

EIR Request (received 24 January 2024) - Reference: DFI/2024-0033

Can we please request the following:

The total amount of compensation paid for vehicles damaged by potholes for the years 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 respectively.

Can the department outline ten roads in Northern Ireland which currently have the highest number of reported potholes?

Response (issued 21 February 2024)

Thank you for your e-mail of 24 January 2024 requesting information pertaining to vehicle damage compensation and confirmation of the ten roads with the highest number of reported potholes.

Your correspondence was forwarded to me for response in accordance with our internal procedures.

In considering your request on behalf of the Department, I have determined that the information requested falls under the aegis of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR), as opposed to Freedom of Information Act 2000. Your request is for information that relates to activities, policies or plans that affect the environment. Section 39 of the Freedom of Information Act specifically excludes from consideration under that Act requests for what is deemed to be environmental information.

A guide explaining the Environmental Information Regulations can be found at: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/foi-eir-and-access-to-information/guide-to-the-environmental-information-regulations/>.

We do hold information related to your request, but because EIR relates to public rights of access to information, one must consider whether information is suitable for release to the world at large, and not solely to the applicant.

The information requested has been examined and a public interest test has confirmed the information requested is suitable for release to the public.

Management information pertaining to roads related public liability claims can be found online at: <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/road-asset-maintenance-directorate-management-information-roads-related-claims-period-20182019>.

Table 7.1 in the above link provides details of the compensation paid during the last five full financial years for vehicle damage. However, please note that as the NICS Accounting System does not record the cause of incidents that lead to compensation payments, it is not possible to disaggregate the amount of compensation paid out by defect (e.g. potholes).

In addition, it is important to be cognisant of the other caveats noted in respect of the information provided on roads related public liability claims via the above link.

The second part of your request relating to the ten roads with the highest number of reported potholes has been addressed in the attachment at:

- Table 3.1 - Top ten roads in 2023 with most reported potholes; and
- Table 3.2 - Top ten roads in 2023 with most recorded surface defects.

This concludes my response to your information request.

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