

Date 8 September 2026
Your Ref FOI-2026-3454
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Enquiries to [REDACTED]
Email psd.foi@nhs.scot

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information Reference FOI-2026-3454

I refer to your Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) request that we received on 14 August 2026 requesting the following information:

Under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, I would be very grateful for access to any retained records falling within the following categories:

- 1. Any retained archival copy of the source code for the former mainframe Community Health Index (CHI) system, including application programs, shared routines, batch programs, job-control scripts, database-access programs, communications or interface programs, and other locally developed software associated with the system.**
- 2. Any retained archival source code for the former national child health or immunisation mainframe applications, including the Child Health Surveillance Programme Pre-School system, Child Health Surveillance Programme School system, Scottish Immunisation and Recall System, or related applications that were replaced or migrated as part of the mainframe transformation programme.**
- 3. Where applicable, source code written in COBOL or other legacy languages, together with copybooks, include files, procedure libraries, job-control or command scripts, screen/interface definitions, data definitions, database schemas, and shared application libraries associated with these systems.**
- 4. Any migration, conversion, extraction, reconciliation, or interface programs created or used when moving information and functionality from these legacy mainframe systems to their successor platforms.**
- 5. Any existing source-code inventory, application inventory, repository manifest, program listing, migration inventory, system catalogue, or similar record identifying the programs and components that made up the former systems at or near the time they were retired or migrated.**

Chair Mr Keith Redpath
Chief Executive Professor Karen Reid

6. Any retained technical documentation describing the architecture of the former systems, programming languages used, operating environment, program structure, interfaces between applications, or the process by which the systems were migrated or decommissioned.

After a search of our records in relation to questions 1 to 5 Public Services Delivery Scotland (PSD Scotland) can confirm that under [Section 17 of FOISA for “information not held”](#) PSD Scotland longer holds the COBOL source code related to CHI & Child Health (CH) so would be unable to provide this or interfaces code etc. The VME Mainframe has been decommissioned and all the disks used to store this source code have been shredded.

In relation to question 6, PSD Scotland has determined that under the [FOISA Section 30\(c\) exemption for “the effective conduct of public affairs”](#) that releasing this information would likely prejudice substantially the effective conduct of public affairs of PSD Scotland in that this information may be used to adversely affect the support status of individual items at any point in time and compromise our digital security posture.

The additional risk with this is that whilst the new systems replaced the COBOL applications, the functionality often is very similar in nature and again providing this information would also provide an insight into the way the current applications run. This could provide an exposure for NHSScotland. This would include interface specifications, and we are likely to be using the same if not very similar interfaces in the new systems.

CH was a replacement for SIRS, CHSP Pre-School and CHSP School, documents for all 3 applications would need assessed and due to the age of the systems an overview architecture is not available, it would be functional specifications for requirements delivered over many years that would need to be reviewed.

For the Section 30(c) exemption to be applied in full public authorities must go on to consider the [Public Interest Test](#). This means assessing whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest is better served by disclosing the information or maintaining the exemption.

FOISA does not define the public interest. It has been described elsewhere as “something which is of serious concern and benefit to the public”, not merely something of individual interest. It has also been described as “something that is “in the interest of the public”, not merely “of interest to the public.” In other words, it serves the interests of the public.

PSD Scotland recognises that there is always public interest in Scottish public authorities acting in an open and transparent manner, however, on this occasion we have identified that release this information into the public domain may be used to attack digital healthcare systems that are used to enable healthcare for the people of Scotland and therefore would likely prejudice substantially the ability of PSD Scotland and NHSScotland to carry out its statutory role in providing and enabling those healthcare systems.

If you are unhappy with any aspect of how we have dealt with your request, you can make representations to us asking us to review the handling of your request. Please write to the Associate Director Corporate Governance using the email address psd.foi@nhs.scot within 40 working days of the date of this correspondence.

If after a review you are still unhappy, you also have the right to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at Kinburn Castle, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS, or via their [online Appeal form](#).

Yours sincerely,

