



Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service

NIFRS | Headquarters
1 Seymour Street | Lisburn | BT27 4SX

T 028 9266 4221
E enquiries@nifrs.org

F & T @NIFRSOFFICIAL
W www.nifrs.org

Andy Hearn
Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer

Our Ref: IU/ FOI 13-23-24

9 June 2023

RE: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST OF 28 APRIL 2023

Dear,

Please be advised when you write to us asking for information the Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives you two rights of access. You have the right to know whether we hold recorded information falling in scope of your request, and you have the right to receive this recorded information subject to cost limit or exemption. NIFRS has considered your request in line with these obligations, and your response is outlined below.

1. How many wildfires did your fire brigade deal with from 2017 to 2022?
Please break down your response by year, size of fire, date, cause and if possible, location.

The information requested is presented in the 3 tables below:

Table 1

Wildfire Incidents by Month, Cause and Financial year						
Year	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Total
Accidental Wildfires						
Apr	14	13	23	70	41	161
May	97	39	18	78	20	252
Jun	19	103	5	58	32	217
Jul	19	249	17	7	104	396
Aug	4	13	7	4	11	39
Sep	5	13	8	10	8	44
Oct	4	14	3	2	4	27
Nov	2	4	2	2	2	12
Dec	0	0	1	1	2	4
Jan	2	3	1	1	1	8
Feb	1	6	0	3	2	12
Mar	2	7	9	6	10	34
Sub Total	169	464	94	242	237	1,206
Deliberate Wildfires						
Apr	349	188	294	460	447	1,738
May	889	331	254	456	189	2,119
Jun	152	550	91	349	197	1,339
Jul	166	1,146	127	62	480	1,981
Aug	71	67	72	31	84	325
Sep	41	116	77	71	60	365
Oct	83	125	47	53	18	326
Nov	34	23	23	10	33	123
Dec	4	14	2	2	6	28
Jan	6	21	21	6	8	62
Feb	26	46	12	64	11	159
Mar	102	60	87	142	195	586
Grand Total	2,092	3,151	1,201	1,948	1,965	10,357

Table 2**Wildfire Incidents by Local Government District, Cause and Financial Year**

Year	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Total
Accidental Wildfires						
Antrim and Newtownabbey	8	22	4	12	14	60
Ards and North Down	17	47	13	18	26	121
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	34	58	10	26	27	155
Belfast	5	19	7	21	17	69
Causeway Coast and Glens	15	38	12	20	26	111
Derry and Strabane	13	22	9	6	16	66
Fermanagh and Omagh	19	24	8	35	28	114
Lisburn and Castlereagh	6	26	5	11	15	63
Mid and East Antrim	9	36	5	16	12	78
Mid Ulster	11	33	10	24	20	98
Newry Mourne and Down	30	135	11	52	35	263
Unknown	2	4		1	1	8
Sub Total	169	464	94	242	237	1,206
Deliberate Wildfires						
Antrim and Newtownabbey	70	150	65	130	117	532
Ards and North Down	178	153	98	85	146	660
Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon	210	287	117	167	191	972
Belfast	204	360	123	216	282	1,185
Causeway Coast and Glens	116	146	82	96	85	525
Derry and Strabane	267	304	163	189	144	1,067
Fermanagh and Omagh	149	124	70	134	89	566
Lisburn and Castlereagh	31	52	17	40	57	197
Mid and East Antrim	65	188	81	122	141	597
Mid Ulster	82	156	39	121	96	494
Newry Mourne and Down	524	737	236	385	363	2,245
Unknown	27	30	16	21	17	111
Sub Total	1,923	2,687	1,107	1,706	1,728	9,151
Grand Total	2,092	3,151	1,201	1,948	1,965	10,357

Table 3**Wildfire Incidents by Area Damaged (in Sq. Metres), Cause and Financial Year**

