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5th June 2026
Internal Reference: 260525
Email:

Dear ,

Thank you for your request for information, which we received on **20/05/2026**
We have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
Please ensure you quote the Internal Reference number above in any future correspondence.

Your Request

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request the following information for the calendar years 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 to date.

1. The current vacancy rates for:

- * paramedics,
- * emergency care assistants,
- * emergency medical technicians,
- * 999 call handlers,
- * clinical supervisors.

2. The total number of applications received for frontline ambulance service roles each year.

3. The number of applicants:

- * invited to interview or assessment,
- * offered positions,
- * who began training,
- * and who completed probation or initial training.



4. The number of frontline staff leaving the Trust each year, broken down where possible by:

- * resignation,
- * retirement,
- * medical retirement.

5. The number of newly qualified paramedics leaving the Trust within two years of joining.

6. Staff sickness absence figures related to:

- * stress,
- * burnout,
- * mental health,
- * or work-related fatigue.

7. Any workforce reviews, internal reports or assessments discussing recruitment challenges, retention pressures or staffing shortages affecting operational delivery.

8. Any internal assessments discussing the impact of:

- * cost of living pressures,
- * housing affordability,
- * competition from neighbouring NHS Trusts,
- * or workload pressures on recruitment or retention.

Formal Response

1. The Trust records vacancy rates by directorate and therefore, data is not held at the level of individual operational roles specified in the request. Vacancy rate data is not held in the format requested for the specified time periods.

2. The total number of applications received for frontline ambulance service roles each year. Please note, the Trust does not hold this information by calendar year but rather financial year (April – March) provided below.

April 2025 to March 2026 – 3,523

April 2024 to March 2025 – 9,875

April 2023 to March 2024 – 12,521

April 2022 to March 2023 – data not held

3. The number of applicants:

April 2025 to March 2026





invited to interview or assessment	offered positions,	who began training,	and who completed probation or initial training
512	314	241	Specific data not held

April 2024 to March 2025

invited to interview or assessment	offered positions,	who began training,	and who completed probation or initial training
852	560	491	Specific data not held

April 2023 to March 2024

invited to interview or assessment	offered positions,	who began training,	and who completed probation or initial training
1852	749	540	Specific data not held

April 2022 to March 2023

Data is not held.

4. The table below shows the total number of frontline staff leaving the Trust in each year. In line with the categories specified in the request, leavers have been grouped into resignations, retirements and medical retirements based on their recorded ESR leaving reason. All remaining leaving reasons have been combined into an "Other Leavers" category. This includes reasons such as dismissal, death in service, end of fixed-term contract and employee transfer.

Year	Resignations	Retirements	Medical Retirements	Other Leavers	Total Leavers
2022	206	31	0	26	263
2023	194	17	1	32	244
2024	148	13	0	31	192
2025	121	16	0	37	174

5. The table below shows the number of employees who left the Trust whilst employed in a Newly Qualified Paramedic (NQP) position and who had less than two years' recorded service at the point of leaving. NQPs were identified using their recorded position title in ESR at the time of termination.





Year	Leavers
2022	18
2023	29
2024	21
2025	9

6. The table below shows sickness absence relating to ESR absence category S10: “Anxiety/stress/depression/other psychiatric illnesses”, as the closest matching ESR category to the absence reasons requested. Absence FTE % is the standard ESR absence rate calculation, based on absence days lost as a proportion of available working time. Absence FTE shows the total absence for the period adjusted for staff contracted hours, so that part-time and full-time absences are reflected on a comparable full-time equivalent basis.

Calendar Year	Absence FTE %	Absence FTE
2025	1.78%	30,144.37
2024	1.62%	26,632.37
2023	1.71%	25,903.28
2022	1.95%	28,014.33

7. Any workforce reviews, internal reports or assessments discussing recruitment challenges, retention pressures or staffing shortages affecting operational delivery.

The Trust does not hold centrally recorded documents specifically categorised as standalone reviews addressing the challenges described. While these matters are considered through routine operational management, governance processes and board-level reporting, we do not hold this information in the requested format.

8. Any internal assessments discussing the impact of:

- * cost of living pressures,
- * housing affordability,
- * competition from neighbouring NHS Trusts,
- * or workload pressures on recruitment or retention

We do not hold this information. These factors may be referenced within broader discussions and operational considerations however no standalone assessments are held in the requested format.





Next steps

Some information held by the Trust is routinely published on our [website](#) and may be of assistance.

If you are dissatisfied with the Trust's response to your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review.

Requests for an internal review should be submitted within **40 working days** of the date of this response and should be sent to:

Richard Banks, Head of Corporate Governance at FOI@secamb.nhs.uk

The internal review will be conducted by an individual who was not directly involved in handling your original request, ordinarily the Trust's Data Protection Officer. We aim to complete internal reviews within **20 working days** of receipt.

If you remain dissatisfied following the outcome of the internal review, you may complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO generally expects complaints to be raised promptly following the completion of an internal review.

The easiest way to raise a complaint is via the ICO's website:
www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints

Alternatively, you may write to:
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Corporate Governance Team
South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust

