

11 October 2010

**Royal Mail Group**

Mr John Gow

By email: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxx

Freedom of Information Unit  
2nd Floor  
Royal Mail Sheffield  
Pond Street  
SHEFFIELD  
S98 6HR

foi@royalmail.com  
www.royalmail.com

Dear Mr Gow,

**RE: Freedom of Information Request**

I am writing in response to your request for information received 15<sup>th</sup> September which has been considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. You requested the following information:

*"You successfully supplied me in May 2009 with a list of post box locations which also included the following: Box type i.e. A, B or C pillar box, lamp box, wall box etc. Collection plate type e.g. CP1-R, SCP1-R, CP7-Y etc, and box last collection times.*

*The document was provided as a pdf file and was called 'A-Z of Postboxes' and proved most useful. I simply request the same pdf document but an up to date version for 2010."*

I can confirm we do hold the information requested however this information is considered to be exempt from disclosure under section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act, prejudice to commercial interests. The information requested has been gathered by Royal Mails own business resource and continues to invest in updating and improving the accuracy of the information held. This information therefore has a commercial value to Royal Mail which would be undermined by its release into the public domain. This would clearly be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of Royal Mail; significantly reducing, if not removing completely, Royal Mail's ability to exploit the information commercially.

Furthermore, in contrast to May 2009 when you previously requested the information, plans are now in place for Royal Mail to provide postbox location information through

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various forms of media. Releasing this new raw data would deny Royal Mail Group the full benefit of providing this service directly to customers, and it would be detrimental for customers to be drawn to alternative websites for reasons of cross-marketing and promotion of other services provided by Royal Mail Group and Post Office Ltd.

Section 43(2) is subject to the public interest test. Royal Mail recognises that there is an interest in promoting access to postboxes and informing the public of postbox locations, however there is also a public interest in protecting the commercial interests of any business from unfair prejudice. Royal Mail Group is a publicly owned company; therefore there is a significant public interest in protecting its commercial interests and its ability to provide public mail services. Royal Mail is reliant on revenue from all possible avenues as we face a decline in mail volumes. The data involved is developed at Royal Mail's own expense and we continue to invest in updating and improving the accuracy of the information, therefore for these reasons we believe the public interest is in favour of withholding the information requested. Additionally, by Royal Mail directly making the information available to the public, it will be accurate and up to date, resulting in the information being more reliable and beneficial to those using it.

I am sorry we are unable to provide an updated version of information previously provided to you, however hopefully the reasons for this are fully explained. If for any reason you are not satisfied with this response, you do have the right to request a review. If you wish to do so please set out in writing your grounds of appeal and send to the Head of Information Compliance, Royal Mail Group, Company Secretary's Office, 100 Victoria Embankment, LONDON, EC4Y 0HQ. An internal panel will then review the request, and you will be advised of the outcome.

If you decide to appeal and are still not satisfied with our response you also have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Telephone: 01625 545 700  
[www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)

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Yours sincerely

Kate Fearn  
Freedom of Information Support Officer  
Freedom of Information Unit