

22nd December 2011

Royal Mail Group

Matthew Davis

Information Rights Team
Freedom of Information
Royal Mail Sheffield
4th Floor, Pond Street
SHEFFIELD
S98 6HR

By email: newsdesk@datanews.co.uk

foi@royalmail.com
www.royalmail.com

Dear Mr. Davis,

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request (Our Reference: DTUP-8NWESG)

I am writing in response to your recent request for information received 24th November 2011. Your request has been considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. You requested the following information:

For each of the last five financial years please state how many cases were raised by Royal Mail Security for full criminal investigation. If you hold the data could you please provide me with any kind of breakdown that you have of the types of these alleged offences for each year.

I confirm that we hold the number of investigations raised by our security department in the last five financial years. However, this information is considered to be exempt from disclosure under section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Commercial interests. We believe the requested information, if disclosed, would be likely to be misconstrued and taken out of context resulting in unfair damage to the reputation of our employees and public perception of Royal Mail.

The total number of investigations would include cases where no postal offence or wrongdoing was found to have been committed. The information would therefore provide a false picture of the integrity of mail services and our people. Disclosure of the information would therefore place Royal Mail at a commercial disadvantage to its rivals who are not required to publish equivalent information themselves. Consequently, disclosure of this information would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of Royal Mail.

Section 43(2) of the Act is subject to the 'public interest test' under the terms of the FOI Act. We have therefore considered whether the public interest in withholding the requested information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. We recognise that there is public interest generally in transparency and accountability. However, we do not believe that this information would significantly add to information which is already available to the public.

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Royal Mail's published transparency report provides information on mail security and the number of former employees who were prosecuted in the last year. Our transparency report can be found online at www.royalmailgroup.com.

Further, as a publicly owned company there is direct public interest in the commercial performance of Royal Mail Group. The interests of the public would not be served by placing Royal Mail at a commercial disadvantage. The commercial success of Royal Mail is vital to support the provision of a universal postal service to the public. Royal Mail Group therefore believes that the overall balance of public interest is in favour of withholding this information.

I am sorry that your request cannot be met on this occasion. If for any reason you are not satisfied with this response, you do have the right to request a review. If you wish to do so please set out in writing your grounds of appeal and send to the Head of Information Compliance, Royal Mail Group, Company Secretary's Office, 100 Victoria Embankment, LONDON, EC4Y 0HQ. An internal panel will then review the request, and you will be advised of the outcome.

If you decide to appeal and are still not satisfied with our response you also have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
WILMSLOW
SK9 5AF
www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Daniel Tulp
Information Rights Officer
Freedom of Information