

Date 14/05/2025
Your Ref
Our Ref 10023

Enquiries to Richard Mutch
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Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – CYBER ATTACKS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to cyber attacks.

Question:

- How much money has the health board spent on the prevention of cyber attacks/e-crimes, including wider digital and physical security spending, in 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 to date?
- How much money has been “lost” in terms of data storage/fines in each of those years
- How many “attacks” has the health board been aware of against it, in each of those years
- How much money has been spent specifically on firewalls, locked down desktops/servers, intrusion prevention systems, and end-point-security software, in each of those years.

Answer:

NHS Lothian believe that by releasing this information into the public domain, we are providing information which will increase the risk of the organisations IT infrastructure being unlawfully targeted and penetrated by unnecessarily exposing information related to its current infrastructure . Organisations could use the information provided to then orchestrate focussed cyber attacks on NHS Lothian. Such attempts, if successful, would be likely to prejudice substantially the Board’s ability to exercise a number of its purposes, but particularly those described under FOISA section 30(c) i.e., be likely to prejudice substantially effective conduct of public affairs. For this reason, we believe that the exemption under FOISA, section 30(c) applies to the information requested.

We acknowledge that any exemption applying under section 30 is also subject to the public interest test. We have therefore applied the public interest test and subsequently determined that, in the context of this specific case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs that in disclosure of the information.”

I am sorry I cannot help with your request.

If you are unhappy with our response to your request, you do have the right to request us to review it. Your request should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this letter, and we will reply within 20 working days of receipt. If our decision is unchanged following a review and you remain dissatisfied with this, you then have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner within 6 months of receipt of our review response. You can do this by using the Scottish Information Commissioner's Office online appeals service at www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal. If you remain dissatisfied with the Commissioner's response you then have the option to appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law.

If you require a review of our decision to be carried out, please write to the FOI Reviewer at the email address at the head of this letter. The review will be undertaken by a Reviewer who was not involved in the original decision-making process.

FOI responses (subject to redaction of personal information) may appear on NHS Lothian's Freedom of Information website at: <https://org.nhsllothian.scot/FOI/Pages/default.aspx>

Yours sincerely

ALISON MACDONALD
Executive Director, Nursing
Cc: Chief Executive