

**Chief Executive**  
2 Franklin Street  
BELFAST  
BT2 8DQ

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

**20<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**BY EMAIL**

**Our Ref: FOI 2073**

Dear [REDACTED]

Your request for information was received on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023 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 in relation to all email correspondence sent and received by BSO Procurement & Logistics Services ( PaLS )in relation a product code:

**Please provide all email correspondence sent received by BSO PaLS between 1 June, 2020 and 1 December, 2020 containing the product code HY9330.**

I should advise you that the Freedom of Information Act (2000) ('FOIA') states that a public body, such as the BSO, may apply charges 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 FOIA and sections 3 and 4 of The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 ('The Fees Regulations') for further information.

BSO PaLS, in reviewing your request have advised that they have estimated that it would take a minimum of 172 hours to determine what information is held in relation to your request. Minus the appropriate limit of £450, the minimum cost to comply with your request would therefore equate to £3,850:



<b>Criteria used for timing calculation</b>	<b>Number of emails in sample</b>
The largest and smallest emails (covering extremes)	2
Least frequent senders (capturing 1 off emailers) This selection includes internal, external and inter HSC, with and without attachments*	4
Mid frequent senders 10-75 emails This selection includes internal and external, with and without attachments*	8
Frequent senders 75+ emails This selection includes internal with and without attachments*	14
Total Sample size which equates to circa 1%	28
* 50% of the total sample had attachments	

Total time for 28 emails	1 hour 43 minutes 32 seconds
Estimated time for 2791 emails	172 hours @ £25.00
Total cost	£4,300.00
Less 18 hours @ £25.00 as per FOI Act	£450.00
<b>Total chargeable</b>	<b>£3,850.00</b>

In line with the above, this letter serves as a refusal to comply with your request on the grounds of cost exemption, as set out with Section 12 of FOIA.

As such, 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 of receipt of this letter. If the BSO does not receive payment of the fee by this date, the request will be considered closed.

However, please note that the BSO would be willing to offer assistance to reduce the request(s) to within the appropriate limit, so far as is reasonable.

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, as the BSO, along with all other public authorities are not obliged to accept internal review requests after this period has lapsed.

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](http://www.ico.org.uk)  
**Phone:** 0303 123 1113  
**Email:** [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto: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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Bailey".

**Karen Bailey**  
Chief Executive