

Paul lynch
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data.access@justice.gov.uk

30 March 2021

Dear Mr Lynch

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request – Add reference number

Thank you for your request dated 2 March 2021 in which you asked for the following information from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ):

Please may you provide me with a response to parts A and B of the following request by filling in this spreadsheet template:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1W5QZNC2Z1NRFaUWONRFtDxjAmLCBbtJR-GIVq5e5SI/edit?usp=sharing>

A) Throughout 2020 and early 2021, a video calling facility called Purple Visits was rolled out across the prison network in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

I would like to know when Purple Visit calls went live at each prison in England and Wales.

The linked spreadsheet lists every prison in England and Wales in Column A and a blank column B next to each to it within which to enter the date Purple Visits went live.

For the purpose of clarity, by going ‘live’ I mean the date in which the first Purple Visits calls took place at that particular prison.

B) I would like to know how many in-cell mobile phones are currently available at each prison in the UK.

Your request has been handled under the FOIA.

I can confirm the MoJ holds the information you have requested. However, to provide as the request currently stands would exceed the cost limit set out in the FOIA.

Section 12(1) of the FOIA means a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

There is no central record of when Purple Visits were initiated at individual prisons as there is no requirement to keep one. In order to answer your request, we would have to contact all prisons to ask them if they have a record of when the first calls were placed and ask them to send to us for collation. We estimate that to do this would exceed the cost limit set by the FOIA.

Although we cannot answer your request at this time, we may be able to answer a refined request within the cost limit. You may wish to consider, for example, a smaller number of prisons or prison within a specific region or area. Please be aware that we cannot guarantee at this stage that a refined request will fall within the FOIA cost limit, or that other exemptions will not apply.

Please note that HMPPS is responsible for prisons in England and Wales. For information from the Scottish Prison Service and the Northern Ireland Prison Service please see the email addresses below.

Scottish Prison Service:
gaolinfo@sps.pnn.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Prison Service:
foi@justice-ni.gov.uk

For guidance on how to structure successful requests please refer to the ICO website on the following link: <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/official-information/>

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/3244/pdfs/ukxi_20043244_en.pdf

Appeal Rights

If you are not satisfied with this response you have the right to request an internal review by responding in writing to one of the addresses below within two months of the date of this response.

data.access@justice.gov.uk

Disclosure Team, Ministry of Justice

You do have the right to ask the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to investigate any aspect of your complaint. However, please note that the ICO is likely to expect internal complaints procedures to have been exhausted before beginning their investigation.

Yours sincerely

Allen Casey
Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service.
Briefing and Correspondence Team