

Mr D Staniford
Salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com

Our Ref: F0190713

If telephoning ask for:
Cara Everitt

19 July 2019

Dear Mr Staniford

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Thank you for your recent request, received by SEPA on 24 June 2019 in which you asked for the following information:

1) Russel Burn Hatchery (The Scottish Salmon Company) is not listed in the Excel spreadsheet F0190275 sites as one of the 184 fish farms licensed to use Formaldehyde (Formalin) but it seems clear that it is being used.

Here's a video showing vats of Formaldehyde at the hatchery in June 2019:

<https://vimeo.com/344042944>

A report - "The State of Scottish Salmon Farming in 2018" - published by Scottish Salmon Watch in March 2019 detailed 80,000 mortalities at The Scottish Salmon Company's Russel Burn Hatchery in November 2018 with the use of Formalin identified:

Here's details from the Scottish Government's Fish Health Inspectorate report:

2) Re. the Excel spreadsheet detailing reported use of Formaldehyde in 2017 and 2018 (F0190275- Formaldehyde) surely there are other companies using it? Marine Harvest is the only company reporting use:

For example, if you trawl through the Fish Health Inspectorate's 'Case Information' (online here) you will see numerous cases reporting the use of Formalin (cases which are not reported as in #2 above).

We have applied the exemption under Section 39(2) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 as we have determined that the information sought in your request is environmental information. We are therefore handling your request under the terms of the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (EIRs). In this case the public interest in maintaining this exemption and in dealing with the request in line with the requirements of the EIRs outweighs any public interest in disclosing the information under FOISA.

Response

We can confirm that the figures supplied for the previous request (reference F0190275) is the only information held by SEPA regarding the use of Formaldehyde (Formalin) at fish farms.

<http://apps.sepa.org.uk/disclosurelog/#>

SEPA does not hold any further information therefore it is excepted under Regulation 10(4)(a) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The text of which is reproduced below;

(4) *A Scottish public authority may refuse to make environmental information available to the extent that;-*

(a) *it does not hold that information when an applicant's request is received.*

The exception in regulation 10(4)(a) is subject to the public interest test in regulation 10(1)(b) of the EIRs. As SEPA does not hold the information in question there is no conceivable public interest in requiring that the information be made available.

If you are not satisfied with our response, you have up until 16 September 2019 to request a formal review from SEPA at:

Access to Information
SEPA
Strathallan House
Castle Business Park
Stirling
FK9 4TZ
Email: foi@sepa.org.uk

If you are still not satisfied, you can appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner.

www.itspublicknowledge.info/appeal

Your unique reference number is F0190713 Please quote this in any future contact with us about your request.

If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact me.

Yours sincerely



Cara Everitt
Access to Information Coordinator

What to expect when making a Request for Information

Each request for information, under The Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 or the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, is formally logged by the authority. The request falls within a process that has two internal stages carried out by the authority; a right of appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner followed by an appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

- Stage 1 – Request for information
- Stage 2 – Formal Review
- Stage 3 – Appeal for decision by Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC)
- Stage 4 – Appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

Each enquiry will have a unique Reference Number which should be quoted when you contact us.

How you will be kept informed

You will receive an acknowledgement for your request and Formal Review. We aim to reply to all enquiries promptly, within 20 working days. You will receive a response along with the requested information and/or an explanation regarding any withheld information. We may also contact you if we require clarification or if we are issuing a fees notice.

What happens once your enquiry has been responded to?

If you are not happy with the response or have failed to receive a response, you have the right to request a Formal Review from SEPA.

Guidance on your rights and how to ask for a review is on the Scottish Information Commissioner's website;

<http://itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Askingforareview.aspx>

We will ensure that all personal data is processed, recorded and retained in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 throughout the handling of each request. You have a right to see information about yourself via submitting a Subject Access Request under the Data Protection Act 2018.

What to do if you are not happy with how your enquiry and review were handled

If you are unsatisfied with our Formal Review response or have failed to receive a response, you can then appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner via the links below.

www.itspublicknowledge.info/appeal

<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/home/ContactUs/ContactUs.aspx>

Should you wish to appeal against the Scottish Information Commissioner's decision, you have the right to appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only. Any such appeal must be made within 42 days after the date of intimation of the decision.