



[Redacted]

Date
02 December 2024

Post Office
100 Wood Street
London EC2V 9ER

Your Ref:

Classification:
Public

Dear [Redacted],

Freedom of Information Request – FOI2024/01500

We are writing in response to your email received by Post Office Limited (“**Post Office**”) on 12 November 2024, which has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“**FOIA**”).

In your email, you have requested the information shown verbatim in bold below:

“Please will you provide data on sales over the past 12 months of the 1st-class signed-for, and 2nd-class signed-for, and the number that resulted in the requested signature being obtained.”

We can confirm that Post Office does hold some of the information you have requested, on behalf of Royal Mail Group (“**Royal Mail**”) under a Mails Distribution Agreement II (“**MDA2**”). We do not hold the data on signatures as Post Office do not hold this data which is outside of the MDA2 agreement with RMG.

The disclosure of sales volumes for Royal Mail Signed-For® 1st Class and Royal Mail Signed-For® 2nd Class would be likely to prejudice both Post Office’s commercial interests and that of Royal Mail. The information you requested on sales volumes is therefore being withheld as it falls under the exemption in section 43(2) of the FOIA, which relates to information which would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).

In applying this exemption, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosure. We recognise that there is a

public interest in disclosure of information concerning details of the 'Signed For' sales volumes between Post Office and Royal Mail as this helps promote transparency in Post Office business and reassurance about the way public money is being spent.

There is, however, a strong public interest in withholding the information as third parties could use the information to inform on procurement, which would harm both the profits of Royal Mail and Post Office. This would affect Post Office and Royal Mail's ability to compete fairly in respect of sales for comparable products from the increasing market from mails competitors. In turn, this would be likely to lead to higher costs on both sides and would harm the relationship between the two parties. All of which would also detrimentally affect our Postmasters remuneration, as Mails is their largest source of revenue stream.

This would lead to Post Office and Royal Mail unable to operate in a fair marketplace and commercially damaged by the release of the information. Post Office and Royal Mail would be affected in terms of the content on disclosure of volumes and price (which is publicly known), reducing the value for money achieved, and providing competitors with an unfair advantage

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of this response, you do have a right to request an internal review. You can do this by writing to the address above within 40 working days of receipt of this response stating your reasons for your internal review request or alternatively, by emailing information.rights@postoffice.co.uk.

If, having requested an internal review by Post Office, you are still not satisfied with our response you also have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113
www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints

Yours sincerely,

Information Rights Team

information.rights@postoffice.co.uk

<https://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/en/governance/access-to-information/access-to-information/>

Post Office Limited is committed to protecting your privacy, information about how we do this can be found on our website at www.postoffice.co.uk/privacy