

The Crown Estate Disclosure Log

Case no: 1171

Date received: 26 February 2020

Subject: IT Security

Request response

I am writing in response to your further email of 26 February 2020, in which you requested information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Please find responses to your questions below.

1. *Are the Data Centre's operated by or for the organisation fit for purpose?*  
Yes
2. *For example, is there a Business Continuity Plan, is there Disaster Recovery in place or is it a single site?* Section 31(1)(a) FOIA applies to this part of your request, the exemption which relates to the prevention or detection of crime. This exemption is a qualified exemption which is subject to the public interest test. Please find this detailed in an annex to this response.
3. *Is there any capital investment in data centres planned in the next 36 months? For example, Mechanical & Electrical or refresh of equipment within the DC such as network, storage area network?* No
4. *Is data privacy and or information security compliance a priority for the organisation's board?* Yes
5. *On your Organisation's risk register, are there any Information Technology related risks?*
6. *If time/ cost allows, please list the top three related risks.*
7. *Are the cyber security vulnerabilities within the organisation's existing Information Technology estate increasing?*
8. *Has the organisation had a security breach in the past 12 months?* Again, section 31(1)(a) FOIA applies to this part of your request. Please see the annex for a further explanation.
9. *Did the organisation meet its Information Technology savings target in the last Financial Year?* We met our budget.
10. *What percentage of Information Technology budget is currently allocated to 'on-premises' capability vs 'cloud' capability?* We hold no information in relation to this part of your request because our budget is not recorded in this way.

11. *Does the organisation have the skills and resource levels necessary for moving to the cloud?* We hold no information relevant to this part of your request. FOIA only entitles a requestor to an opinion where it is already recorded.

12. *What percentage of the Information Technology department headcount are software developers?* 0

13. *In relation to contracts with Amazon Web Services, Microsoft for Azure and/or Google for Google Cloud, was the monthly expenditure higher than budgeted?* No

14. *If yes, has the organisation been able to subsequently reduce the cost whilst maintaining service levels for users?* Again, we hold no information relevant to this part of your request.

I hope that this response is helpful. However, if you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your information request, you may appeal our decision which will then be investigated through an internal review. If you are not content with the outcome of that, you have the right to refer any complaint directly to the ICO ([www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)). The ICO will usually expect you to have first exhausted our own complaints procedure before raising any concerns with them.

#### Annex – Section 31(1)(a) Public Interest Test

We are unable to provide you with some of the information you have requested because it is exempt from disclosure under section 31(1)(a) FOIA. Section 31(1) (a) exempts information if its disclosure is likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. This relates to the information you have requested which would reveal our organisational processes in relation to business continuity and IT security.

Section 31 is a qualified exemption and we are required to conduct a public interest test when applying any qualified exemption. This means that after it has been decided that the exemption is engaged, the public interest in releasing the information must be considered. If the public interest in disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in withholding it then the exemption does not apply and the information must be released. In FOIA there is a presumption that information should be released unless there are compelling reasons to withhold it.

In this case, we have concluded that the balance of the public interest is in favour of withholding information covered by the section 31(1)(a) exemption. Considerations in favour of the release of the information included the principle that there is a public interest in transparency and accountability in disclosing information about our procedures as a public body. However, release of this information would make The Crown Estate more vulnerable to crime, such as a malicious attack on its systems, and the disclosure of the information you have requested could therefore facilitate a criminal offence. As a result, in this case the public interest weighs in favour of non-disclosure.