



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Our ref: ATISN 15360
Date: 16 August 2021

Dear

ATISN 15360

Thank you for your request which I received on 28 July 2021. I have set out at Annex 1 the questions you submitted.

I have determined that the total number of potential fraud and corruption reports made to the Welsh Governments Counter Fraud Team for the requested years are as follows;

Year	Referrals	Referral to the Police	Fraud or Corruption
2017-18	15	NA	NA
2018-19	20	NA	NA
2019-20	19	NA	NA
2020-21	75	3	2 completed 1 live
2021 to date	20	5	5 live
Total	149		

Since 2020 there have been 8 fraud cases in total referred to the police or appropriate agency to date.

It should be noted the pandemic started in early 2020 and the increase in referrals relates to significant amounts of COVID-19 related funding being delivered. The increase in referrals means that many investigations are ongoing within the Counter Fraud Team and there is an inevitable carryover of investigations year on year before cases can be drawn to any firm conclusion.

To date from 2020-21 only 2 of the investigations referred are concluded and 6 remain under consideration of the police and the Crown Prosecution Service. The two concluded cases are:

Case	Potential offence	Date	Money lost
1	Procurement fraud & corruption to secure funds	2.6.20	No loss
2	Fraud false identity	12.1.21	£700

Fraud investigations can be complex and time consuming, nevertheless all suspicions or referrals of fraud impacting on Welsh Government finances are investigated and there is a zero tolerance of fraud. In our experience, investigations are, generally, more likely to prove no fraud is present than to actually identify fraud.

You may also be aware of a Freedom of Information request made by the BBC in September 2019 which requested all cases examined by the Welsh Government's Counter Fraud Team over the

last 5 years and which concluded fraud had taken place. That information was provided on 11 September 2019.

Within that response I explained how all cases referred to the Welsh Government's Counter Fraud Team are recorded and concluded. Those included in the table above are being investigated and, once completed, the outcome will be recorded using the following classification:

- the facts provide evidence of no fraud but there may have been a contractual breach so civil recovery or claw-back of funds is a more appropriate route;
- fraud is identified but the loss is small and recovery remains the more appropriate and expedient route;
- suspicion of fraud is identified and referred to the Police but is either discontinued by the Police and/or CPS or identified as better pursued under the Civil Law;
- a prosecution is pursued by the police (and the outcome of any judicial proceedings finalises the matter).

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely

Annex 1

The total number of potential fraud and corruption reports made to the Welsh Government's Counter Fraud Team each year, for the following years:

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021 (to closest applicable date)

How many of these reports resulted in the Counter Fraud Team referring the case on to police?

How many reports from 2020 to present concluded that there had been fraud or corruption? Please could you record the date, nature of the offence and money lost for each?