

23 October 2024

Case Reference IC-333869-F5S4

Request

You asked us:

"Please provide the first part (out bound code) of the home address postcode of the Information Commissioner John Edwards"

We received your request on 25 September 2024.

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

Our response

We can confirm we hold the information you have requested, however we are withholding it under section 38(1)(b) of the FOIA.

Section 38 – Health and safety

Section 38 of the FOIA states:

"(1) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to—

(a) endanger the physical or mental health of any individual, or

(b) endanger the safety of any individual."

We have sufficient concerns that disclosure would actively enable any individual to use this information to target the Information Commissioner ("the Commissioner"). We therefore believe that disclosure of the requested information would endanger the safety of the Commissioner.

The information significantly narrows down the scope of possible or likely locations or routes of the Commissioner, and the Commissioner is a senior public office holder who is likely to be more recognisable than others who are also in those locations or on those routes at any given time.

We also think it's reasonable to assume there may be individuals who are interested in knowing this information, or any similar details about the Commissioner, so that they can use it to target them.

Taking this into account, we consider there's a legitimate basis for believing that the disclosure of the information would endanger the safety of the Commissioner.

Public interest test

Section 38 is not an absolute exemption, which means we have to carry out a public interest test to weigh up the factors in favour of disclosure and those against.

In this case the public interest factors in disclosing the information are:

- the public interest in knowing where senior public figures are permanently based, to the extent that it has a meaningful relation to their role in public affairs, or, to the extent that it relates to any other matter of public interest that involves that public figure

The factors in withholding the information are:

- the public interest in ensuring the personal safety of the Commissioner to allow them to carry out their duties without having personal security and welfare concerns that have unnecessarily resulted from a public disclosure;
- the public interest in the ICO making decisions which take due consideration of security risks and consequences, particularly where this

means saving costs in time and resources to manage risks that have resulted exclusively from a public disclosure;

- the public interest in maintaining assurance that the role of Commissioner doesn't come at the cost of personal safety, and that the ICO is trusted to protect certain information about its personnel, to the extent that it protects those individuals from harm

Having considered these factors, we are satisfied that it is appropriate to withhold the information.

There are negligible public interest factors in favour of having access to this information.

We accept there may be an interest in knowing a basic layer of information about the status and arrangements of the Commissioner as a UK-based regulator. However, there is no context or other factor we're aware of which would warrant the publication of the Commissioner's postcode information.

We consider there is a strong enough basis in favour of withholding the information which comfortably overrides any public interest factor in favour of disclosure.

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



Information Access Team
Strategic Planning and Transformation
Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water
Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF
ico.org.uk twitter.com/iconews
Please consider the environment before printing this email
**For information about what we do with personal
data see our [privacy notice](#)**