

**Strategic Planning & Corporate
Services Group**
Strategic Support Directorate



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Our Reference: **DAERA/26-237**

██████████ via
██████████ [@gmail.com](mailto:██████████@gmail.com)

Corporate Support Branch
Clare House, 1st Floor
303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
Belfast
BT3 9ED

Email: Corporate.SupportSection@daera-ni.gov.uk

20 April 2026

Dear ██████████

Freedom of Information Act 2000

I refer to your request for information received by the Department on 26th March 2026 that sought the following information:

Please disclose the below information for each of the following staff (names redacted where appropriate if necessary):

- Permanent Secretary
- Deputy Secretaries

1. Does their department-owned mobile phone (i.e. their work phone) have WhatsApp downloaded onto it?
2. If so, have they enabled the 'disappearing messages' feature for any of their chats?

I am writing to advise you that following a search of our records I have established that the information you requested is not held by the Department.

If you are deaf or have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via the Next Generation Text Relay Service by dialling 18001 + telephone number.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in people Standard

DAERA does not hold information on senior staff downloads or usage of WhatsApp. The NICS policy on the use of non-corporate communication channels (including WhatsApp) restricts the use of these channels on work devices, and states that these channels should only be used in exceptional circumstances when carrying out official business.

If you require any clarification, believe that any part of your request has been overlooked, misunderstood or misinterpreted, please contact me in the first instance to see if it is a matter that can be resolved.

If you are unhappy with the manner in which your request for information has been handled or the decision to release/withhold information, you have the right to request a formal review by the Department. If you wish to do so, please contact The Review Section either by e-mailing daera.informationmanager@daera-ni.gov.uk or by post at The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Data Protection & Information Management Branch, Floor 2, Jubilee House, 111 Ballykelly Road, Ballykelly, Limavady BT49 9HP, within two months from the date of this letter.

If after such an internal review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review of the Department's decision.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted signature]

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