, please also see our response below:

Please find below a request made under the FOI Act.

How many cyber-attacks (incidents) did your organisation experience in the last 3 years?

If these statistics are available within the cost limit, how many of those incidents involved a) Malware b) Ransomware c) Hacking d) Phishing emails
How many incidents over the last 3 years were reported to the Department of Health and Social Care, whether under the Security of Network and Information Systems Regulations 2018, or otherwise?

How many incidents over the last 3 years resulted in a notification to the Information Commissioner's Office?

How many incidents over the last 3 years were reported to both DHSC and the ICO?

Under Section 31: Law Enforcement

(1) Information which is not exempt information by virtue of section 30 is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice—

(a) The prevention or detection of crime

Because section 31 is a qualified exemption, we are required to conduct a public interest test. This means that after it has been decided that the exemption is engaged, the public interest in releasing the information must be considered. If the public interest in disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in withholding it then the exemption does not apply and the information must be released. There is a presumption running through the FOIA that information should be released unless there are compelling reasons to withhold it.

The public interest has now been concluded and the balance of the public interest has been found to fall in favour of withholding information covered by the section 31(1)(a) exemption on this occasion. Considerations in favour of the release of the information included the principle that there is a public interest in transparency and accountability through disclosure of information relating to public authority security issues.

However, release of this information would make The Trust more vulnerable to cyber-crime. As such release of this information would prejudice the prevention or detection of crime by making Trust systems more vulnerable to hacking. There is an overwhelming public interest in keeping Trust systems secure which would be served by non-disclosure. While we strive to be transparent, we must also consider the importance of our duty to provide the public with quality and value for money services. As a result of this duty, and the risk of potential prejudice to it posed by the various reasons laid out above, we believe the interest in withholding this information outweighs that for disclosure. We therefore find that the section 31(1) exemption is appropriately engaged and hope that the information we have provided in response to the rest of the request assists you.

I hope you find this information of some assistance.

If for any reason you are dissatisfied with our response, kindly in the first instance contact Caroline Smart, Head of Information Governance via the following email address:

FOI@secamb.nhs.uk

Yours sincerely

**Freedom of Information Coordinator
South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust**