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2025  
Internal Ref: 250627  
Email:

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[www.secamb.nhs.uk](http://www.secamb.nhs.uk)

Dear ,

The trust acknowledges receipt of your Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) request, referenced above. Please ensure you quote this number in any future correspondence.

### **FOI Request**

You asked us:

**This is a request under FOIA for details of instances in which South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (including, where applicable, any agencies, bodies, or units for which it is ultimately responsible for supplier payments) has failed to pay its suppliers on time, thereby causing liabilities for late payment compensation and/or interest on late payments to be incurred for the public purse.**

**As the Government has made clear, late payment remains a significant issue for business and a drag on the UK economy as a whole. It is clear that, despite what the law says, many suppliers have not received timely payment or the interest and compensation for late payment to which they are entitled by statute.**

**Public authorities must keep information on payment in order to comply with their legal obligations, and there is a public interest in ensuring both compliance and that unpaid interest and compensation is recovered from public authorities. If proper records are kept as they ought to be, then information in this respect ought readily to be available.**

**The information requested below is not confidential, and its disclosure under FOIA is not capable of adversely affecting any party's commercial interests. This is because this request is aimed at data about late payment liabilities that have in fact arisen: the disclosure of this data cannot cause any additional liability to arise. We therefore do not anticipate any reasonable grounds for refusing this request.**

**In any event, there is strong public interest in transparency about these matters. Relevant factors in this respect include: enhancing public**



understanding and scrutiny of issues of significant importance to stewardship of the public purse and to economic growth; facilitating an informed debate about compliance by your authority with its contractual obligations and with Government policy; helping businesses that suffer from late payment (many of which are small and medium-sized enterprises), and encouraging improvements in payment practices by public authorities such as yours.

## **Request**

With the above points in mind, we request under FOIA that you provide, (preferably in Microsoft Excel or an equivalent machine-readable format) the following information in respect of suppliers which were not paid in within 30 days for the period starting 1 April 2022 to the date of this request:

1. Supplier Name
2. Invoice Date
3. Gross Invoice Value
4. Payment Date
5. Late Payment Compensation or Interest Paid (if any)

## **Clarification:**

We reiterate that this request:

- (a) Â Â is limited to information which should (if proper records are kept) be readily available from a purchase ledger system and should therefore be possible to retrieve without any difficulty and without imposing any significant burden;
- (b) Â Â relates to organisations (not individuals) who are entitled to be paid out of public funds for public services, and we do not require the disclosure of any personal information of any individual person;
- (c) Â Â does not require the disclosure of any confidential information or information to the production of which there could be any other lawful objection.

## **Formal Response**

The Trust confirms it holds the information you have requested.

Suppliers which were not paid in within 30 calendar days, for the period starting 1 April 2022 to the date of this request:

1. Supplier Name
2. Invoice Date
3. Gross Invoice Value
4. Payment Date
5. Late Payment Compensation or Interest Paid (if any)



The Trust has provided the above data points in spreadsheet format (FOI\_250627-Response). It shows the number where invoices paid date is greater than 30 days from the invoice date. Please note, this includes:

- credit notes; which may have delayed payment of invoices due to the credit position of the supplier account or where an invoice is in dispute and we were awaiting a partial credit, etc.
- supplier invoice error; where delay may have been caused by the supplier not providing the necessary information (e.g. purchase order), leading to late receipt of the invoice into payment run.

The Trust also publishes its compliance against the Better Payment Practice Code (BPPC), in its annual report that can be found on its website. Further information on the BPPC can be found in the UK Government (DHSC) accounting manual: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dhsc-group-accounting-manual-2024-to-2025>.

### **Next steps**

We publish a variety of information which may assist future enquiries relating to our service on our website – [www.secamb.nhs.uk](http://www.secamb.nhs.uk).

Should you be dissatisfied with our response then in the first instance please contact Richard Banks, Head of Corporate Governance, via the following email address: [FOI@secamb.nhs.uk](mailto:FOI@secamb.nhs.uk)

You can ask us to review our original response. If you would like us to carry out an internal review, please let us know within 40 working days of you receiving our original response. This review will be conducted by an individual who was not directly involved in reviewing the original response, ordinarily, the Trust Data Protection Officer. We will endeavour to complete this request within 20 working days.

Should you remain dissatisfied then you can contact the [Information Commissioner's Office](https://www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints) (ICO). Complaints to the ICO should be made within six weeks of receiving the outcome of an internal review. The easiest way to lodge a complaint is through their website: [www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints](https://www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints).

Alternatively, the ICO's postal address is:  
Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely,

**Freedom of Information Coordinator**



Saving Lives,  
Serving Our Communities

Chair: Michael Whitehouse CEO: Simon Weldon

## **South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust**



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