

**Rural Affairs, Forest Service and  
Estate Transformation**  
Estate Transformation Division



Our reference: **DAERA/23-1**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Office Estate and Resourcing Branch  
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Dundonald House  
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BT4 3SB

Tel: (028) [REDACTED]

Email: [BMO.Accommodation@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:BMO.Accommodation@daera-ni.gov.uk)

30 January 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

### **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

With regard to your request for information received by the Department on 3 January 2023 which sought the following information:

*This is an information request relating to occupancy rates of government offices in Northern Ireland.*

*Please include the information for the following months: September, October, November, December (all 2022).*

- *The occupancy rates for each of this month, i.e. what percentage of desks were in use and what percentage of staff were in on each day.*

*If it is not possible to provide the information requested due to the information exceeding the cost of compliance limits identified in Section 12, please provide advice and assistance, under the Section 16 obligations of the Act, as to how I can refine my request.*

I can advise that a search was completed and can confirm that the Department holds some of the information you have requested. The Department does not routinely collect data for the purpose of monitoring occupancy or attendance rates across our office estate locations.

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However, in our three main Headquarters buildings (Jubilee House, Dundonald House and the Klondyke Building) and in two of our other regional office locations information has been collected and retained for managing fire evacuations through a roll call system. This information has been used to provide an estimation of the level of workstation occupancy at these locations. In calculating these percentages, we have taken account of workstations equipped to reflect New Ways of Working (NWoW) which the Department has implemented and also total workstations available at these locations.

However, we are unable to provide the percentage of staff which were in their headquarter offices on a daily basis as this information is not held by the Department.

It should be noted that due to the nature of the Department's business while many Departmental staff are headquartered at a particular office location, for administrative purposes, they frequently carry out their duties off site or at alternative location. This includes working from home under the NICS Hybrid Working Policy.

		September	October	November	December
DAERA Office estate locations (where data is available)	Average percentage usage of NWoW workstations in use	21.9%	30.2%	35.7%	25%
DAERA Office estate locations (where data is available)	Average percentage of all workstations available	12.8%	15.9%	19.6%	14.5%

Please note data for Dundonald House was not available for October and November due to ongoing maintenance issues during part of this period. The information above is calculated based on the dates that the building was available for use.

If you require any clarification, believe that any part of your request has been overlooked, misunderstood or misinterpreted, please contact me in the first instance to see if it is a matter that can be resolved.

If you are unhappy with the manner in which your request for information has been handled or the decision to release/withhold information, you have the right to request a formal review by the Department. If you wish to do so, please contact The Review Section either by e-mailing [daera.informationmanager@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:daera.informationmanager@daera-ni.gov.uk) or by post at The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Data Protection & Information Management Branch, Floor 2, Jubilee House, 111 Ballykelly Road, Ballykelly, Limavady BT49 9HP, within two months from the date of this letter.

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If after such an internal review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE, SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review of the Department's decision.

Yours sincerely,

**Office Estate and Resourcing Branch**

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