24 January 2018

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – 52/18

Dear Sir/Madam

Your request for information has now been considered and the information requested is provided below.

Request & Response:

The information that I am requesting relates to the tree risk management responsibilities that fall within your highway management function for all road categories (excluding motorways) that carry vehicles, and is as follows:

1. How many fatalities due to highway tree failures (trees within falling distance of the highway that fell onto the road) have occurred in each of the five years from the beginning of 2013 to the end of 2017?
Answer: Zero

2. How many injuries due to highway tree failures have occurred in each of the five years from the beginning of 2013 to the end of 2017?
Answer: Zero

3. Does your highway authority have a formal tree risk management strategy/protocol/guide for inspecting highway trees? If so, could you please provide the document or a link to it?
Answer:

Rutland County Council does have a formal tree risk management strategy/protocol/guide for inspecting highway trees and it can be found here https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-community/roads-and-highways/transport-plans-and-policies/

4. Does your highway authority require its highway inspectors to look for tree hazards as part of their highway inspection responsibilities?
Answer: No. Rutland County Council has a dedicated forestry officer who completes inspections in line with above policy.

If yes:

4.1. Does the highway authority have a published/formal policy to train highway inspectors in tree hazard recognition?
4.2. If the answer to 4.1 is ‘yes’, is that training through the LANTRA Basic Tree Inspection course, the LANTRA Professional Tree Inspection course, in-house training, or other out-sourced training?

4.3. Do highway inspectors have specific tree hazard recognition refresher training to keep up to date, and if so, how often?

4.4. If the answer to 4.3 is ‘yes’, is that refresher training in-house or outsourced?

4.5. Are the inspections carried out on foot or driven?

4.6. If driven, please describe:

4.6.1. at what speed;

4.6.2. how many operatives are in the vehicle;

4.6.3. whether spotters are expected to check trees and highway defects at the same time;

4.6.4. whether spotters are expected to carry checks on both sides of the road during one traverse of the route, whilst driving in a single direction; and,

4.6.5. is there a formal list of tree conditions that trigger the vehicle to stop to allow the inspector to carry out a closer check?

5. Has your highway authority implemented the advice set out in paragraph 5(4) of the Prevention of Future Deaths Report issued by the Berkshire Coroner on 17th July 2014 following the Michael Warren Inquest (https://www.judiciary.gov.uk/publications/michael-warren/)?

Answer: Yes. Please refer to our policy (https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-community/roads-and-highways/transport-plans-and-policies/)

6. Does your highway authority use professional trained arboriculturists, either in-house or out-sourced, to check highway trees?

Answer: Yes. Please refer to previous answers and our policy (https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-community/roads-and-highways/transport-plans-and-policies/)

If so:

6.1. In addition to their basic training, does the highway authority have a published/formal policy to provide additional training for arboricultural inspectors through the LANTRA Basic Tree Inspection course, the LANTRA Professional Tree Inspection course, in-house training, or other out-sourced training?

6.2. Do arboricultural inspectors have refresher training to keep up to date, and if so, how often?

6.3. If the answer to 6.2 is ‘yes’, is that refresher training in-house or outsourced?
6.4. Are the inspections carried out on foot or driven?

6.5. If driven, please describe:

6.5.1. at what speed;

6.5.2. how many operatives are in the vehicle;

6.5.3. whether spotters are expected to check trees on both sides of the road during one traverse of the route, whilst driving in a single direction; and,

6.5.4. is there a formal list of tree conditions that trigger the vehicle to stop to allow the inspector to carry out a closer check?

7. At what frequency are highway tree inspections carried out by a) highway inspectors, and b) arboricultural inspectors, on A, B, and lower category roads. Please feel free to use the table below if it is of help.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Highway Inspector</th>
<th>Tree inspector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Roads</td>
<td>(Insert frequency here)</td>
<td>(Insert frequency here)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Roads</td>
<td>(Insert frequency here)</td>
<td>(Insert frequency here)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower category roads</td>
<td>(Insert frequency here)</td>
<td>(Insert frequency here)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answer:

Please refer to our policy at (https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-community/roads-and-highways/transport-plans-and-policies/)

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If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please contact the Head of Corporate Governance, Rutland County Council, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HP

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House, Water lane  
Wilmslow, Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Tel: 01625 545700

Yours faithfully
FOI Administrator
Corporate Support Team, Rutland County Council