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Our Reference: FOI201803

19 September 2018

Dear XXXXXX XXXXX,

Request under Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

Thank you for your freedom of information request of 22 August 2018, received by us on 22 August 2018. This gave a statutory deadline for responding of 19 September 2018 under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

In your request, you asked for;

- 1) *Numbers of staff employed in financial years 2008/09 and 2017/18*
- 2) *Numbers of stress related absences in the financial years 2008/09 and for 2017/18*
- 3) *Absence costs incurred in relation to all sickness absence for financial years 2008/09 and for 2017/18*
- 4) *Absence costs in relation to stress related illnesses for the same periods, 2008/09 and 2017/18*
- 5) *Information on steps that your organisation has taken to manage stress at work such as implementing the HSE Stress Management Standards*
- 6) *The date that your organisation first carried a workplace stress risk assessment and dates of subsequent review.*

As Serco Ltd operate HMP Kilmarnock under contract to a Scottish public authority, information you requested shall be considered in relation to HMP Kilmarnock as a service whose provision is a function of that authority.

After a search of our records, I can confirm that Serco Ltd holds records which show some of the information you requested. Please note that in the interim period between the two date ranges detailed in your request, a Sickness Absence Manager System has come into operation.

1) Numbers of staff employed in financial years 2008/09 and 2017/18

- **FY 2008/09:**
 - Average headcount between April 2008 and March 2009 was 276.
 - Closing Headcount in March 2009 was 267.

- FY 2017/18:
 - Average headcount between April 2017 and March 2018 was 274.
 - Closing Headcount in March 2018 was 269.

2) Numbers of stress related absences in the financial years 2008/09 and for 2017/18

- FY 2008/09 (1st Apr 2008 to 31st March 2009):
 - 443 absence days considered stress related. It is acknowledged from records available that rest days might be included in these absence days.

We do not hold any information which differentiates between work-related stress and stress absence related to factors external to the working environment.

- FY 2017/18 (6th Apr 2017 to 5th Apr 2018):
 - 539 absence days considered stress related.

Differentiation between work-related stress and stress absence related to factors external to the working environment was not part of this freedom of information request.

3) Absence costs incurred in relation to all sickness absence for financial years 2008/09 and for 2017/18

As a result of limitations in payroll information available, we do not hold information relating to absence costs incurred in relation to all sickness absence for financial year 2008/09. Accordingly, we give notice under the provisions of Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 that we do not hold the information you requested. However, Section 15 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 requires a Scottish public authority to provide advice and assistance to a person who has made a request for information to it. With that in mind, the following costs relating to 2008/09 pertains to employees who remain employed by the company.

- FY 2008/09: £47,541.00
- FY 2017/18: £201,437.00

4) Absence costs in relation to stress related illnesses for the same periods, 2008/09 and 2017/18

Whilst Serco Ltd holds payroll information detailing absence costs incurred in relation to sickness absence, we do not hold information providing a breakdown of the reasons for sickness absence associated with the sickness costs. Accordingly, we give notice under the provisions of Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 that we do not hold the information you requested.

5) Information on steps that your organisation has taken to manage stress at work such as implementing the HSE Stress Management Standards

Risk assessments considering departmental tasks and risk assessments specifically addressing the six key areas of work design associated with work-related stress, namely, Demands, Control, Support, Relationships, Role and Change have been completed over time since the contract came into operation. The assessments identified possible contributors to work-related stress and action was taken to reduce the risk arising from the hazards identified. Controls introduced were based

upon 'Hierarchy of Controls' to reduce risk as far as reasonably practicable through elimination, substitution, engineering or administrative control.

'Stress Management' training has been provided consistently in various formats over the years as part of Initial Training Course (ITC) for Prisoner Custody Officers and as part of Induction Training for Non-Custodial staff. A "Preventing and Reducing Stress at Work – Initial Training for Prison Custody Officers" (2007 and 2009) package was one example. A 'Stress Awareness' CD was also shown historically as part of a Health & Safety Induction to all new employees. Up until 2012, Prisoner Custody Officers were provided conditioning training during induction, covering managing conflict, de-escalation, and verbal communication, training which was provided by the Psychology department. This training was replaced by pro-social modelling training in 2012. Since 2014, Prisoner Custody Officers have been provided a 'Highfield Level 2 Award in Conflict Management' along with a 'Highfield Level 2 Award in Health and Safety within the Workplace'. Both of these Level 2 Awards contribute to managing stress in the workplace. Also, from 2009 and up to present day, Scottish Mental Health First Aid training (SMHFA) has been delivered as part of the Initial Training Course (ITC) to Prisoner Custody Officers with other staff attending this training as well.

