

Thank you for your email of 10 April, in which you requested the following information:

1. Please could you tell me whether an informal ministerial meeting of nuclear power-interested European countries is scheduled to take place, whether in the United Kingdom or any other EU country, between today and December 2012?
 - a. Please tell me what the dates and locations of the meetings would be.
 - b. Please provide me with the most up-to-date copy of the agenda for the next meeting and a list of the countries which have been invited.
 - c. Please tell me who will attend from the United Kingdom, including ministers, departmental officials and agency staff, and their role.
 - d. Please tell me whether any employees of private sector companies, including the energy sector, have been invited. Please provide me with a list of the invited companies and the job title of the invitees.

2. Please provide me with a copy of any ministerial or departmental briefings produced for the 10 February informal ministerial meeting of nuclear power-interested European countries that took place in Paris.
 - a. Please tell me who attended on behalf of the United Kingdom, which department they work for and their job title.

Your request has been considered under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 ('the Regulations').

We do not hold information falling within your first request with regard to informal ministerial meetings of nuclear power-interested European countries scheduled to take place between the date of your request and December 2012. You may however find it useful to know that the UK has proposed to hold a possible meeting later in the year, although no further arrangements have yet been made. However, we plan to hold a preparatory officials' meeting in June.

With regard to your second request in relation to the 10 February informal ministerial meeting of nuclear power-interested European countries that took place in Paris. I enclose the information which can be disclosed. The UK delegation included Lord Sassoon, Commercial Secretary to the Treasury, and Neil Hornby, Head of GDF, EU and International, Office for Nuclear Development, Department of Energy and Climate Change.

Some information relating to this part of your request is exempt under section 12(4)(e) of the Regulations because it involves the disclosure of internal communications. In relying on this exception, we have considered whether the public interest lies in disclosure or whether it lies in maintaining the exception and

withholding the information. In this case, we consider that the public interest favours withholding the information.

In coming to this view, we acknowledge that there is a general public interest in favour of disclosure of information as it promotes greater understanding by the public of the government's work, and increased transparency makes government more open and accountable. However, in this case, we consider that there are stronger public interest factors in favour of withholding the information. This is because the disclosure of this information would, or would be likely to, prejudice the provision of free and frank advice. Ministers and officials need space in which to develop their thinking and explore options in communications and discussions without fear that their views will be disclosed to the public. This safe space enables views to be tested and debated which can assist in stakeholder management, which in itself enables more thorough policy development in the public interest.

In addition, some of the information is exempt under regulation 12(5)(a) as it is information the disclosure of which would, or would be likely to, adversely affect international relations. In relying on this exception, we have considered whether the public interest lies in disclosure or whether it lies in maintaining the exception and withholding the information. In this case, we consider that the public interest favours withholding the information.

In coming to this view, we acknowledge that there is a general public interest in favour of disclosure of information as it promotes greater understanding by the public of the government's work, and increased transparency makes government more open and accountable. However, in this case, we consider that there are stronger public interest factors in favour of withholding the information. The release of this information would, or would be likely to, prejudice relations between the UK and those States and would, or would be likely to prejudice the ability of the UK to promote its interests abroad, in particular in the nuclear energy sector.

In addition, some of the information is exempt under regulation 13(1) of the Regulations (personal data) as it constitutes personal data the disclosure of which would contravene one or more of the data protection principles and falls within condition 13(2)(a) of the Regulations. In particular, the first data protection principle requires that disclosure must be fair and lawful. In this case we do not consider that it is fair to release the personal data of Government officials who are not considered to have public facing roles in relation to this information.

If you are unhappy with the way the authority has handled your request, you may ask for an internal review. Please contact foi@decc.gsi.gov.uk who will arrange an internal review of your case. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me.

**Informal ministerial meeting of nuclear power-interested European countries
Paris - Friday 10 February 2012**

**Conference Centre
Ministry for the Economy, Finance and Industry**

Starting at 9am: Bilateral meetings

9.30 am: Welcome of participants

9.45 am: Official picture for heads of delegation

9.50 am: Introduction by Eric BESSON, Minister of Industry, Energy and the Digital Economy

10–10.45 am: What are the energy challenges at the EU level?

Chair: Czech Republic

Keynotes: Sweden/Latvia

- Energy policy objectives.
- The impact of energy prices on European industrial competitiveness.
- The Energy 2020 objectives and looking further ahead.

10.45–11.45 am: What share for nuclear power in domestic energy mixes?

Chair: United Kingdom

Keynotes: Poland/Lithuania/Bulgaria

- One year after Fukushima – summing up the debate.
- The cost of nuclear power: content and comparison with other forms of energy.
- The economic framework required for developing low-carbon energies.
- Remarks on the 2050 Energy Roadmap issued by the European Commission.
- The current state of domestic discussions on the future energy mix.

11.45–12.30 pm: How to ensure the sustainability of nuclear energy?

Chair: Finland

Keynotes: Slovakia/Spain/Hungary

- Issues of a European-level nuclear industry.
- Cooperative efforts and progress in the disposal of radioactive waste and spent fuel.
- R&D investments in the fourth generation reactor.

12.30– 12.45 pm: Conclusion

12.55 am – 1.25 pm: Informal debriefing for the press (open to all ministers who wish to attend)

Participants: Bulgaria, France, Hungary (tbc), Latvia, Poland, Czech Republic, United Kingdom

1.30–2.30 pm: Ministerial luncheon. Theme: Building trust in civil nuclear power.

- First outcomes of the stress tests.
- Next steps at European and international levels

2.30–3.30 pm: Bilateral meetings

HEADS OF DELEGATION

Bulgaria	Traicho TRAIKOV Minister of Economy, Energy and Tourism
Spain	Fernando MARTI Secretary of State for Energy
France	Eric BESSON Minister of Industry, Energy and digital Economy
Finland	Jouni HAKALA State Secretary to the Minister of Employment and the Economy, responsible for Innovation, Energy and regional Development
Hungary	Pal KOVACS Under-Secretary of state for Energy
Latvia	Daniel PAVLUTS Minister of Economy
Lithuania	Arvydas SEKMOKAS Minister of Energy
Poland	Hanna TROJANOWSKA Undersecretary of State, governmental plenipotentiary for nuclear energy
Czech Republic	Martin KUBA Minister of Industry and Trade
United Kingdom	James SASSOON Commercial Secretary to the Treasury
Slovakia	Kristian TAKAC State Secretary for the Ministry of Economy (by videoconference tbc) Marek ESTOK Ambassador to France
Sweden	Anna-Karin HATT Minister for Information Technology and Energy (by videoconference) Gunnar LUND Ambassador to France
Estonia	Ando LEPPIMAN Undersecretary for Energy to the Minister of Economic Affairs
Netherlands	Hugo SIBLESZ Ambassador to France
Romania	Bogdan MAZURU Ambassador to France
Slovenia	Janez KOPAC General Director for Energy, Ministry of Economy