



**SCOTTISH AMBULANCE SERIVCE**  
**JOB DESCRIPTION**

1. JOB IDENTIFICATION	
JOB TITLE	Information Compliance Officer
JOB DESCRIPTION REFERENCE	
DEPARTMENT	Business Intelligence
NO OF JOB HOLDERS	1
DATE JOB DESCRIPTION AGREED	11 February 2020 (team structure updated 11/10/2024)

## 2. JOB PURPOSE

The post holder will be responsible for ensuring the Scottish Ambulance Service complies with Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation by acknowledging, recording, coordinating and collating the response to any FOI request that is received by the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) within the legislative timeframe.

The post holder will be responsible for ensuring the Scottish Ambulance Service complies with Data Protection (DPA) legislation by overseeing the acknowledgment, recording, co-ordination and collation of responses to any Subject Access Request (SAR) that is received by the SAS within the legislative timeframe.

The post holder will engage with stakeholders, customers and staff across NHS Scotland, Scottish Government and partner organisations across the UK, contributing to national strategy and policy development for Freedom of Information and Data Protection.

## 3. DIMENSIONS

The post-holder will be based within the Business Intelligence department, providing expert advice support to all staff in SAS.

The job holder will have day to day responsibility for developing SAS processes for Subject Access Requests, Access to Health Records, Freedom of Information and related areas. This will involve working collaboratively with the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), Caldicott Guardian, Data Protection Officer, Freedom of Information Officer, Information Governance Colleagues and regional leads in related information governance areas.

The Service receives a large number of requests for information, such as Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, Subject Access Requests (SAR) and requests for information from the Procurator Fiscal Service (PF), Police Scotland and ombudsman such as the Scottish Information Commissioners' Office and Scottish Public Service Ombudsman.

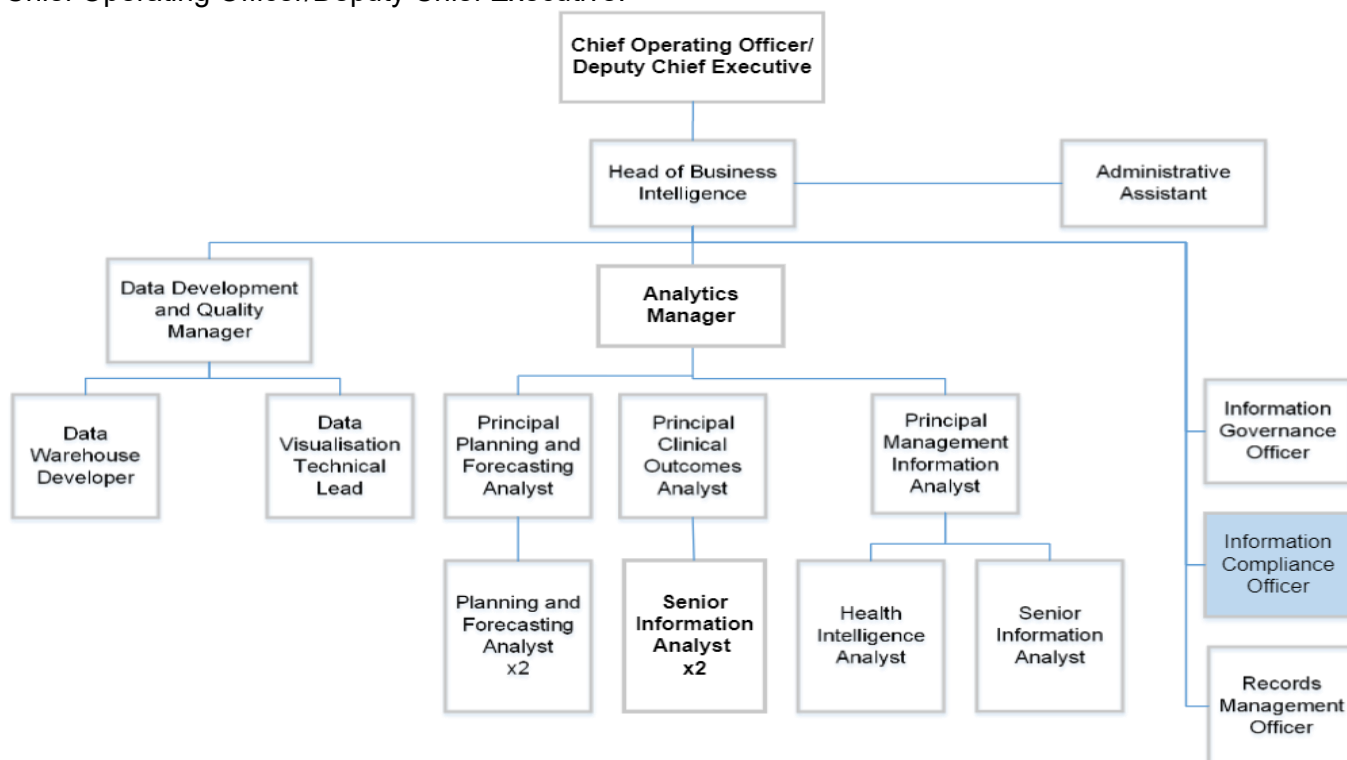
The post-holder will be responsible for managing these requests, delegating them to colleagues across the organisation to provide the information requested, checking and collating the data which is returned and ensuring that the information is sent back to the requester within deadline.

