

Our Reference: FOI 1876

By email: [REDACTED]

Date: 18 April 2016

Dear [REDACTED]

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your request for information which we received on 8 April 2016. We are dealing with your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act).

Your request for information is as follows:

***Please confirm, for each of the last five calendar years (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015):***

- ***How many Freedom of Information Requests did the FSA receive?***
- ***How many of these requests resulted in full disclosure of the requested information?***
- ***How many requests resulted in partial disclosure?  
How many requests were rejected?***

The information you requested for calendar years 2011 to 2014 is available via the Gov.UK website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-foi-statistics>

Information for the calendar year 2015 is being withheld under section 22 (information intended for future publication) of the Act.

Section 22 of the Act states that:

*22 Information intended for future publication*

*(1) Information is exempt information if -*

*(a) the information is held by the public authority with a view to its publication, by the authority or any other person, at some future date (whether determined or not),*

*(b) the information was already held with a view to such publication at the time when the request for information was made, and*

*(c) it is reasonable in all the circumstances that the information should be withheld from disclosure until the date referred to in paragraph (a).*

As section 22 is a qualified exemption, we have considered the public interest test for and against disclosure. In favour of disclosure we have recognised that there is a strong public interest in openness and transparency with regards to the Freedom of Information legislation particularly in relation to an individual's right to know. We recognise that disclosure would provide reassurance that the FSA is processing the requests that it receives in a timely manner particularly as it would indicate how we are meeting our obligations as outlined in the provisions of the Act.

We do not consider however that it is in the public interest to place information into the public domain, prematurely, before pre-publication procedures have taken place. The FSA submits its FOI statistics to Cabinet Office on a quarterly basis for publication. The Cabinet Office undertakes a number of pre-publication checks and validation before it is published. We consider that the requirement to undertake pre-publication checks, such as verifying the information is correct, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information before it is formally published. Overall we consider the balance is in favour of withholding this information at this time.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me on the details provided in the footer of this letter. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not satisfied with the way the FSA has handled your request for information, you should write within two calendar months of the date of this letter to the Openness Team, and ask for an internal review. They will arrange for the Complaints Coordinator to conduct the review. Their address is Food Standards Agency, Room 2C Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH (email: [Openness.team@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Openness.team@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the FSA. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or through the website at: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name]

FOI Advisor