

Date: 6 December 2023

IC-270451-M7C9

Request

You asked us:

"have the ICO seen less tracing agencies or investigators renewing their registrations since 2019? (COVID-19) Has there been a drop offs of new registrations since 2019?"

In a subsequent email exchange, I advised that your question may be answered by the provision of statistical information generated from new registrations and renewals and whether this is what you wanted to access. You responded to confirm:

"Yes it would interesting to know if possible how many renewals were issued for Data Controllers within the tracing and private investigation sector only from 2018 - 2023 or a near as is feasible."

I have proceeded on this basis. We received your request on 15 November 2023. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the FOIA).

Our response

I have enquired with our Registration & Renewals team to determine what information we hold in scope of your request. They have confirmed that we do not hold information as far back as you have requested, owing to our retention periods. With this in mind, I have confirmed what we hold below and provided it to the extent that I am able to.

Renewals per year – Private Investigators

I can confirm we hold the number of renewals for this financial year. We do not hold the number of renewals for previous financial years.

This year, there are 1434 due to renew, of which 777 have renewed and 657 are yet to renew.

Although we cannot see how many renewals there were for historic financial years, we do hold how many new registrations, cancellations and expirations there were for each financial year back to the 2020/21 financial year.

This information is not strictly in scope of your request. However, I have included this information because it is readily available to me, it may be of interest to you, and there is no reason for me not to voluntarily disclose it.

New registrations per year – Private Investigators

I can therefore confirm that we do hold information in scope of your request for the financial years 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24 (YTD). We do not hold information prior to this time. The information is as follows:

Financial Year	Number of new registrations – private investigators
2023/24 (YTD)	83
2022/23	166
2021/22	214
2020/21	191

As explained, we do not have information prior to this time.

Cancelled registrations per year – Private Investigators

I can confirm we hold the number of cancelled registrations per year for the financial years 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24 (YTD). We do not hold information prior to this time.

Financial Year	Cancelled registrations – private investigators
2023/24 (YTD)	82
2022/23	134
2021/22	87
2020/21	11

As explained, we do not have information prior to this time.

Please be aware that cancellations can happen for a number of reasons, including a change of status. Where there is a change of legal status, the organisation will need to submit a new registration.

Expired registrations per year – Private Investigators

I can confirm we hold the number of cancelled registrations per year for the financial years 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24 (YTD). We do not hold information prior to this time.

Financial Year	Expired registrations – private investigators
2023/24 (YTD)	78
2022/23	99
2021/22	100
2020/21	134

As explained, we do not have information prior to this time.

Please be aware that we will send a further reminder and, potentially, a notice of intent to organisations where their registration has expired. However, if we receive a payment, then they will be added back on to the public register.

This concludes our response. I hope you find the information helpful.

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](#) on our website.

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 sets out [your rights](#). Our [Retention and Disposal Policy](#) details how long we keep information.

Yours sincerely



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