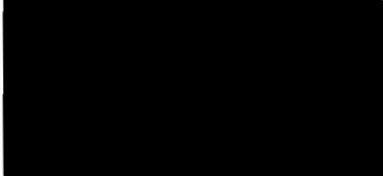




31 October 2019



Redacted to protect personal privacy.

Dear 

I refer to your request dated 4 October 2019, pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982, seeking:

1. Can you please tell me if Pornhub.com has been visited by staff at the Ministry between August 2018 and August 2019. Please provide the number of times staff have accessed, attempted to access or been blocked from accessing the site (by month)
2. Please also include details of other sites staff have attempted to access that have been blocked including site names, dates and number of attempts.

The response to the request is as follows:

1. No staff accessed PornHub.com between August 2018 and August 2019. Access to Pornhub.com was, and is, prevented by Ministry systems.

Regarding attempts to access Porhhub.com:

- Since June 2019, there have been no attempts to access this site as no blocks have been reported.
 - We do not have statistics about attempts to access this site prior June 2019 because the Ministry used a different application to control internet access, which has been retired.
2. The Ministry restricts access to sites based on a complex series of rules that are content and context based, that include, amongst others:
 - systems management, including managing software updates appropriately
 - other ICT operational processes
 - security best practice and protection
 - tracking cookies

- known viruses and vulnerabilities
- pop-ups, advertising and autoplay
- gambling and adult sites

An attempt to access one of these sites can be generated by:

- An application or operating system including, for instance, antivirus updates and security patching requests.
- Advertising links on websites, for instance news sites.
- System testing of blocked sites
- User attempts

This means we are unable to identify deliberate staff attempts to access restricted sites. Staff in most cases do not 'attempt to access' these sites, rather they are accessed without their knowledge by either an application or a webpage advertisement.

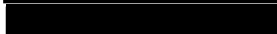

Between June 2019 and 31 August 2019, our systems have blocked access to 830 sites, a total number of 8,719,522 times. These are generally either legitimate sites blocked for operational reasons, or advertising links.

83% of blocks are from our top 5 sites:

- Windowsupdate.com
- Microsoft.com
- Doubleclick.net
- Symantec.com
- Adobe.com

Given the volume of data, if there are specific web pages you are interested in, please advise us of these and we may be able to provide specific information.

Yours sincerely



Manager Digital and Knowledge

Redacted to protect personal privacy.