

Public Interest Test – EIR

Reference Number – DAERA/26-87

Requested Information

Please provide the following information:

Aggregated information sought regarding the number of suspected breaches, number of checks on fishing vessels, and the number of fishing vessels checked (Requests, 1, 2a, 2b, 3a, and 3b).

Detailed information sought on individual breaches that resulted in formal enforcement action of any kind (Request 4a).

Additional detailed information sought for any breaches related to sea fisheries regulations that resulted in a prosecution (Request 4b).

Exemption / Exception under consideration

Section 12(5)(b) – The course of justice, fair trial, conduct of a criminal or disciplinary inquiry

Reasons why the public interest would favour withholding:

- Disclosure of this information would breach the expectation of confidentiality and trust between the Department and the fishing industry.
- The current enforcement investigations are live and still in the course of completion. The release could potentially impact the outcome.
- Third parties would also have a reasonable expectation that information regarding any live enforcement proceedings into their business would not be released to the public. It would be reasonable to assume that a duty of confidence currently still exists.

Conclusion

Following consideration of the Public Interest Test the Department has decided to withhold the information as the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosure.