



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Freedom of Information Team
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
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www.gov.uk/dhsc

Ms Gloria Zimba

By email to: request-811748-561063a6@whatdotheyknow.com

13/01/2022

Dear Ms Zimba,

Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1376279

Thank you for your request dated 29 November, in which you asked the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC):

"Dear Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards,

I am writing to make an open government request for all the information to which I am entitled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please forward responses to the attached questions below.

I would like the above information to be provided to me as an electronic document.

If this request is too wide or unclear, I would be grateful if you could contact me as I understand that under the Act, you are required to advise and assist requesters. If any of this information is already in the public domain, please can you direct me to it, with page references and URLs if necessary.

If the release of any of this information is prohibited on the grounds of breach of confidence, I ask that you supply me with copies of the confidentiality agreement and remind you that information should not be treated as confidential if such an agreement has not been signed.

I understand that you are required to respond to my request within the 20 working days after you receive this letter. I would be grateful if you could confirm in writing that you have received this request.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Gloria Zimba.

1. *Do you have a formal IT security strategy? (Please provide a link to the strategy)*

- A) Yes
- B) No

2. *Does this strategy specifically address the monitoring of network attached device configurations to identify any malicious or non-malicious change to the device configuration?*

- A) Yes
- B) No
- C) Don't know

3. *If yes to Question 2, how do you manage this identification process – is it:*

- A) *Totally automated – all configuration changes are identified and flagged without manual intervention.*
- B) *Semi-automated – it's a mixture of manual processes and tools that help track and identify configuration changes.*
- C) *Mainly manual – most elements of the identification of configuration changes are manual.*

4. *Have you ever encountered a situation where user services have been disrupted due to an accidental/non malicious change that had been made to a device configuration?*

- A) Yes
- B) No
- C) Don't know

5. *If a piece of malware was maliciously uploaded to a device on your network, how quickly do you think it would be identified and isolated?*

- A) *Immediately*
- B) *Within days*
- C) *Within weeks*
- D) *Not sure*

6. *How many devices do you have attached to your network that require monitoring?*

- A) *Physical Servers: record number*
- B) *PC's & Notebooks: record number*

7. *Have you ever discovered devices attached to the network that you weren't previously aware of?*

- A) Yes
- B) No

If yes, how do you manage this identification process – is it:

- A) Totally automated – all device configuration changes are identified and flagged without manual intervention.*
- B) Semi-automated – it's a mixture of manual processes and tools that help track and identify unplanned device configuration changes.*
- C) Mainly manual – most elements of the identification of unexpected device configuration changes are manual.*

8. How many physical devices (IP's) do you have attached to your network that require monitoring for configuration vulnerabilities?

Record Number:

9. Have you suffered any external security attacks that have used malware on a network attached device to help breach your security measures?

- A) Never*
- B) Not in the last 1-12 months*
- C) Not in the last 12-36 months*

10. Have you ever experienced service disruption to users due to an accidental, non-malicious change being made to device configurations?

- A) Never*
- B) Not in the last 1-12 months*
- C) Not in the last 12-36 months*

11. When a scheduled audit takes place for the likes of PSN or Cyber Essentials, how likely are you to get significant numbers of audit fails relating to the status of the IT infrastructure?

- A) Never*
- B) Occasionally*
- C) Frequently*
- D) Always"*

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Question 1

DHSC holds the information you have requested. The department does not have a formal IT security strategy.

Questions 2-11

DHSC holds information relevant to your request. However, we consider this information is exempt under FOIA for a number of reasons, which we set out below:

Section 24(1), safeguarding national security and Section 31(1)(a), crime prevention are qualified exemptions. These exemptions are engaged because releasing the information will prejudice the prevention of crime and the safeguarding of national security.

Sections 24 and 31 are qualified exemptions and we are required to assess whether the balance of public interest favours disclosing or withholding the information.

DHSC recognises that there is a general public interest in transparency in government as this increases public trust and engagement. However, this has to be weighed against a strong public interest in safeguarding national security and preventing and detecting crime. In this case, we have decided that the public interest in withholding this information outweighs that in its release.

If you are not satisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to appeal by asking for an internal review. This should be sent to freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk or to the address at the top of this letter and be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communication.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have already appealed our original response and received our internal review decision. You should raise your concerns with the ICO within three months of your last meaningful contact with us.

The ICO can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow SK9 5AF

Website: <https://ico.org.uk/concerns>

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Team
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