The post-holder will provide expert advice and a leading, supportive role to colleagues within the communications and engagement team who are providing administrative support to help action requests.

This is a busy and fast-paced environment. As such, the ability to be able to work under pressure and to multi-task whilst maintaining high standards is important.

#### 4. ORGANISATIONAL POSITION

The post holder will report to the Head of Business Intelligence and is accountable to the SIRO who is the Chief Operating Officer/Deputy Chief Executive.



#### 5. MAIN TASKS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Lead the development of a corporate approach for Subject Access, Freedom of Information and Access to Health Records requests including the implementation of corporate procedures and guidance that will support the Service in meeting its statutory obligations and promote good practice across all departments to improve business and operational efficiency.
2. To oversee the day-to-day management of FOI requests, Specification of Documents and SAR's, specifically-
  - a. Ensure all requests are acknowledged in the timely standard required and they are recorded on the relevant system.
  - b. Assess the information required and co-ordinate with internal stakeholders and collate the information that has been requested.
  - c. Review the information received, applying relevant exemptions to ensure the Service complies with all legislative requirements.
  - d. Draft the response for these requests and where appropriate send them for approval by Senior Management or the Chief Executive
  - e. Liaise with the communications team in respect with FOI to protect the integrity and name of the service and ensure the responses are appropriate to be released

3. To be responsible for managing information requests under the above legislation, delegating them to colleagues across the organisation to provide the information requested, checking and collating the data which is returned and ensuring that the information is sent back to the requester within deadline.
4. As a member of the Scottish Ambulance Service's Information Governance Group, lead the Service's performance management around the response to these requests and regularly report progress and risks to the Data Protection Officer.
5. To provide specialist advice to administrative support colleagues who are providing to help action requests.
6. Establish and maintain a high quality standards of communication with patients, requestors and the public as well as both internal and external stakeholders in reference to FOI's, SAR's and Specification of Documents.
7. Act as a liaison for the Service with the Scottish Information Commissioner (SIC) in regard to the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.
8. Engage with personnel at all levels throughout SAS requesting assistance to complete requests and offering advice where appropriate.
9. The post holder must be confident in understanding and interpreting the needs of all requests in line with legislation including the application of appropriate exemptions.
10. Liaise with the Communication Manager to ensure they are aware of all media related FOI requests.
11. Ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act, Caldicott Guidelines, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 in relation to all aspects of the management of FOI, SAR and Specification of Documents.
12. During the assessment phase ensure appropriate legislation is applied to the request (e.g. exemptions).
13. Assist key external stakeholders such as Police Scotland, other NHS Health Boards and the Procurator Fiscal in their enquiries.
14. Exercise freedom to act on own initiative, prioritise workload, ways of approaching work, resolving issues, managing risks and using judgement appropriately. However, objectives will be set by line manager and guidance and support given regularly.
15. Flag any potential risks that the post-holder may come across while carrying out due-diligence checks on information that has been requested.
16. Be able to multi-task and identify emerging priorities.
17. Keep abreast of developments in Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation and keep up to date with ICO and SIC and other guidance on good practice and standards, ensuring that such developments are considered by the Information Governance Committee before being communicated to staff as required.

