



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

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[www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

Our ref: RFI 7125

19 January 2015

Dear [REDACTED],

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: staffing in the Sustainable Procurement Policy Unit and Government Buying Standards Team or any other team dealing with sustainable or ethical procurement**

Thank you for your request for information, which we received on 18 December 2014, about staffing in the Sustainable Procurement Policy Unit and Government Buying Standards Team or any other team dealing with sustainable or ethical procurement. As you know, we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I attach at Annex A the responses to your request for information. As you will see, Defra does not hold some of the information that you have requested.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA and the 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 attach Annex B, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex C 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,

[REDACTED]

**Defra FOIA and EIRs Team**  
[InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk)



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE

## **Annex A**

**Q1. How many DEFRA staff currently work in:**

**a) The Sustainable Procurement Policy Unit**

**b) A Government Buying Standards Team or any other team dealing with sustainable or ethical procurement.**

Government Buying Standards are developed by the Sustainable Procurement Policy team. There are currently 2.6 full time equivalent staff (FTE) at SEO/HEO level and 1 FTE at G7 level in the team. Several others in the Food Policy Unit spend some of their time on sustainable procurement insofar as it relates to procurement of food and catering services and a member of the ICT Strategy Team plays a role in greening Defra's ICT procurement feeding into the Government's Green Delivery Unit.

**Q2. Are any staff specifically devoted to ethical procurement, rather than environmental elements or generic sustainable procurement?**

No

**Past staffing levels at their maximum**

***My assumption is that more staff used to be devoted to these areas, for two reasons: sustainable procurement was a priority to establish after Procuring the Future, and recently public budgets have been cut.***

**Q3. When were staffing levels at their highest for sustainable procurement/administering GBS? (Since 2005)**

The Department does not hold records in relation to staffing at this level of granularity going back to this date. Therefore, Defra does not hold the requested information

**Q4. How many staff were devoted to this policy area in that year?**

As mentioned in the response to Q3, Defra does not hold this information

**Q5: If there are less staff now, it would be useful to know the reasons, very briefly, and when numbers were reduced.**

Defra does not hold this information.

## **Annex B**

### **Copyright**

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## **Annex C**

### **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 [REDACTED], 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