

Reference Number : DAERA/26-687



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

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

Veterinary Service Animal Health Group
Information Communication Branch

[REDACTED]
Via Email:

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

Email: vsinfocommsbranch@daera-ni.gov.uk

28 September 2026

Dear Ms Cameron

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for your email received by the Department on 07 September 2026 which you sought the information in bold below.

On 24 August 2026, the Scottish SPCA announced that “almost 50 puppies” had been seized in recent weeks while being brought into Scotland as part of ongoing investigations into the low-welfare puppy trade, and stated that Police Scotland and other partners were involved.

Please provide, for the period 1 July 2026 to 24 August 2026:

- 1. Any records held by DAERA concerning puppy consignments, movements, interceptions, seizures or welfare referrals travelling or intended to travel from Northern Ireland to Scotland which involved or were referred to Police Scotland and/or the Scottish SPCA.**
- 2. For each relevant incident, where held and disclosable:**
 - **date;**
 - **port/location and ferry route;**
 - **number of puppies;**
 - **breed/type and approximate age;**

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- **point or business of origin in Northern Ireland, where recorded;**
- **intended destination in Scotland;**
- **commercial transporter, dealer, breeder, rescue or other business/organisation involved;**
- **documentation or animal-health compliance issues identified;**
- **welfare or disease concerns;**
- **action taken and agencies notified.**

1. **Copies of relevant non-exempt correspondence, referrals, inspection records, movement records, intelligence summaries or communications exchanged with Police Scotland, the Scottish SPCA, APHA, ferry/port operators or other public authorities concerning those incidents.**

I can advise that the Department has completed its searches and neither confirms nor denies whether it holds information within the scope of your request under Section 30 (Investigations and Proceedings) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Section 30 is a qualified exemption and is subject to the public interest test. This means that the Department must consider whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in confirming or denying whether the requested information is held.

Details of the public interest test are set out at **Annex A**.

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 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, 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,



Veterinary Service Animal Health Group

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