

Water Industry Commission for Scotland Freedom of Information Policy

Introduction

The Freedom of Information Scotland Act 2002 ('FOISA') provides individuals the right to request information held by public authorities. Requests must be made in writing and the information will be provided within 20 working days, subject to exemptions.

We are fully committed to the aims of FOISA and related legislation, and make every effort to meet our obligations.

The Water Industry Commission for Scotland's Freedom of Information Principles

- We publicly demonstrate our commitment to the Freedom of Information by ensuring as much information as possible is published on our website
- In order to support the effective application of the Act, we create and share information thoughtfully, deliberately and purposefully
- We encourage behaviour which is open and transparent

Purpose /Objectives of this Policy

This policy outlines our approach to responding to requests for information made under FOISA and demonstrates that we fully endorse and adhere to the principles of FOISA, meeting the standards set out in satisfying public authorities' obligations under the Act.

This policy aims to ensure access to information in order to promote greater openness and to build public trust. The WICS' Publication Scheme includes a more detailed guide to the information that we make available routinely.

Responsibilities

Freedom of Information Officer

- Develop, maintain and monitor the corporate FOI policy and procedures
- Coordinate responses to requests for information in conjunction with Directors and Chief Executive
- Calculate any fees to be charged for FOI requests, in line with the WICS' Freedom of Information Fees Scheme
- Provide advice and guidance on the FOI policy and procedures
- Identify and communicate any FOI issues to Directors and Chief Executive
- In conjunction with the appropriate Director, allocate the request for information to relevant member of their staff
- Ensure that requests for information are handled effectively by logging and co-ordinating requests
- Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Freedom of Information Officer on an annual basis

Directors

- Ensure all staff comply with the agreed policy and procedures for FOI
- As required, appoint a member of their team to assist the FOI Officer to fulfill requests for information
- Recognise FOI issues in service planning and resource allocation

All staff

- Be aware of what FOISA means and know how to recognise a request
- Follow the policy and procedures for handling FOI requests
- Deal with all requests promptly and within 20 working days of receipt
- Provide advice and assistance to requests for information