ANNEX A

FOI DOF/2024-0351

Request

I write to request the following information:

1. the total amount of employees within the NI Civil Service Government Departments. This disclosure should be presented as a. Department 1 (its Name) - x employees; Department 2 (its Name) - x employees etc.

2. the total amount of employees within the NI Civil Service Government Departments who have a full-time home working contract as a result of a reasonable adjustment made (an employee specifically not linked to an office or base location or who was previously linked but is not now), This disclosure should be presented as a. Department 1(Name) - x employees; Department 2 (Name) - x employees etc.

3. Any guidance/policies currently used by the NI Civil Service Government Departments to determine eligibility of an employee for a Home Working Contract.

DoF Response

I can confirm the department holds some of the information requested.

1. As at the end of July 2024 (the most recent data available at the time of request), the total number of employees within the NI Civil Service, broken down by Department, is provided in the table below.

Department	**Staff (Headcount)**
DAERA	3,408
DE	522
DfC	7,543
DfE	1,266
DfI	2,903
DoF	3,480
DoH	622
DoJ	3,396
PPS	435
TEO	440
Total	**24,015**

2. No employees within the NI Civil Service departments have a full-time home working contract as a result of a reasonable adjustment. Reasonable adjustments are not a change to contractual terms and conditions and are subject to regular review. Reasonable adjustments are agreed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995.

3. The NICS offers hybrid working which covers a variety of working arrangements enabling a combination of time spent working from home or other remote locations and in a designated workplace. Not all job roles will be suitable for hybrid working due to the nature of the business. Hybrid working is subject to business needs and is a **non-contractual arrangement**.

   HR Policy 3.10 Alternative Working Patterns policy, Section 5, details eligibility to make a request for flexible working under the Employment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002. The guidance for hybrid working and alternative (flexible) working patterns is exempt under Section 21(1) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 21 applies to information that is already reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. Section 21 is an absolute exemption and the department is not required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information. For ease of reference, you can find the policies here: HR policy 3.15 Hybrid Working and HR policy 3.10 Alternative Working Patterns