

Official

Tyne and Wear Fire
and Rescue Service



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

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FOI REFERENCE: FOI 23/24 - 108

DATE RECEIVED: 28/06/23

TITLE / CATEGORY: Engineering and Fleet – Fleet List

REQUEST

The following info is what im looking for;

Reg, Make and model

Station based at

Role in the fleet

RESPONSE

Please find attached Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue (TWFRS) fleet list.

We have applied an exemption to the request for vehicles registration, locations and the call signs of our fire stations under Section 24(1) National Security.

The National Security exemption is based on the effect the release of the information would have and not on the information itself. As you may be aware, disclosure under the FOIA is a release of information not only to you, but to the public at large.

Vehicle registration numbers can be used to identify vehicles at emergency incidents and in the wrong hands these could be misused to impersonate an Officer and impede or interfere with our emergency response or encourage criminal activity and put public safety at risk.

To release the location of our emergency response vehicles will provide those intent on committing crime to 'map' where certain vehicles are located and impede or interfere with our emergency response. This information would assist criminal and terrorist activities in the preparation of a 'cloned' vehicle, compromising both public safety and the safety of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue buildings and staff.

Fire and Rescue Services are part of the Critical National Infrastructure and therefore we have a duty to protect our assets and provide appropriate security to ensure resilience and be able to deploy our resources accordingly.

When applying this exemption, we must consider whether the public interest favours disclosing or withholding the information.

Any printed documents are considered uncontrolled.

www.twfire.gov.uk

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RESPONSE CONT.

The Information Commissioner (ICO) guidance states that “national security” can be interpreted widely and need not be a direct or immediate threat, therefore we believe that it can be considered in this case. Further information is available on the ICO website here: <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisatio...>

When applying this exemption, we must consider whether the public interest favours disclosing or withholding the information.

There is strong public interest in transparency, allowing the public to know how many vehicles we have and providing reassurance regarding the level of capability in Tyne and Wear, preventing potential danger to the public. By providing a current fleet list of the numbers, make and model of vehicles, we believe we have met this public interest.

The strongest reason favouring non-disclosure is the need to ensure that our national security is not placed at risk by enabling those with criminal intent, the opportunity to gain an operational advantage over the Fire and Rescue Service. Disclosing details of the location and number plates of vehicles would undoubtedly compromise both local and national security and undermine law enforcement and public safety processes.

Whilst we are not questioning your motives in requesting this information, you will appreciate that we must ensure that information relating to the strategic movement of our emergency response vehicles is appropriately protected. We have therefore concluded that on balance, there is a much stronger public interest in withholding this information.

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