Year	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Total
Accidental Wildfires						
None	0	0	0	0	0	0
Up to 5	1	2	0	1	0	4
6-10	1	0	0	0	0	1
11-20	1	0	0	0	0	1
21-50	0	0	0	1	2	3
51-100	1	1	0	1	0	3
101-200	1	3	0	0	0	4
201-500	0	1	0	0	2	3
501-1,000	0	1	0	0	1	2
1,001-2,000	0	0	0	2	0	2
2,001-5,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
5,001-10,000	1	1	0	0	1	3
Over 10,000	0	2	0	1	1	4
Unknown	163	453	94	236	230	1,176
Sub Total	169	464	94	242	237	1,206
Deliberate Wildfires						
None	1	1	0	0	2	4
Up to 5	1	3	4	4	11	23
6-10	1	2	1	4	4	12
11-20	4	1	0	3	3	11
21-50	0	1	0	4	2	7
51-100	1	4	0	1	0	6
101-200	2	1	1	1	3	8
201-500	0	4	1	7	3	15
501-1,000	3	3	2	4	2	14
1,001-2,000	1	0	3	4	0	8
2,001-5,000	2	2	0	2	1	7
5,001-10,000	3	3	0	4	1	11
Over 10,000	4	6	4	16	4	34
Unknown	1,900	2,656	1,091	1,652	1,692	8,991
Sub Total	1,923	2,687	1,107	1,706	1,728	9,151
Grand Total	2,092	3,151	1,201	1,948	1,965	10,357

Additional incidents may have occurred however limited detail within the recorded data would render these incidents unable to be extracted.

2. Please let me know any new equipment your service has purchased or plans to purchase in the last 5 years to combat wildfires.

Over the past 5 years NIFRS has developed a Wildland Kit to assist with combating wildfires.

The wildland kit consists of:

1 X WILDLAND BAG

2 X WILDLAND BRANCHES

2 X INSTANTANEOUS-STORTZ COUPLINGS

1 X 3 WAY CONTROLLED DIVIDING BREECH

2 X 19mm OR 22mm STORTZ- QUICK RELEASE SLEEVE LOCK ADAPTORS

1 X 45° LEVER OPERATED ON/OFF BALL VALVE STORTZ-STORTZ ADAPTOR

4 X INSTANTANEOUS COUPLING SEALS

4 X STORTZ COUPLING SEALS

2 X KNAPSACK SPRAYERS

4 X LENGTHS OF 20 METRE X 25mm WILDLAND HOSE STORED ON APPLIANCE

The wildland kit has been placed on 68 NIFRS first responding fire appliances, with a plan in place to also add the wildland kits to the remaining 52 fire appliances before the end of 2023

3. Please let me know the annual cost of dealing with wildfires to your brigade 2017 to 2022. Please break the figure down by each year.

The indicative cost to NIFRS of mobilisations to wildfires is set out in the table below:

	Cost – Year £'000
2017/18	593
2018/19	935
2019/20	262
2020/21	921
2021/22	659

Due to the nature of the information held in relation to the incidents, it has been necessary to apply assumptions in the calculation of the cost and therefore the cost is indicative.

The cost is calculated based on the costs that are directly attributable to attendance at an incident (direct staff time and fuel consumption), and does not therefore include overheads and other indirect costs such as administration; wear and tear of equipment; and command and control.

It should also be noted that NIFRS has recently reviewed its costing model. The costing for this request is based on that model. For this reason the costs may not be comparable to similar incident costings previously provided.

Review Process

Under the terms of the legislation, if you are unhappy with this response you have the right to seek a review within the Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service in the first instance. If you wish to do so, please write to Stuart Crawford the Governance, Information & Business Support Services Manager, 1 Seymour Street, Lisburn, BT27 4SX within two calendar months of the date of this letter.

If after such a review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner who will undertake an independent review.

The Information Commissioner contact details are – 3rd Floor 14 Cromac Place Belfast BT7 2JB.

Please visit www.nifrs.org for more information about NIFRS.

Yours sincerely

Information Unit