



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

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**Your ref:**  
**Our ref:** RFI 6556  
**Date:** 22 May 2014

Dear

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: TRADE UNION REPRESENTATION AND PAY & CONDITIONS**

Thank you for your request for information about trade union representation and pay & conditions, which we received on 30 April 2014. As you know, we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked:

*“1) Name of unions which are signatories to your main collective agreement covering pay and conditions;*

*2) Number of employees covered by the agreement;*

*3) Lists of grades and current pay rates. Please indicate any agreed equivalence between the grade names used within the list and the following civil service grades:*

*1) Administrative Assistant (AA)*

*2) Administrative Officer (AO)*

*3) Executive Officer (EO)*

*4) Higher Executive Officer (HEO)*

*5) Senior Executive Officer (SEO)*

*6) Grade 7*

*7) Grade 6*



4) *Copy of latest pay settlement. If the latest pay settlement is based on the 1% maximum paybill increase set by the Treasury, please provide the following information on how the 1% has been applied:*

1) *Have there been any changes to the pay scales?*

2) *Are progression payments being paid?*

3) *Are performance-related bonuses being paid? If so, what are the arrangements for performance-related bonuses?*

5) *Have any changes to terms and conditions been implemented as a result of the Civil Service Reform Plan (Modernising the Employment Contract)? If so, what changes have been made? Do these changes apply to:*

1) *new staff?*

2) *promoted staff?*

3) *existing staff?."*

The information you requested is as follows:

Defra recognises three trade unions representing staff in core Defra and executive agencies. These are the FDA, the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS), and Prospect.

The core-Department, Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories (AHVLA) and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) form the Defra bargaining unit with a pay award date of 1 July.

The number of staff (headcount) in each of these organisations at 31 March 2014 is:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Number of Staff as 31 March 2014</b>
Core Defra	2068
AHVLA	2201
VMD	156

Defra's remaining executive agencies; the Rural Payments Agency (RPA), The Food and Environment, Research Agency (FERA) and Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) exercise pay delegation and develop their own pay arrangements. They are separate bargaining units with differing pay award dates.

Pay structures for the Defra bargaining unit with effect from 1 July 2013 are attached as Annex 1 to this letter. These are the current pay rates and apply to all staff at Grade 6 or below within the Defra Bargaining Unit. Pay for Senior Civil Servants is managed by the Cabinet Office.

A copy of the latest pay settlement (Defra, AHVLA and VMD 2013 Pay Round: Final Offer) is attached at Annex 2 to this letter.

Defra's pay settlement for 2013 was limited to an average of 1% as set out in the Civil Service Pay Guidance. The department did not increase any pay range maxima or pay range minima in the National and Inner London pay regions. Pay ranges in Outer London have been shortened in order to address potential equal pay tensions.

There is no pay progression system in the departmental pay structure. Movement towards the pay range maximum is generally provided through increases to individual's salary over and above any increases to the relevant pay range maximum. In the 2013 Pay Settlement, increases to salary were differentiated by performance and capped by the relevant maximum (as shown in Annex 2).

In the 2013 Pay Settlement, Defra linked base pay to performance. End-year performance payments were made to those staff who receive an 'Excellent' validated performance marking (these will be the top 25% of performers) under Defra's performance management system. Payments are paid as a percentage of the midpoint of each individual's pay range.

Defra also offer in-year performance payments which are available to all staff who have made a one-off outstanding contribution. An in-year performance payment is a one-off, non-consolidated, non-pensionable, but taxable, payment of variable amount up to a maximum of £1,000. These payments are funded from a pot worth 0.4% of the pay bill.

The following changes to terms and conditions (T&Cs) have been implemented in Defra from March 2013, in line with Civil Service Reform benchmarks:

- Privilege leave (1.5 days privilege leave removed for new starters).
- Annual leave (new starters receive 25 days leave, increasing incrementally to 30 days after 5 years' service).
- Hours of work (37 hours for new starters regardless of location).
- Mobility (introduce mobility clause allowing staff to be mobile across the Civil Service, allowing compulsory transfers to Civil Service posts within the UK for new staff).
- Occupational Sick Pay (new starters to receive 1 months full pay and 1 months half pay during their first year of service. OSP will increase each year until it reaches 5 months at full pay and 5 months at half after 5 years' service).

These changes were implemented for new starters. For existing staff the 1.5 days privilege leave were re-branded as annual leave. The department continues to review the position in relation to changing T&Cs for staff moving on promotion.

The department continues to closely monitor the evolving position across Whitehall and are awaiting the lessons learnt from those Departments who have implemented this change.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

I attach Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex B 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,

**David Pearsall**

**Direct Line** 020 7979/7238 8590

**Email** David.Pearsall@defra.gsi.gov.uk

## **Annex A**

### **Copyright**

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## **Annex B**

### **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