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Your Ref:
Our Ref: FOIR7145 – IR
Date: 3 December 2018

Dear Sir/Madam

Freedom of Information – Internal Review

Thank you for your email of 10 November requesting an Internal Review of the response you received dated 24 October (Ref: FOIR7145).

On 1 October, you asked a number of questions relating to **DVLA's Beta software version in operation for online SORN applications during April 2018**. In particular you asked for the **BetaTest Closure Report, details of bugs reported/fixed/still to be fixed, details of re-testing software, data with regard to data loss/errors/performance issues/crashes/ inconsistencies, stability issues, feedback and any other information with regard to the testing and release of this software version**.

On 24 October you received a response from DVLA that neither confirmed nor denied that information in scope of your request was held and that the Agency relied on section 31(3) of the FOIA. Details of the public interest test carried out by DVLA also accompanied the response.

You then asked the same day as receiving the response for DVLA to answer your questions on the basis that your request was **to ascertain whether the BETA version of the DVLA's software was working correctly**. You also suggested that **it is in the public interest to know that DVLA's systems are working correctly**.

Having reviewed your request, the Agency maintains the exemption because to either confirm or deny that information is held in scope of your request would be likely to put the security of DVLA's IT services (notably the online SORN application service) at risk.

The point you raise about the public interest test is noted but that is just one factor for disclosure. The Agency has to weigh up both the factors for and against disclosure, reaching a balanced and reasoned conclusion between the two. So while it is acknowledged that there is a public interest in disclosing information that demonstrates that DVLA's system work correctly, there is also the public interest in ensuring that the Agency does not disclose information that could compromise its IT

systems or reduce its effectiveness in collecting vehicle tax for the Exchequer. Being the holder of the database of all vehicles registered in the UK (currently some 40 million records of licensed or SORN vehicles and their keepers) it is in the greater public interest to keep those systems secure. It is for that reason that the public interest in withholding the information in scope of your question would outweigh that for disclosing it, if it were held.

However, and outside the provisions of the FOIA, I can advise that despite being described as a BETA service, it is fully operational with the service processing over 250,000 SORN requests in April 2018.

If you remain unhappy about the outcome of the Internal Review that has been carried out, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). A reminder of the ICO's contact details can be found below.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'R. Toft', is written over a faint rectangular box.

Robert Toft
Head of Data Sharing Policy & Freedom of Information Team

Your right to complain to DVLA and the Information Commissioner

If you disagree with the outcome of the Internal Review, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office. Further information can be found via: <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/getting/>.

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