

electoral administration bulletin

The
Electoral
Commission

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EA Bulletins are issued on a regular basis. They are one of our key channels for communicating with Returning Officers, Electoral Registration Officers and their staff. Past issues of Bulletins for England, Scotland and Wales are available [here](#). You can also [subscribe to the EA Bulletins](#).

Please [keep us informed](#) of any staff changes within your team. This will help us to keep our mailing lists up-to-date.

We are sending you this newsletter as it contains important information about the Electoral Commission's work which is relevant to you. The newsletter forms part of the Electoral Commission's public task which has its basis in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. We will manage your personal information and contact details in line with the General Data Protection Regulation and UK data protection legislation as outlined in our privacy notice (<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/privacy-notice>)

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Issue 328 (Scotland) – 8 August 2023

Electoral Commission cyber-attack

We have today announced that the Commission has been the subject of a complex cyber-attack. The incident was identified in October 2022 after suspicious activity was detected on our systems. It became clear that hostile actors had first accessed our systems in August 2021. The Commission has since worked with external security experts and the National Cyber Security Centre to investigate and secure its systems. The Commission does not know the identity of the hostile actors.

During the cyber-attack, hostile actors were active in our systems and had access to the Commission's servers which held our email, our control systems, and copies of the electoral registers. We believe our email system and the electoral registers were accessed.

The registers held at the time of the cyber-attack include the name and address of anyone in the UK who was registered to vote between 2014 and 2022, as well as the names of those registered as overseas voters. They do not include the details of people registered anonymously. While the data contained in the electoral registers is limited, and much of it is already in the public domain, we understand the concern this may cause. We regret that sufficient protections were not in place to prevent this cyber-attack. Since identifying it we have taken steps, with the support of specialists, to improve the security, resilience, and reliability of our IT systems.

We have [notified](#) the public and issued a [media statement](#) on the attack. An [FAQ document](#) is available to assist with any questions you, or your electors, may have. Members of the public and electors can also contact the Commission directly by using this [webform](#) and selecting the title 'Cyber-attack' to get in touch. If you have concerns about data you may have shared with the Commission, please contact the [data protection team](#) in the first instance.

Should you require any further support, please contact infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk

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