



**Our ref:** RFI 6505  
**Date:** 09 May 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Bovine TB Control Costs**

Thank you for your request for information about the costs of controlling Bovine TB in 2013, which we received on 10 April. We have handled your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

The EIRs apply to requests for environmental information, which is a broad category of information defined in regulation 2 of the EIRs. Public authorities are required to handle requests for environmental information under the EIRs. They give similar access rights to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

**You asked for an estimate of the cost incurred by the department in controlling bovine tuberculosis in the year 2013 (January 2013 - December 2013 inclusive).**

Your request covers two financial years which are 2012 to 13 and 2013 to 14. Forecast expenditure on the bovine TB programme for the current financial year (2013 – 14) is just over £99 million, excluding Defra policy development costs. That is after taking account of EU funding of around £12 million, which is as yet not guaranteed.

Of this, £66 million is for operational, policy and laboratory work carried out by the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency, including payments to private vets for TB testing. A further £23.5 million is for cattle compensation costs, net of salvage income. It is reasonable to expect that we will continue to incur similar, possibly greater, costs in future years unless tough new action is taken to combat the disease.

The costs of the pilot badger culls which took place in 2013 are not yet finalised so a figure cannot be provided. Regulation 12(4)(d), material which is still in the course of completion, unfinished documents or incomplete data applies.

## **The Regulation and Public Interest Test**

### **Regulation 12(4)(d), material still in the course of completion or incomplete data:**

Defra is still collating the costs incurred from the pilot culls as final invoices are being submitted and reviewed. Details of the costs will be released in due course.

Defra understands the public interest in all aspects of controlling bovine TB and the badger culls. However, the department is not in the position of being able to release the finalised figures. Releasing estimates could mislead the public if they are ultimately incorrect which is counter to the purpose of freedom of information which is to inform and provide clarity. It is prudent to wait until the finalised figures are available for release.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the EIRs, and in keeping with the government's Transparency Agenda, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you will now be published on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. Please note that this will not include your personal data.

I have attached an annex giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

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

Yours sincerely,

**Defra TB Programme**

**Email:** [ccu.correspondence@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ccu.correspondence@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

## Annex

### Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Mike Kaye, Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: [requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk)) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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