## 6 EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY

The postholder uses a PC on a daily basis as part of the standard work tools.

Use of internet and intranets for research, education, obtaining records management information.

The post holder requires use of computers and software e.g. Microsoft Office Suite including Access, Excel, Powerpoint and Outlook.

- Photocopier and telephones are also used routinely

- Audio Equipment
- Video conferencing
- Specialised electronic document management system

## 7. SYSTEMS

Demonstrate a broad understanding of the key determinants of health and healthcare including national policy frameworks.

IT literate and competent in the use of IT systems including document management, scanning and other specialist systems.

Exploit a variety of software packages/applications to collect, analyse, manipulate, organise and present data.

Has a sound understanding of NHS Board policies and procedures and can apply these consistently.

## 8. DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTS

This post reports to the Head of Business Intelligence. Work for the post-holder is generated from a broad framework determined in conjunction with the Head of Business Intelligence and the post holder will agree with the Head of Business Intelligence the main priorities of the role.

The post holder is expected to work on their own initiative (with appropriate supervisory support provided by their line manager) managing their time to allow for the most efficient and timeous delivery of all Freedom of Information requests, Subject Access Requests, Specification of Documents or other. There will be a need to prioritise competing deadlines to ensure compliance with the associated legislation. The post holder must work closely with their colleagues within Corporate Affairs and Engagement as well as all other departments and operational divisions within the SAS.

The post-holder will be working simultaneously across many issues and will be required to make difficult decisions and judgements. Judgements typically involve highly complex facts or situations which require the analysis, interpretation and comparison of a range of options, as well as legal and advisory sources, some of a complex and potentially conflicting nature.

The post holder will be expected to highlight and escalate any issues identified through these requests to the most appropriate member of management. In the absence of their line manager, the post holder has the freedom to act and is expected to exercise initiative and judgement to resolve an urgent matter; ensuring processes are followed with the action being taken in an appropriate manner.

As the Service's 'expert' on Subject Access Requests and Freedom of Information, there is a degree of support required to be given to other colleagues in terms of educating and ensuring the Service is compliant with the various Acts. Advice may be sought from the post holder on a daily basis from various internal stakeholders. In the event that members of staff are not complying and the Service becomes in danger of being either financially penalised or brought into disrepute, it is the responsibility of the post holder to flag this to the appropriate senior management and executive. The post holder will be expected to be comfortable speaking to colleagues across all levels throughout the Service about the quality and timeliness of response in order to receive the information requested accurately, quickly and within legislative timescales. Appropriate support will be provided by managers within the department if issues need to be escalated.

The postholder will be expected to work closely with the Service's Data Protection Officer and Information Governance Team to ensure any Data Subject's Rights requests received by the Service are dealt with appropriately, efficiently and within legislative requirements.

## 9. COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

The post holder is expected to communicate with all levels of operational and non-operational staff within the Scottish Ambulance Service, and with colleagues in external organisations. Excellent communication skills are required as they will be required to regularly present and explain complex and legal information relating to data protection to colleagues across the Service. This can be in the form of emails, presentations, published articles and training workshops.

The post holder will be required to establish, develop and maintain relationships with a range of internal and external stakeholders including:

- Other members of the Corporate Affairs and Engagement Team
- Operational and Non-operational colleagues of all level
- Data Protection Officer and Information Governance Team
- Strategy Project Leads
- Medical Directorate
- Procurator Fiscals Office
- Central Legal Office
- Scottish Information Commissioner
- Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)
- Scottish Health Council
- Scottish Government
- Management of Information Team
- Police Scotland
- British Transport Police
- Other NHS Boards

The post holder will work with these stakeholders to fulfil the statutory requirements that the SAS has in relation to the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and the Data Protection Act. It is the post holder's responsibility to ensure that the voice of key external stakeholders is heard and their rights are respected and adhered to. This includes influencing both clinical and corporate colleagues of all levels.

