



Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service

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Andy Hearn
Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer

Our Ref: IU/ FOI 193-22-23

9 March 2023

RE: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST OF 14 FEBRUARY 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.

Q1 The number of calls to fires caused by electric blankets. And the number of calls to fires caused by plug-in electric heaters.

I would like the data from January 2017 until as recently as records allow. I would like the data to be broken down as follows:

In both cases would like to know, in total, how many calls there were in each year: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021.

For 2022 and 2023, I would like a month-by-month breakdown of the number of calls.

Please see below statistics of fires caused by Electric Heaters* and Electric Blankets. For the purposes of this enquiry, the data is reported within the calendar years 2017 to 2022.

Fires Caused by Electric Heaters 2017 to 2021

Year	Total
2017	21
2018	29
2019	29
2020	26
2021	14
Grand Total	119

Fires Caused by Electric Blankets 2017 to 2021

Year	Caused
2017	6
2018	1
2019	1
2020	1
2021	0
Grand Total	9

Fires Caused by Electric Heaters in 2022

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Grand Total
2	2	3	0	2	1	0	0	2	1	1	4	18

Fires Caused by Electric Blankets in 2022

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Grand Total
0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

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

Qualitative interpretation is applied for this particular request as there are no clear categories for fires caused by or involving electric blankets / electric heaters.

*For electric heaters the term 'plug-in' could not be distinguished. Therefore the figures are for all fires that were believed to be caused by or involved electric heaters.

Q2 In both cases, I would also like to know, in each year, the ages of the callers, if this information is held. If it is not, please omit.

There is no information available on the age of the callers for the incidents.

Q3 Furthermore, I would like for you to provide a case summary of the last five callouts; five for blankets and five for heaters.

NIFRS does not prepare case studies for incidents.

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