

Professor John Robertson
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Our Ref **HQ18331**

15 April 2019

Dear Professor Robertson

Thank you for your request dated 18 March 2019 under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA). This gives a statutory deadline for responding by 15 April 2019. For reference I have copied your request below. You asked:

Request for Information

RFI1: Please provide me with the number of FOI requests made to you, over the last 10 years, by individuals representing or from these groups:

- a. The Scottish Labour Party
- b. The Scottish Lib Dems
- c. The Scottish Conservatives
- d. The SNP
- e. BBC Scotland
- f. The Herald newspaper
- g. The Scotsman newspaper
- h. STV

RFI2: What is the average cost of an FOI request to you in terms of both budget and staff time?

We have now completed our search for the information you request, and a copy is enclosed.

In response to RFI 1, I can confirm that the authority does not hold full records of FOISA requests for 10 years prior to 18 March 2019. Our records commence in April 2013.

I can also confirm that we do not record the newspaper or the broadcaster for which a journalist is working when making a request, nor do we record the political party interest of a request received from a political source on our log. .

I can however confirm that from the time our records commence in April 2013 until the date of this request the SPS has recorded;

1. 138 requests from 56 different individuals from a political source,
2. 600 requests from 256 different journalists.

In order to identify the individuals we would need to locate and retrieve each request made, review the request so ascertain if a publication, broadcaster or a political interest are identified in the request.

I carried out a sample test on 10 relevant requests and I can confirm that this sample took 40 + Minutes to complete and resulted in 3 of those requests identifying either the political interest or media employer. Two requests in the sample were not found.

Under Section 12 of FOISA an authority is not obliged to respond to a request if the cost to do so would exceed a limit which is currently set at £600 by the Scottish Information Commissioner. Therefore given that there are a total of 738 records to check and assuming they can all be located this would take the authority over 49 hours to complete at a cost of £15 per hour would equate to £735. Furthermore only 30% of the sample could be attributed to a source and 20% were not found. If this were extrapolated out over the entire record it would be reasonable to only be able to recover 50% of the information requested for 6 of the 10 years.

In response to RFI 2, I can confirm that the authority does not hold this information.

If you are unhappy with this response to your request, you may ask us to carry out an internal review, by writing to The Chief Executive, Calton House, 5 Redheughs Rigg, Edinburgh, EH12 9HW. Your request should explain why you wish a review to be carried out, and should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this letter, and we will reply within 20 working days of receipt.

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner.

Yours sincerely

Lyndsey Moug
Corporate Communications Manager
Scottish Prison Service