



**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Information Compliance Team
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Sent by email to:

[REDACTED]

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Date: 16 May 2022

Our Reference: FOI 013 22-23

Enquiries to: Information Compliance Officer

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Dear [REDACTED]

We are writing in respect of your application for the release of information held by the Service, which we received on 25 April 2022. We can confirm that we have now completed our search for the information requested.

You asked:

For details of the appliances (type and home station) that attended the incident at Somerton Avenue, Harefield, Southampton on 24 April.

Our answer:

We can confirm we hold the information requested. The following appliances attended the incident at Somerton Avenue on 24 April:

Quantity	Appliance Type
2	Pumping – Pump / Pump ladder
3	Pumping – Water tender ladder
1	Command – Control unit
2	Pumping – Water tender
1	Command – Command support

We can confirm we also hold details of the home station of each appliance, however we are refusing to provide this information on the grounds that it would be likely to endanger both

the health and safety of individuals, as per sections 38(1) (a) and (b) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

While we are not questioning the motives of the applicant, a disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act is deemed to be to the world at large. This information can be used by criminals to target stations based on the appliances and the equipment they hold. This would lead to an increased risk to the safety of operational staff, staff from other agencies and other people who operate at, or are visiting, the station. This would also have consequences for the public as it would impinge on our ability to respond to incidents if our vehicles are stolen or otherwise damaged by any criminal activity.

Public Interest Test

For the Health and Safety exemption to apply, the public interest in maintaining these exemptions must outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information.

Public Interest in Disclosure

There are several reasons in favour of disclosure to the public at large as follows:

- it promotes transparency, showing that we have appropriate vehicles, equipment and capabilities to tackle incidents.
- it satisfies the general interest in our vehicles, which has been expressed by several members of the public.
- it encourages accountability by revealing what resources the Service has at each station.

Public Interest Against Disclosure

There are also significant reasons why providing the information is not in the public interest. As mentioned above, revealing the home stations of our vehicles would result in certain stations becoming targets of criminal activity, and as a consequence:

- cause loss or damage to station appliances and equipment, risking the health and safety of the public as stations are left with fewer or no resources to respond to incidents and carry out lifesaving work.
- risk the safety of our staff and any visitors in stations, as they could be harmed in the process of criminals attempting to steal our vehicles.
- lead to increased public costs as all vehicles that are stolen or damaged would have to be replaced, leading to the inefficient use of taxpayer funds.

Conclusion

Public safety and the ability to deliver an effective response to emergencies are of paramount importance to HIWFRS. Disclosing this information would be likely to compromise our ability to respond to criminal activities and would endanger the health and safety of our staff. Therefore, we believe that the balance of public interest favours not disclosing this information.

Any future correspondence with Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service in relation to this matter should be sent to the Information Compliance Officer at the above address.

If for whatever reason you are unhappy with our response you may request an internal review by contacting DP@hantsfire.gov.uk or by writing to the Information Compliance Team at the above address.

Should you remain dissatisfied you can appeal against the internal review decision by contacting the Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Information Compliance Team
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service