



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

Information Compliance Team
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Sent by email to:

[REDACTED]

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Date: 06 November 2024

Our Reference: FOI 107 24-25

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 4 November 2024. We can confirm that we have now completed our search for the information requested.

You asked:

I was wondering if I could get a list of all the vehicles in the HIOWFRS fleet, their locations, and callsigns?

Our answer:

We can confirm we hold the information, please find it attached. Please also find attached an abbreviation guide to assist you with understanding the vehicle role information.

National Security

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (HIWFRS) holds the callsigns and assigned station for each of our vehicles. However, this information is exempt under Section 24(1) National Security of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Section 24(1) provides that information is exempt from Section 1(1)(b) if it is required for the purposes of safeguarding national security. The national security exemption is based on the effect the disclosure would have, not on the content or source of the information.

As you may be aware, disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act is a release to the public at large. While we are not questioning the motives of the applicant, releasing our vehicles' callsigns and base station locations would enable the tracking and targeting of our vehicles to prevent us from responding in the event of criminal/terrorist activity. Additionally, particularly relating to the callsigns, this would assist malicious actors in creating false 'Trojan' emergency vehicles which could then be used for the purposes of terrorism. This would increase the effectiveness, severity, and likelihood of terrorist attacks, endangering the public. This would be to the detriment of providing an efficient emergency service and a failure in our duty of care to all members of the public.

Health and Safety

Further, we are refusing to provide the location of our vehicles on the grounds that it would be likely to endanger 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. Criminals can use this information to target valuable equipment at stations for theft. 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.

Public Interest Test

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

Public Interest for Disclosure

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

- it promotes transparency, showing that we have appropriate vehicles/ capabilities to tackle incidents.
- there is a general interest in our vehicles which has been expressed by several members of the public.

Public Interest Against Disclosure

There are also significant reasons why providing the information is not in the public interest as it may:

- it would be likely to endanger the safety of our staff in our vehicles and both staff and visitors to our stations were such an attack to take place.
- be used to facilitate and increase the effects of terrorist activities in our area and attacks on our vehicles and stations.

- lead to an increased risk of theft of equipment from our vehicles. This would negatively affect our ability to conduct our life-saving work and lead to increased public costs in replacing the equipment. This would not be an efficient 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/terrorist activities and would endanger the health and safety of those at our stations as well as members of the public. Therefore, we believe that the balance of public interest favours not disclosing this information.

The above concludes our investigation into this matter.

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 Data Protection Officer at the above address.

Should you remain dissatisfied you can appeal against the internal review decision by contacting the Information Commissioners Office. This can be done online at www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints or by post to The Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

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