



Department  
of Energy &  
Climate Change

Department of Energy & Climate Change  
3 Whitehall Place,  
London SW1A 2AW  
[www.decc.gov.uk](http://www.decc.gov.uk)

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Our ref: FOI 14/ 0433

4 April 2014

Dear **Redacted**

**RE: Freedom of Information Request**

Thank you for your email of 8 March in which you asked for the following:

*“Please could you list the dates and purpose of any meetings, letters, emails or other communications over the last year involving [Viscount Astor](#), a member of the House of Lords, and:*

*a) Any ministers within Defra - listed by name*

*b) Decc's senior civil servants, meaning its permanent secretary, director generals, chief scientific advisor, non-executive directors, ministerial special advisors and principal private secretaries.”*

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'), you have the right to:

- know whether we hold the information you require.
- be provided with that information (subject to any exemptions under the Act which may apply).

I can advise you that this Department does not hold any information relevant to the first part of your request concerning meetings between Viscount Astor and Ministers within Defra.

Concerning the second part, the Department wishes to be as open as possible in answering requests, and to help people obtain the information they are looking for. Unfortunately, we cannot provide the information you have



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requested as your request is too wide and the effort to administer your request would exceed the limit prescribed in Regulations made pursuant to Section 12 of the Act. This limit is £600 which represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information. The Act provides that we are not obliged to comply with requests where the estimated cost of complying would exceed this limit.

In order to provide you with the information on the scale that you have requested would require a search of all the records, computer drives and email accounts of those senior civil servants, you mentioned in your request above, in the Department plus their office staff for an undefined period of time. We estimate that the amount of work required would take us over the limit referred to above.

The best way that we can help you is therefore to ask you to consider whether you could narrow down your request to focus on the precise information that you are seeking. You may wish to refine your request by narrowing its scope by being more specific about what information you particularly wish to obtain. For example you could state the specific subject you wish to know about and provide a period of time.

### **Appeals procedure**

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to the Information Rights Unit ([foi@decc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:foi@decc.gsi.gov.uk)).

Information Rights Unit (DECC Shared Service)  
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills  
1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

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.

Yours sincerely,

**Redacted**  
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