

Our ref: FOI 754,495

Your ref:

Operations Directorate Services Team  
Manager  
9th Floor  
The Cube  
199 Wharfside Street  
Birmingham B1 1RN

13 September 2017

Dear

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 15 August 2017 asking for data on roadkill on English Highways.

In your email you asked for the following information:

- *Q1. Please provide the number of animal carcasses found on roads from 2010 and 2017 to date. Please break down the figures by month, year and animal species.*
- *Q2. Please can you identify where (by road name) each incident took place?*
- *Q3. Please provide distance (in Kilometers) for each of the roads in question.*
- *Q4. Please provide information regarding the methodologies used for collecting the roadkill data for each of the roads e.g. Are roads surveyed daily/weekly etc. or are roadkill incidences only recorded on an impromptu basis? Who carries out the surveys? Is the data collected using dedicated roadkill surveys or as part of general maintenance surveys? Are animal carcasses removed after identification? etc.*

Highways England is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving England's strategic road network which comprises approximately 4,300 miles of motorways and all-purpose trunk roads. The motorways and major roads in England that are managed by the Highways England can be viewed on our network management map:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/roads-managed-by-highways-england>

Other public roads in England are managed by local authorities.

Taking each of your questions in turn:

*Q1. Please provide the number of animal carcasses found on roads from 2010 and 2017 to date. Please break down the figures by month, year and animal species.*

*Q2. Please can you identify where (by road name) each incident took place?*

We have estimated that the cost of compiling your full request will exceed £450. Section 12 of the Act does not oblige us to comply with requests if they exceed this limit. We are, however, able to supply to you with some of the relevant raw data, relating to animal deaths from 2010 to March 2017 – please see the attached spreadsheet. This data has been taken from previous similar requests. As the requested data is not held in a central format, it cannot be sorted as you have requested. The data has been

supplied by our area team service providers who each have their own system for recording such events.

The data in the spreadsheet is broken down into separate tabs for our different regions or area teams – please refer to our network management map (link above). Please note that some data may be missing where there has been a change in service provider or where information was not required to be recorded previously.

*Q3. Please provide distance (in Kilometers) for each of the roads in question.*

Please find attached a table showing the route lengths for each of the roads maintained by Highways England. The figures include the length of the main carriageway, slip roads, roundabouts and laybys.

*Q4. Please provide information regarding the methodologies used for collecting the roadkill data for each of the roads e.g: Are roads surveyed daily/weekly etc. or are roadkill incidences only recorded on an impromptu basis? Who carries out the surveys? Is the data collected using dedicated roadkill surveys or as part of general maintenance surveys? Are animal carcasses removed after identification?*

There are no specific surveys carried out to locate roadkill as our network is patrolled on a continual basis by our maintenance contractors and roadkill data is collected during their routine and/or formal safety inspections. Routine inspections are carried out on a responsive daily basis and safety inspections are often carried out on a weekly and monthly basis on our motorway and trunk road network. Safety inspections are undertaken by either Highways England staff or our service providers, dependent on the type of contract and location. In addition, our roads are also frequently patrolled by the police and our Traffic Officers. We also receive and log notification of road kill from our road users and external partners.

Roadkill that has been identified as a safety issue, ie it has been located in a live lane, is removed under set contractual timescales and often under rolling road block conditions. Roadkill not in live lanes will be removed when it is safe to do so.

Whether roadkill is removed or not depends on the specific circumstances. For example, if a dead animal (other than a domesticated animal) is well away from the road and any public access points and is not posing a hazard, it may be left in situ for nature to take its course. If the animal is domesticated (ie a cat or dog) our service providers are required to look for a collar or tags, ear tattoos and also scan it for a microchip identification. They are then placed in a freezer while we seek to identify the owner. We also contact the local authority to arrange for collection and disposal.

Depending on the state of the dead animal, some types of roadkill may be of interest to various parties. For example some birds of prey carcasses are sent to a University for research purposes and Otters may go to the Environment Agency for research. Other species, including deer and badger, might be collected in certain locations to be tested for TB.

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review. Our internal review process is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>

If you require a print copy, please phone the Information Line on 0300 123 5000; or e-mail [info@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:info@highwaysengland.co.uk). You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number 754,495 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Email: [Ops\\_dst@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:Ops_dst@highwaysengland.co.uk)