Other training information available demonstrates that Managers at HMP Kilmarnock have received specific training relating to work-related stress, for example, "Management competencies for preventing and reducing Stress at Work" (2007). All Managers have also completed 'Highfield Level 3 Award in Health and Safety in the Workplace' training in the last two years where Stress Management formed part of the curriculum. Six Managers have also attended a 'Mentally Healthy Workplace Training for Managers' course with further attendance anticipated for later in 2018. Furthermore, all staff are required to undertake annual 'Serco Essential' computer based refresher training which includes 'Health & Safety' and 'Display Screen Equipment' refreshers which contain information relating to stress awareness.

Just over two years ago, nineteen Custodial Operations Managers undertook an Assessment Centre, designed to measure them against key competencies required of an efficient and effective Custodial Operations Manager. Following on from the assessment, each Custodial Operations Manager was required to complete a Management Development portfolio designed to provide them with all the key competencies required to become a confident, knowledgeable and inspiring leader, which in turn would develop each of their teams into a successful, effective and efficient body. Promoting ethos of a caring and supportive employer, along with demonstrating a working knowledge of attendance management and work-life balance, whilst understanding stress and the use of calming skills represented three of the thirty development aims associated with the portfolio. A Manager had to demonstrate proficiency in each of the development aims, over ten separate occasions they met with the Contract Director to be assessed on a particular section of the portfolio, prior to a final assessment by the Director of Custodial Operations or their deputy.

Managers are required to complete Performance Development Review (PDR) meetings with individual members of staff three times a year, at the opening of the PDR, mid-year review and end of year review. Meetings such as this play an important role in identifying and addressing issues relating to stress management. A Duty Director shift exists to provide visibility of Senior Management at all times. A Sickness Absence Management Procedure exists comprising various tools such as home visits, return to work meetings and sickness absence management meetings designed to support the employee along with an Employee Assistance Programme, providing confidential advice to employees. Furthermore referrals can be made to Occupational Health, or a local Staff Support Team, who staff can self-refer to for support and who also provide support to employees immediately after incidents, as part of hot or cold de-briefs or should the employee require to attend Court for any reason in relation to work activities.

There is also guidance from a wider Serco Ltd perspective in relation to workplace stress which can be utilised by each of the various Serco divisions such as Defence, Health, Justice & Immigration, etc. All Serco employees are provided access to a Serco Our World site which also contains a 'Welcome to Serco Health & Wellbeing' page with a number of available 'Health and Wellbeing documents' along with links and information relating to Serco's Health & Wellbeing model and approach, reflecting 'Relationships', 'Working Well', 'Health Matters' and finally 'Support for You'.

An HMP Kilmarnock 'Safety Matters' Newsletter disseminated to all staff within the establishment in May 2018 also covered mental health, stress recognition and mindfulness. Additionally, there is an annual Serco wide staff survey which gauges engagement scores, how supported staff feel, how valued they feel their opinion is taken in the workplace and whether in their opinion they are provided the right tools for the job. As part of our 2017 Zero Harm week, the establishment focused on Wellbeing on day 3 of the event, Tuesday 10 October 2017, conducting various activities designed in support of World Mental Health Day.

6) The date that your organisation first carried a workplace stress risk assessment and dates of subsequent review.

As Health & Safety Officer at HMP Kilmarnock from years 2000 to 2006, I can confirm that risk assessments considering departmental tasks and risk assessments specifically addressing the six key areas of work design associated with work-related stress, namely, Demands, Control, Support, Relationships, Role and Change were completed during that time. Due to time that has passed and associated retention procedures, documentation from that time is not available and accordingly, we give notice under the provisions of Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 that we do not hold the information you requested.

However, risk assessments considering departmental tasks and risk assessments specifically addressing the six key areas of work design associated with work-related stress, namely, Demands, Control, Support, Relationships, Role and Change are available dated June 2009. The date of the most recent workplace stress risk assessment is 15 March 2017. We give notice under the provisions of Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 that we do not hold information relating to the interim period.

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you have the right to request an internal review. Your request should be made within 40 working days of the date of receipt of this letter, and we will reply within 20 working days of receiving your request.

Under section 20(3)(c)(ii) of the Act your request should outline your reason for seeking a review. If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you then have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner. You can also lodge an appeal online by going to www.itspubliknowledge.info/Appeal.

If you require an internal review to be carried out, please write to

The Director
HM Prison Kilmarnock
Mauchline Road
Kilmarnock
KA1 5AA

The review will be undertaken by staff who were not involved in the original decision making process.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'BM', enclosed in a light grey rectangular box.

Billy Menzies
Assistant Director