

May 16th 2018

BY EMAIL

Tel: 028 9536 3863
Email: FOI.BSO@hscni.net

Our Ref: FOI 870

Dear 

Your request for information was received on April 14th 2018 and was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please be advised that the Business Services Organisation (BSO) has now completed its search for the information you requested with regards to the February 2018 Prompt Payment Report.

Q1: Please confirm details of the quantum of the invoice backlogs on the Register for both HSC Trusts and other HSC Bodies referred to in the February 2018 Report broken down by both numbers and value of outstanding invoices?

There are over 151000 invoices contributing to the February 2018 report. Currently, there is no bespoke report that would analyse the figures to obtain the requested information. As such, a number of extractions and sorts would be required to identify the specific invoices. Once identified, each of these invoices would need to be checked individually to identify the reason for delay and value of invoice.

The Freedom of Information Act (2000) ('The Act') states that a public body, such as the BSO, may apply charged in order to provide information to the public. If a public body spends more than £450 on staff time in complying with a request, then charges may be applied; this figure is based on an hourly rate of £25 over 18 hours. Please refer to sections 12 and 13 of The Act, and sections 3 and 4 of The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 ('The Fees Regulations').

The BSO has estimated that it would require a minimum of 1 minute to investigate each invoice (equating to a minimum of 2516 hours). This equates to £62900 – minus £450 – therefore £62450.

We are unable to continue processing your request until the fee is paid. If you wish the BSO to continue to process your request, you should pay the fee within 3 months (i.e. 15/08/2018). If the BSO does not receive payment of the fee by this date, the request will be considered closed.



Q2: On a separate point the 30 Day Prompt Payment Report tabled at Board meetings going back to at least May 2017 refer to the percentages of Invoices Paid in 30 working days. If this reference to "working days" is not an error please provide a copy of Departmental Guidance which instructed the change from the original basis of reporting figures as a percentage of Invoices Paid in 30 calendar days.

The 30 day Prompt Payment is a calendar day count.

I hope that the information provided assists you. If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to

Information Governance Manager,
2 Franklin Street,
Belfast,
BT2 8DQ

If, following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision making panel, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the BSO has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

You can contact Information Commissioner at:

Website: www.ico.org.uk
Phone: 0303 123 1113
Email: casework@ico.org.uk
Post: Information Commissioner's Office
3rd Floor, 14 Cromac Place
Belfast
BT7 2JB

In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. However the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Yours Sincerely,


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Liam McIvor
Chief Executive