



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

**Department for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities**

Fry Building
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London
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www.gov.uk/dluhc

Ms Rebecca Moody
Via email

Date: **1 December 2021**

Dear Ms Moody,

Freedom of Information Act 2000 - 12892429

Thank you for your request for information which we received on 11 November 2021 and processed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested:

"Please find below my FOI request regarding malicious emails sent to the department.

The date range for the requests is from 2018 to present day. The data shall include a breakdown by year and by individual departments (e.g. separate departments, agencies, or public bodies within the main government agency), if applicable.

- 1. How many malicious emails have been successfully blocked?*
- 2. What percentage of malicious emails were opened by staff?*
- 3. What percentage of malicious links in the emails were clicked on by staff?*
- 4. How many ransomware attacks were blocked by the department?*
- 5. How many ransomware attacks were successful?"*

Under section 31(3) by virtue of section 31(1)(a) (prejudice to law enforcement) of the FOI Act, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) neither confirms nor denies whether it holds the information you have requested. This is explained in further detail below.

We consider that confirming or denying if we hold this information, is exempt under section 31(3), as disclosure of whether such information existed or not would be likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. This is a qualified exemption and is therefore subject to a public interest test. We have considered the public interest in demonstrating that the

Department and its arm's length bodies' IT systems and processes are robustly defended against cybercriminals and recognise that there is a strong public interest in the public being made aware of any incidents that may have threatened our data.

However, we have weighed this against the countervailing arguments that by disclosing whether information exists or not about any ransomware attacks experienced by the Department or any of the organisations for which we have oversight, we would be putting into the public domain information that can assist cyber-attackers.

Confirming or denying whether information is held can be used by potential cyberattackers to target apparent vulnerabilities in organisations' cyber security defences, as it would potentially reveal the extent of the problem and the likely success or failure of such attempts.

We have concluded that the public interest in neither confirming nor denying whether the department holds information, is outweighed by that of disclosing whether the information is held.

Complaints procedure

If you are unhappy with this response, we will review it and report back to you. (This is called an internal review.) If you want us to do this, let us know by return email within two months of receiving this response. You can also ask by letter addressed to:

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Knowledge and Information Access Team
4th Floor SE, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DF

If you are unhappy with the outcome of this internal review, you can ask the independent Information Commissioner to investigate. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at email address casewoxx@xxx.xxx.xx or use their online form at ico.org.uk/concerns or call them on 0303 123 1113.

Kind regards,

Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities FOI Team