

Reference Number: DAERA/26-525



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

Veterinary Service Animal Health Group
Information Communication Branch

[REDACTED]

Via Email:

[REDACTED] [@mla.niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@mla.niassembly.gov.uk)

VSAHG Information Communications Branch
1st Floor
Jubilee House
111 Ballykelly Road
Limavady
BT49 9HP

Email: vsinfocommsbranch@daera-ni.gov.uk

25 August 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for your email received by the Department on 03 August 2026 which you sought the information in bold below.

We advised you on 04 August 2026 that this request was being dealt with under Environmental Information Regulations 2004, however on consideration of the information being requested, the request has been processed under Freedom of Information legislation.

All records showing when the Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and any Special Adviser(s) were first informed of the proposed cattle destruction operation at Martin Beattie's farm near Fivemiletown, County Tyrone.

This should include:

The date and time they were first informed.

The method of communication used.

The identity and position of the person providing the information.

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.

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Copies of the first briefing, submission, email, text message, WhatsApp message, Teams message or other communication used to notify the Minister and/or Special Adviser(s).

Any record confirming acknowledgement, approval, concern or direction issued following that first notification.

If any information is withheld, please identify the exception relied upon and release all reasonably severable material.

I can confirm that the department has completed its searches and holds some, but not all, of the information within the scope of your request.

However, the department has decided not to disclose this information at this time, as it is exempt from disclosure under Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Information Intended for Future Publication).

A public interest test has been carried out and is attached at **Annex A**.

As you may be aware, Minister Muir has provided a detailed summary of the actions taken by the department and the accompanying context in his Written Ministerial Statement to the Assembly on 06 August and during the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs meeting held on 10 August 2026. These publications may be of interest to you.

You can read the statement via this link: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/written-statement-northern-ireland-assembly-6-august-2026>.

Coverage of the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs meeting on Monday 10 August 2026 can be viewed here: <https://niassembly.tv/committee-for-agriculture-environment-and-rural-affairs-meeting-monday-10-august-2026/>

An independent external review is being taken forward to review the action taken by the department and the terms of reference has been published on the department's website: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/terms-reference-independent-external-review>. The Minister has also committed to publishing the main findings and recommendations from the review once it has been completed.

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.

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If you are unhappy with the way 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,

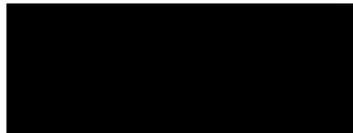
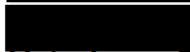
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Environment and Rural Affairs, Data Protection & Information Management Branch, Floor 2, Jubilee House, 111 Ballykelly Road, Ballykelly, Limavady BT49 9HP, within two months from the date of this letter.

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,

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.A small black rectangular box redacting the name of the sender.

Veterinary Service Animal Health Group

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