

## Freedom of Information request 232-17

---

### Request

Under Freedom of Information legislation, I'd like to know how much you have spent on cyber security in each of the last five years (2012/13-2016/17)?

I'd also like to know which operating systems your computer systems run (Windows XP, Windows 95, Mac OSX etc.)?

Do you have any form of email security (Minecast or similar applications)? If so, what?

Do you have a policy regarding the use of USB sticks? If so, what?

### Response

1. NHS Borders spends approximately £250,000 per financial year on cyber security.
- 2 & 3 We are withholding this information under Section 24 (1) (National Security) of the Freedom of Information Act and Section 31(1) (a) of the Act (law enforcement) which covers all aspects of the prevention and detection of crime. Both section 24 and 31 are qualified exemptions, which means they are subject to a public interest test. Under Section 24 (1) we consider that disclosure would not be in the interest of the Boards' security. Disclosing details about operating systems and e-mail security systems could allow individuals to assess the strength of our defences. The public interest arguments against disclosure under Section 31 (1) (a) are similar. Any attempt to hack into an IT system is a criminal offence. Disclosing this information could aid, and indeed encourage, a criminal who was intent on launching an attack on the Department's ICT systems and could expose the Board to potential threats such as targeted e-crime. We acknowledge the public interest in openness and transparency. We also appreciate that disclosure of this information would provide information on the scale of threat posed by cyber attacks. However, for the reasons outlined we have concluded that the balance of public interest favours withholding this information.
4. Board policy regarding USB sticks is to use Board-provided, hardware encrypted devices only and only in work-related computers, not personally owned devices.

If you are not satisfied with the way your request has been handled or the decision given, you may ask NHS Borders to review its actions and the decision. If you would like to request a review please apply in writing to, Freedom of Information Review, NHS Borders, Room 2EC3, Education Centre, Borders General Hospital, Melrose, TD6 9BS or [foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk).

The request for a review should include your name and address for correspondence, the request for information to which the request relates and the issue which you wish to be reviewed. Please state the reference number **232-17** on this request. Your request should be made within 40 working days from receipt of this letter.

If following this review, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner and request an investigation of your complaint. Your request to the Scottish Information Commissioner should be in writing (or other permanent form), stating your name and an address for correspondence. You should provide the details of the request and your reasons for dissatisfaction with both the original response by NHS Borders and your reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome of the internal review. Your application for an investigation by the Scottish Information Commissioner must be made within six months of your receipt of the response with which you are dissatisfied. The address for the Office of the

Scottish Information Commissioner is, Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle,  
Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife.