



24 January 2025

Right to Know

requests@righttoknow.ie

Re: AIE Request 25 026

Dear Right to Know,

I refer to the request you made under the European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007 to 2018 (S.I. No. 133 of 2007, S.I. No. 662 of 2011, S.I. 615 of 2014 and S.I. No. 309 of 2018) (hereafter referred to as the AIE Regulations) for access to information held by this the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine (DAFM).

Your AIE Request

Under the AIE Regs to request a database of all deer fencing grants to include

- fence outlay data per contract*
- date of fence contract*
- location of fences*
- area covered by fence and/or length of fences*
- map of fences**

**if this exists, FLV has individual deer fence maps in pdfs. RTK cannot tell if there's a comprehensive map of grant aided deer fences nationally*

**FLV allows user to export up to 100 records to csv. There appears to be no way, for example, to export all afforestation records to see which have deer fence grants, but perhaps this function exists with the DAFM version of FLV*

Context:

A significant amount of money is spent on deer fences, and there does not appear to be a way to assess their effectiveness as there is no single dataset of deer fences in public domain. RTK are unaware of what data is held on deer fencing contracts, so we would appreciate an opportunity to refine this request with DAFM FS, for example, we cannot determine how far back deer fencing data goes. Sample contacts in FLV appear to show mid 2018 deer fence maps.

Summary of Decision

I have decided on your AIE request on 24 January 2025. My decision is part grant your request. The basis for my decision is that I have identified one record held by the Department in relation to your request.



Where information has been refused or partially refused, the following article(s) of SI 133/2007 apply:

Article 7(5) *Where a request is made to a public authority and the information requested is not held by or for the authority concerned, that authority shall inform the applicant as soon as possible that the information is not held by or for it.*

Searches Conducted

Following the assignment of this AIE request to me, the following searches were undertaken:

- (i) Seppi Hona Grade 1 Forestry Inspector was contacted in relation to your request.
- (ii) Frank Barrett Grade 2 Forestry Inspector Forestry Support was contacted in relation to your request on the recommendation of Forestry Inspector Hona.

Forestry Inspector Barrett extracted a report from APEX which provides all data in relation to fencing contracts available on the Department's licencing system, iFORIS. Forestry Inspector Barrett advised that a national map of deer fencing and fencing outlay data by contract are not available and therefore I am refusing those parts of your request under article 7(5) of the AIE regulations.

Fees

In this instance the Department will not be applying a fee for this AIE because search, retrieval and compilation of records took less than the chargeable time.

Right of Review

Under article 11 of the AIE Regulations, you have a right to request an internal review of this decision. An internal review involves a complete reconsideration of the matter by a member of the staff of this Department, unconnected with the original decision, of the same or higher rank than the original decision-maker, who may affirm, vary or annul the original decision.

If you wish to request an internal review, you can do so by emailing FOI Unit at freedomofinformation@agriculture.gov.ie referring to this decision, quoting the AIE reference number. This request must be made within one month of the date of receipt of this decision. The decision of an internal review will be communicated to you within one month of receipt of your request for an internal review.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Boyce

AIE Unit

Forestry Division

Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine

Johnstown Castle Estate

County Wexford