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27th April 2017

Email:

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/17/02/42.

You requested the following information:

**I am enquiring as to what exemption this Trust has for the use of flashing/alternating white warning lights on your emergency vehicles (not the flashing/alternating headlamps) but specifically the lights used in the front grille's and lightbar's which fall under the remit of the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations.**

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust is not aware of any legislation that says we are not permitted to fit the type of lights in question and therefore we are by default permitted to do so.

Generally, you cannot have flashing lights fitted to vehicles except for flashing headlamps. As for the 'additional' small strobes often fitted alongside our blue flashing strobes and indeed in the overhead gantry bars, there appears to be very little legislation that covers these anomalies. The law states that 'Each warning light should flash between 1 and 4 times per second and spend an equal amount of time on and off (meaning strobes are not covered) blue light use'. The only exemptions to flashing white lights are 'reversing lights' and 'work' lights. This term would seem to indicate any light which we deem as needed to facilitate our 'work.' Ambulances for instance are permitted to leave the rear doors open thereby showing a white light to the rear at night whilst treating/dealing with a patient etc.

There is no actual definition of 'work light' so until a judge rules on it in a court of Law it would appear that a 'work light' is whatever light we use in relation to 'our work.'

Changes to the law are being made constantly as lighting to vehicles changes and improves. As each emergency service tries to keep up with technology sometimes

technology in fact runs ahead of laws being passed. Changes in the lighting regulations for emergency vehicles have already been updated in 2005, 2010 and again in 2011.

I hope you find this information useful.

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

[FOI@secamb.nhs.uk](mailto:FOI@secamb.nhs.uk)

Yours sincerely

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

