

Chief Executive
2 Franklin Street
BELFAST
BT2 8DQ

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

23rd December 2022

BY EMAIL

Our Ref: FOI 1846

Dear 

Your request for information was received 23rd November 2022 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 BSO's Organisation's ICT Contracts.

Please find this information attached.

Please also note that some information has been considered exempt from disclosure under Section 31 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('Law Enforcement').

Section 31 is also a qualified exemption which means that the public interest test (PIT) must be considered. This involves weighing the harm resulting from possible disclosure against the likely benefit to the wider public. A copy of PIT is attached for your reference.

In considering the PIT, I acknowledge that there may be a public interest for disclosure in line with HSC's requirement to be open and transparent in its use of public monies and provision of public services. However, while I make no suggestion that there is any malicious intent on your part; provision (and therefore publication) would be capable of making Health and Social Care, vulnerable to malicious attack. I therefore consider that the public interest in withholding this information outweighs the public interest in supplying it.

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

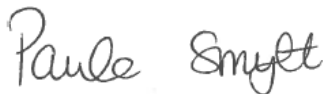
If, following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision making panel, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate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



for Karen Bailey
Acting Chief Executive

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Public Interest Test (PIT)

Exemption claimed in respect of Section 31 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('Law Enforcement') for disclosure of details on contracts registers

In considering this PIT, the following have been taken into account:

- the public interest in issues of accountability and transparency and in scrutinising how BSO's affairs are conducted
- the public interest in ensuring that BSO is able to protect its systems from cyber-attacks which could damage security
- the public interest in ensuring that BSO can proactively manage the risks around cyber security, for the wellbeing and safety of all its stakeholders

In favour of disclosure of information	In favour of not disclosing information
<p>Openness and transparency: it is recognised that releasing this information would provide the public with assurance that we are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protecting our technologies; • spending public money responsibly, especially where this relates to the provision of public services 	<p>BSO hosts a vast range of software, systems and data on behalf of the wider Health and Social Care (HSC) within Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Release of this information would make BSO, and by association the wider HSC more vulnerable to crime (namely a malicious attack on BSO's network). As such release of this information would be seen to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime by making BSO more vulnerable to hacking at a given time.</p>
	<p>Under data protection legislation, BSO has a legal obligation to process personal data in a manner that ensures its appropriate security using appropriate technical or organisational measures. The release of this information is therefore a reasonable threat to the security and integrity of confidential personal data held on our systems.</p>
	<p>BSO and the wider HSC operate the majority of their services with a high dependency on IT. Many services operate almost exclusively via information held within our network infrastructure. Any disruption of BSO's network infrastructure, even for a short period would be likely to severely restrict our ability to carry out statutory functions across the wider HSC network.</p>

	<p>There is therefore an overwhelming public interest in keeping BSO's systems secure which would be served by non-disclosure.</p> <p>It has therefore been decided that the balance of the public interest lies clearly in favour of withholding the material on this occasion.</p>
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FOI Number	Questions	Response
FOI 1846	1. Incumbent Supplier: For each of the contract(s) please can you provide me with the supplier of the contract.	Exempt from disclosure under Section 31 of the Freedom of Information Act 200 ('Law Enforcement')
	2. Annual Average Spend: For each supplier, please state the annual average (over 3 years) spend for each supplier	Only one supplier - We have an Enterprise Licence Agreement
	3. Contract Duration: For each supplier, please state the contract duration of the contract expires. If available please also include any contract extensions.	3 years
	4. Contract Expiry: For each supplier, please state the date of when the contract expires.	6th January 2023
	5. Contract Review: For each supplier, please state the date of when the contract will be reviewed.	During Year 2022
	6. Contract Description: For each supplier, please state a brief description of the services provided of the overall contract.	Enterprise Licence Agreement, including licencing, support and software upgardes.
	7. Contact Details: For each supplier, please state the person from within the organisation responsible for the contract. Please provide me with their full name, actual job title, contact number and direct email address. At the very least please provide me with their actual job title.	Exempt from disclosure under Section 31 of the Freedom of Information Act 200 ('Law Enforcement')
	8. Number of Agents; please provide me with the total number of contact centre agents;	290
	9. Number of Sites; please can you provide me with the number of sites the contact centre covers.	6
	10. Manufacturer of the contact centre: Who is the manufacturer of the contact centre system that you operate?	Exempt from disclosure under Section 31 of the Freedom of Information Act 200 ('Law Enforcement')
	11. Do you use Microsoft Exchange 2003 as your email server? If not, then which products do you use?	Not to be disclosed as provides potential cyber security risks(Ben's comments)
	12. Number of email users: Approximate number of email users across the organisations.	BSO - 2258 mailboxes
The second part of my request relates to the use inbound network services contracts which could relate to one of the following:		
FOI 1846	1. Incumbent Supplier: For each of the contract(s) please can you provide me with the supplier of the contract.	Exempt from disclosure under Section 31 of the Freedom of Information Act 200 ('Law Enforcement')
	2. Annual Average Spend: For each supplier, please state the annual average (over 3 years) spend for each supplier	RQIA share inbound services with other BSO ans ALBs. It is impossible to split the spend up. We current use just one supplier.
	3. Contract Expiry: For each supplier, please state the date of when the contract expires.	Jan-25
	4. Contract Review: For each supplier, please state the date of when the contract will be reviewed.	During year 2024
	5. Contract Description: For each supplier, please state a brief description of the services provided of the overall contract.	200 SIP channels
	6. Contact Details: For each supplier, please state the person from within the organisation responsible for the contract. Please provide me with their full name, actual job title, contact number and direct email address.	BSO Interim Director of Customer Care & Performance Info.BSO@hscni.net 0300555 0113

4th January 2023

BY EMAIL

Our Ref: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Chase,

we are writing to you in response to your request for a review of the above referenced Freedom of Information request, received by the Business Services Organisation on 28th December 2022.

We can advise that a review panel was convened on 4th January 2023 to evaluate the matter. This panel consisted of Ms Julie Erskine (Chair, BSO) and Mr Mark Bradley (Interim Director of Customer Care and Performance, BSO).

Your request for a review cited that you believe that the use of exemption 31 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 was not appropriate within the response issued to your information request.

The panel reviewed both your request and the response issued and agreed that they are content with the information that was provided to you within the formal response to your information request.

The panel agreed with the rationale, as set out within the Public Interest Test, that was provided to you, and upheld that disclosure of this information would leave BSO more vulnerable to crime, with the risk in question being associated to BSO's cyber security for infrastructure and systems.

If, following this internal review, carried out by the above named 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.



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BT7 2JB

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Yours Sincerely,



Ms Julie Erskine

BSO Chair



Mr Mark Bradley

Interim Director of Customer
Care and Performance