

Our Reference: DAERA/26-658

Water Catchment Unit
NIEA Lisburn
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09 October 2026

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Environmental Information Regulations 2004

Thank you for your request for information received by the Department on 21 August 2026 which sought the following information in relation to water pollution incident WR 4/23/0956. I can advise that the Department has completed its search and can confirm that it holds some of the information you requested. Each request is answered sequentially below.

(1) Was the electro fishing work done to evaluate the impact?

Annual electrofishing work was conducted on the Crumlin River as part of the Inland Fisheries 'Assigned Work Programme' in 2023, 2024 and 2025. The average number of Trout fry recorded at 9 sites, during 5-minute timed electrofishing (semi-quantitative) surveys, are presented in **Table 1** below. The Crumlin River was not electro-fished in the three years prior to 2023.

Table 1 – Electrofishing Results in Years 2023 - 2025

Year	Average Trout Fry per 5-minute Survey
2023	7.1
2024	4.7
2025	7.6

(2) Is there any investigative information/material that is available for me to assess if a private prosecution could be progressed; and



Following the report on 12 February 2023, of a ‘fish kill’ in the Crumlin River, Co. Antrim, made by a member of the Crumlin and District Angling Association, an NIEA Water Quality Inspector (WQI), carried out an investigation and confirmed a pollution incident had taken place.

(3) Is the material still *sub judice*?

Some information requested constitutes personal data of which you are not the data subject. Regulation 12(3) of the above legislation requires that personal data is not disclosed and Regulation 13 prohibits the disclosure of third-party personal data that would contravene UK GDPR or the DPA 2018. In this instance, releasing the data would be in contravention of principal (1) “personal data should be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to a data subject”. This is an absolute exemption; therefore, no public interest test applies. The Department has, however, carried out the appropriate Lawfulness, Fairness & Transparency Test which is attached as **Annex A**.

NIEA considered the evidence available in relation to incident WR 4/23/0956 and concluded that due, in part, to the reporting delay, NIEA was not in a position to gather sufficient *prima facie* evidence in respect of the alleged offender. The delay meant that NIEA was unable to collate sufficient evidence to meet the exacting standards required by Public Prosecution Service (PPS) for them to consider the initiation of prosecution proceedings under Criminal Law i.e. ‘beyond reasonable doubt’. Preparation of the Prosecution File was discontinued by the Department and, consequently, it is confirmed that this incident is closed and details are no longer considered to be *sub-judice*.

NIEA are able to provide you with the WR 4/23/0956 Incident Report, with required redactions, at **Annex B**. Photographs taken at the time of investigation by the NIEA Water Quality Inspector (WQI) are available at **Annex C Parts 1-6**. Available Witness Statements of the Officer conducting the sample analysis and lead Water Quality Inspector are at **Annex D**. An ecological survey was requested to be carried out as part of the investigation. The purpose of this ecological survey was designed to provide impact data in order to help identify potential sources of the pollution and assess any impacts on the local freshwater invertebrate community. The survey report is at **Annex E**. The Department can also disclose a table of environmental parameters compiled by Agri-food Bioscience Institute (AFBI) (**Table 2**) and final trout ‘fish kill’ count for Crumlin River (**Table 3**). [AFBI accepts no liability for outcomes arising from use, interpretation or application of the information they provide.]

Table 2 - Parameters of Water Sample Taken in the Crumlin River and Analysed by AFBI

Environmental Parameters	Unit	Result
NH4	µg/l	5137
TON	mg/l	1.36
NO2	µg/l	17
TP	µg/l	117
TSP	µg/l	95
SRP	µg/l	47
CL	µg/l	47.40
Total Fe	µg/l	448.92
SOL Fe	µg/l	151.61



PH	PH	8.21
Conductivity	µS/cm	351
Alkalinity	meq/l	4.19

Table 3 – Number of Trout killed in Crumlin River Pollution Incident 2023

Fish Species	Age group	Number of fish killed
Trout	0+	2
Trout	1+	835
Trout	2+	937
Trout	3+	252
	Total	2026

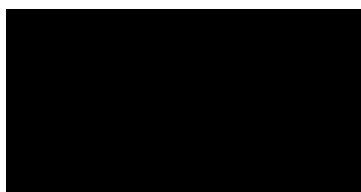
If you require any clarification, believe that any part of your request has been overlooked, misunderstood or misinterpreted, please contact me in the first instance to see if it is a matter that can be resolved.

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,



NIEA Water Pollution Response and Enforcement Team



An Agency within the Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Gníomhaireacht de chuid na Roinne
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