

Professor James Curran
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SEPA
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February 15th 2013

Dear James

When we met last August with Linda Rosborough I raised a specific matter about the collection of data by SEPA. This related to you requiring fish farming companies to submit details not only of the weight of fish to be disposed of from fish farm sites, but also the numbers of fish. Whilst there is a wholly understandable reason why SEPA should require information on the volume (weight) of waste to be disposed of, there appears to be no justifiable need or requirement for information on the numbers of fish.

My concern about the approach SEPA was adopting was twofold. Firstly, it is fundamentally poor regulatory practice to demand information you do not need to undertake your statutory responsibilities. Secondly, since all information held by SEPA is in the public domain (through FOI or otherwise) you were potentially placing information in the public domain which could be used to the commercial detriment or competitive market disadvantage of the companies submitting the data. You were in fact providing competitor companies both within and outwith the UK with significant market and business information.

At the time I raised this matter you undertook to consult with colleagues in SEPA and then to write to me. However, there has been no follow up correspondence.

Could I therefore through this letter raise the matter once more?

Yours sincerely

PHIL THOMAS
Chairman