

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

██████████
Address for correspondence
██

24 February 2026

Dear ██████████

HMICS Freedom of Information Request – FOI.26.00005

I refer to your request dated 12 February 2026, under the freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA), for the following information:

“Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide the following recorded information held by your department regarding assurance processes for software based data erasure of end of life IT equipment.

For clarity, this request relates solely to software based data destruction. Please exclude physical destruction methods such as shredding, crushing, degaussing or disintegration.

- 1. Please confirm whether departmental policy, contractual terms or internal procedures require an explicit outcome based warranty or guarantee confirming that personal data has been rendered irretrievable through software based erasure, whether carried out internally or by an external provider.*
- 2. Where software based data destruction is performed internally, what recorded evidential assurance does the department rely upon to conclude that the final data state is irretrievable?*
- 3. Where software based data destruction is performed by a third party provider, does the department hold recorded information demonstrating that any warranty or assurance provided explicitly extends to the software erasure method used and its claimed effectiveness? If so, please confirm the recorded nature of that verification.*
- 4. Where no explicit outcome based warranty is required or provided, what recorded form of evidential assurance does the department rely upon to conclude that software based erasure has rendered personal data irretrievable?*

I am not requesting technical configuration detail, security sensitive information or supplier specific vulnerabilities. I am seeking confirmation of the assurance model relied upon for software based data destruction”



NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Although HMICS is an independent body, we are provided with any equipment that holds personal information such as personal laptops from Scottish Government and hence we are required to follow their processes. This applies both when someone acquires equipment and when the equipment is returned. Both internal and third party software based data destruction are also performed by Scottish Government where required.

This information is held by the relevant team within Scottish Government. Therefore, in respect of the elements of your question, an exemption under section 17(1) of FOISA applies, that the information is not held. Should you wish to send your Freedom of Information request to the Scottish Government directly, the contact details are:-

General Enquiries Scottish Government

St. Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG
Email: contactus@gov.scot
Phone: 0300 244 4000

For more information specifically on Data Protection you can contact the [Information Assurance and Data protection Branch](#) or the [Data Protection Officer](#) directly.

I trust this information is satisfactory for you, however, if you are unhappy with this response you may ask us to carry out an internal review, by writing to the address shown on this letterhead or by emailing HMIC@hmic.gov.scot. Your request should explain why you wish a review to be carried out and should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this letter. We will then reply within 20 working days of receipt of any such letter.

You then have a right of appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner if you are dissatisfied with our internal review. The Commissioners website has a guide containing the full details for this process (www.itspublicknowledge.info) or they can be contacted via the following:

Scottish Information Commissioner

Kinburn Castle
Doubledykes Road
St Andrews
Fife
KY16 9DS
Tel: 01334 464 610

Yours Sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

