

20 November 2023

IC-269861-M9G9

Request

You asked us:

"Please provide information on the number of reported data breaches (under GDPR) classed as ransomware attacks by sector (public authority, university, retail etc), broken down by annual quarters, and information on whether ransoms were reported as paid for each breach.

I would like information covering 2016 to date."

We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the FOIA).

Our response

We have searched our systems based on the information you have provided and can confirm that we hold some information within the scope of your request.

The ICO regularly disposes of information in line with our [Retention and Disposal Policy](#). Information about data breaches reported to us is retained for either 2 or 6 years, depending on whether or not the ICO took action in response to the report. This means that we do not hold information regarding ransomware attacks dating back to 2016. However, we have provided all of the information we do hold.

The ICO publishes a tool to explore [Data security incident trends](#), which breaks down all of the personal data breaches reported to us. This tool is regularly updated, and was last updated 1 November 2023. It includes information about number of ransomware attacks.

To find information about ransomware attacks, scroll to the Data Security Incident Trend dashboard and click 'click to begin.' Select 'Time Series' on the left-hand menu. From here, you can select 'Ransomware' under 'Incident Type'. You can then add more modifiers such as business sector and you can change

the time period shown on the dashboard. The trend dashboard contains information dating back to 2019.

We also publish [data sets](#) of the personal data breaches reported to us. These are updated quarterly.

Because this material is already reasonably accessible to you, it is technically withheld under section 21 of the FOIA. This exempts information which is reasonably accessible to the applicant through means other than a request under the FOIA.

It is an absolute exemption, which means it is not necessary for us to consider any public interest test.

The ICO does not gather information on whether or not ransoms are paid on ransomware attacks. This means that for the purposes of FOIA, our response is that no information held within the scope of this part of your request.

This concludes our response to your request.

Next steps

You can ask us to review our response. Please let us know in writing if you want us to carry out a review. Please do so within 40 working days.

You can read a copy of our full review procedure [here](#).

If we perform a review but you are still dissatisfied, you can complain to the ICO as regulator of the FOIA. This complaint will be handled just like a complaint made to the ICO about any other public authority.

You can [raise a complaint through our website](#).

Your information

Our [Privacy notice](#) explains what we do with the personal data you provide to us, and set out your rights. Our retention schedule can be found [here](#).

Yours sincerely



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data see our [privacy notice](#)**