



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

**Information Compliance Team**  
Headquarters  
Leigh Road  
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Sent by email to:

[REDACTED]

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**t.** 02380 644000  
**e.** DP@hantsfire.gov.uk  
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Date: 27 January 2025

Our Reference: FOI 152 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 13 January 2025. We can confirm that we have now completed our search for the information requested.

#### ***You asked:***

*Water supplies*

*I am working on a fire strategy for*

*Fareham Hampshire PO16*

*I would be very grateful if you could forward a plan of the public fire hydrants in the area.*

#### **Our answer:**

We can confirm we hold the information requested. However, we are refusing to provide it as per Sections 38 and 24 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

#### **Health and Safety**

We are refusing to provide the information on the grounds that releasing it would be likely to endanger the health and safety of members of the public (Section 38(1)(b) Freedom of Information Act 2000). While we are not questioning the motives of the applicant, a release of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 is deemed to be to the world at large. Consequently, if this information was released it would be available to arsonists and other

criminals and would be used to plan and carry out arsons in areas that were perceived to be more susceptible to damage. It would also enable them to plan and take secondary activities to damage/sabotage hydrants to prevent us using water supplies to tackle fires. As arson endangers people's lives and inflicts damage to property, releasing the information requested would endanger public health and safety.

## **National Security**

Additionally, while this request is only for hydrants in a certain area, if we were to release the details of hydrants in one area then this would have a precedential effect and mean we would have to release the details of all fire hydrants on request. Doing so would enable terrorists to carry out attacks on our water supply structure. Therefore, release of this information could endanger national security. Consequently, we are refusing to provide the information relating to the location of hydrants (Section 24(1) Freedom of Information Act 2000).

## **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 in Disclosure**

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

- promotes transparency in the way Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service operates,
- provides evidence that we hold necessary information about hydrant locations to enable us to effectively locate water sources as part of operational activities,
- brings to light information affecting public safety.

## **Public Interest Against Disclosure**

There are also significant reasons why providing the information to the public is not in the public interest. Providing the information may:

- lead to an increased risk to the public of arson and endangerment of lives,
- lead to an increase in the severity of arsons that are committed if they are committed in areas where it is perceived we would be less able to respond,
- enable terrorists to plan attacks against our water infrastructure.

## **Conclusion**

Having considered the public interest factors for and against disclosure of the information for each exemption, as set out above, we have determined that the interest in not disclosing the information outweighs the interest of disclosure. We are aware in this time of heightened security, and we must be more careful in what information we provide to ensure that we can

protect the public. Therefore, we are refusing to provide the information requested. We can reassure you that there is a fire hydrant in the proximity mentioned above.

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](http://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