

Mr Ian Kermodé
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Our ref: 3497965

20 November 2023

Dear Mr Kermodé

We write further to your request, received 1 November 2023, which states:

"By a FOI reply dated 31.10.23 the IOM Cabinet Office confirmed that the number of IOM residents registered as electors at the date of the IOM Census on 30th May 2021 was 64,181.

The Census shows that the Island's total resident population was 84,069. The Census also shows that number of persons aged 16 and over was 70,671.

This means that 70,671 persons were qualified to vote in the General Election.

However, only 64,181 had registered as electors.

Consequently, 6490 persons were missing from the electoral register.

Please can you confirm the following:

- 1. Is it a legal requirement for qualified persons to register to vote under Registration of Voters Act 2020?**
- 2. What steps/action has been taken to ensure that those qualified to vote are registered to vote?**
- 3. Who is responsible for taking such steps/action?**
- 4. How many IOM residents were subject to civil penalty under S.5 or S.6 Registration of Voters Act 2020 for failing to complete or return election registration forms in 2022?**
- 5. How many IOM residents have been subject to such civil penalties for the years 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021?**
- 6. What was the total monetary amount of such civil penalties for each year 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022?**
- 7. How much did it cost to send out election registration forms to the IOM population, the last time they were sent out (whether in 2022 or 2023 and the overall cost to include all labour, letters, envelopes and postage)?**

Thank you."

Our response to your request is as follows:

- 1. Is it a legal requirement for qualified persons to register to vote under Registration of Voters Act 2020?**

Section 6(1) of the Registration of Electors Act 2020 sets out the legal requirement for individuals to register.

6 Individual Registration

(1) A qualifying person must ensure that –

(a) He or she is registered; and

(b) His or her personal data are updated so as to be current (as far as is reasonably practicable).

The personal data referred to in paragraph (b) are the personal data submitted by or on behalf of the qualifying person in compliance with the registration requirement.”

2.What steps/action has been taken to ensure that those qualified to vote are registered to vote?

Up to 2021 a full Canvass was undertaken annually, which involved sending a Household Enquiry Form to every property on the Island. This required a 'head of the household' to complete the form providing details of every eligible elector resident within the property. Since 2020 an online service has also been made available for electors to update their address or to register as a new elector. Social media has also been utilised to promote electoral registration. Officers from the Crown & Elections team visit schools annually to raise awareness of the registration requirement in addition to encouraging 16/17 year olds to register. In 2022 and 2023 the full Canvass was replaced with a Canvass Lite model which removed the requirement for Household Enquiry Forms, and instead a communications plan was published to invite individual qualifying persons to register or to update their entry on the register if their details had changed.

All three of the Islands' radio stations have been engaged since 2020 to amplify the requirement to register. Notices have also been placed in Isle of Man newspapers and press releases issued. Government has also used its social media platforms as a method of encouraging individuals to register.

Whenever an election or by-election is announced, communications are scheduled to remind potential candidates and voters that they must appear on the electoral register to stand and vote.

3. Who is responsible for taking such steps/action?

Under Section 5(3) of the Registration of Electors Act 2020 it is the Electoral Registration Officers responsibility for taking such steps to make available to qualified persons the form on which to submit their details for admission to the register. However, it is the responsibility of each qualifying person to ensure that the information submitted is accurate and truthful.

4. How many IOM residents were subject to civil penalty under S.5 or S.6 Registration of Voters Act 2020 for failing to complete or return election registration forms in 2022?

No individuals were subject to a civil penalty under Section 5 or Section 6 of the Registration of Electors Act 2020 in 2022.

5. How many IOM residents have been subject to such civil penalties for the years 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021?

No Isle of Man residents have been subject to such penalties for the years 2020 and 2021 (* this can only demonstrate 2020 and 2021 - the Act came into effect in 2020).

6. What was the total monetary amount of such civil penalties for each year 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022?

The total amount of monetary value of such penalties for 2020, 2021 and 2022 was nil as no penalties have been issued.

7. How much did it cost to send out election registration forms to the IOM population ,the last time they were sent out (whether in 2022 or 2023 and the overall cost to include all labour, letters, envelopes and postage)?

The cost to send out election registration forms to the Isle of Man population, the last time they were sent out was £36,728.98.

Please quote the reference number 3497965 in any future communications.

Your right to request a review

If you are unhappy with this response to your freedom of information request, you may ask us to carry out an internal review of the response, by completing a complaint form and submitting it electronically or by delivery/post.

An electronic version of our complaint form can be found by going to our website at <https://services.gov.im/freedom-of-information/Review> . If you would like a paper version of our complaint form to be sent to you by post, please contact me and I will be happy to arrange for this. Your review request should explain why you are dissatisfied with this response, and should be made as soon as practicable. We will respond as soon as the review has been concluded.

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner for a decision on;

1. Whether we have responded to your request for information in accordance with Part 2 of the Freedom of Information Act 2015; or
2. Whether we are justified in refusing to give you the information requested.

In response to an application for review, the Information Commissioner may, at any time, attempt to resolve a matter by negotiation, conciliation, mediation or another form of alternative dispute resolution and will have regard to any outcome of this in making any subsequent decision.

More detailed information on your right to a review can be found on the Information Commissioner's website at www.inforights.im.

Should you have any queries concerning this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Further information about freedom of information requests can be found at www.gov.im/foi.

I will now close your request as of this date.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular redaction mark covering the signature of the Administrative Officer.

Administrative Officer