

Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham B5 4UA
21 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3HF

By email

11 December 2017

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 - Request For Information

Reference: FOI 201711102

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information concerning popular websites.

Ofwat confirms it does hold some of the information and the information requested is in the spreadsheet attached.

Ofwat considers that some of the information is exempt from disclosure. The exemption applied is Section 31(1) Law Enforcement.

The relevant subsection applied to this request is s31 (1) (a) which states that:

“Information which is not exempt information by virtue of section 30 is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice-

(a) the prevention or detection of crime”

The exemption in Section 31(3) is qualified and is subject to the balance of the public interest. This means that a public interest test must be carried out to determine whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, as set out below.

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Public Interest Test

Ofwat acknowledges that there is a public interest in how a public authority functions and that public authorities are open and transparent, particularly in regards to the disclosure of information regarding the type of websites visited by public authorities. We recognise that disclosure may provide assurance that Ofwat is working to ensure that its IT systems are used appropriately and not rendered unnecessarily vulnerable to attack.

In some instances Ofwat has redacted site names and addresses as these may be useful to anyone wishing to harm Ofwat's IT systems and if disclosed may indicate which sites are most necessary to Ofwat and enable them to deduce where an IT attack would cause the most disruption. Attacks on Ofwat's IT systems could themselves constitute a crime or create a vulnerability to criminal activity. Therefore, on balance we have decided that it is not in the public interest to provide the confirmation sought. We therefore deem this exemption engaged.

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<https://ico.org.uk/>

Freedom of Information/EIR Provide the Information

Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham B5 4UA
21 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3HF

or

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow

Yours sincerely,

Christine Manise

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