The post holder will be a key member of the Information Governance Committee.

The post holder will attend relevant internal and external meetings on behalf of the organisation or department.

The post holder is expected to have strong presentation skills and to be able to express a view convincingly and coherently, verbally and in writing.

## 10. PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL DEMANDS OF THE JOB

### Physical Demands

- Sitting at a desk for some considerable time – daily.
- Being on the phone regularly – daily.
- Travel between divisional locations for meetings and events – monthly.

### Mental Demands

- Work under pressure – weekly.
- Assimilate large amounts of information, determining which is material to the task at hand – weekly.
- Concentrate for prolonged periods of time – daily.
- Be able to motivate, enthuse and persuade colleagues across the organisation to assist in your requirements and to respond quickly – weekly.
- Time Management – daily.

### Emotional Demands

- Listen to, read and share information which may be distressing (for example, patient information) – occasionally.
- Negotiate behavioural and cultural barriers with the complex and demanding NHS system, for example, where colleagues may be resistant to provide FOI information or suggest they don't have time to do them – on occasion.
- Pressure of responding to urgent requests at short notice – weekly.
- Coping with demanding and sometimes aggressive external enquiries, for example, patient complaints – on occasion.

## 11. MOST CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOB

Managing conflicting priorities and deadlines and assessing and managing the risks associated with these.

Concentrating for prolonged periods of time, for example, reviewing complex FOI information or assessing which elements of patient files can and cannot be released.

Maintaining a calm and controlled demeanour whilst working under pressure in a demanding working environment

Dealing with sometimes demanding external stakeholders such as the Information Commissioners' Office.

Maintaining knowledge of current issues and legislation in order to respond accurately and speedily and within legislative timeframes.

The ability to convey complex legislation and Service decisions relating to this legislation to key stakeholders including for example, patients, families and the public.

Dealing with persistent interruptions

Managing very sensitive and emotive information

Engaging, persuading and, on occasion, challenging senior level colleagues within the organisation, for example when there may be resistance to complete FOI requests in a timely manner due to other competing pressures on their time.



**12. KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOB****Essential**

Educated to degree level or equivalent experience which demonstrates key competencies of the role.

Specialist Knowledge of:

- a. The Data Protection Act 2018
- b. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- c. Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

An understanding of:

- d. Caldicott Principles and their application with NHS
- e. Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011

Ability to interpret complex legislation and litigation and apply this practically in the interest of Service

Excellent communication skills and the ability to communicate with a wide range of people, from senior management, ombudsman, health service partners and the patients/the public.

Proven ability to work on own initiative, managing busy workload and time management skills to meet deadlines.

Ability to understand complex clinical information and translate it into plain English.

Must be capable of working to set goals within defined timescales and with frequent interruption

Evidence of supervisory experience, for example, overseeing the work of more junior colleagues and delegating tasks to them

Evidence of emotional intelligence and self-awareness in order to effectively manage the wide range of internal and external stakeholders required by this post.

Ability to understand and interpret clinical records or clinical terms and phrases.

Comprehensive understanding of the Government's 2020 vision, the Patients' Rights (Scotland) Act 2011, the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Data Protection Act and CEL 4 (2010) Informing, Engaging and Consulting People in Developing Health and Care Community Care Services

Familiarity with the Caldicott Guidelines, the Service's Significant Adverse Event Review Framework, the Service's 'Being Open' policy and the Duty of Candour.

The ability to deal sensitively with confidential information, such as patient data, whilst adhering to the relevant legislation.

Ability to use a range of IT tools (Microsoft Office, SAS Data Warehouse, Datix etc) to a high standard

**Desirable**

Experience in a clinical setting (to demonstrate, for example, the ability to understand complex clinical information).

**13. JOB DESCRIPTION AGREEMENT**

Job Holder's Signature:

Date

Head of Department Signature:

Date

