

Thank you for your email of 24 August 2011 requesting information about:

1. How much has your Department spent on press and communications in the financial year (i) 2009/10 and (ii) 2010/11?
2. How many press officers have been employed in (i) 2009/10 and (ii) 2010/11 in your Department?
3. How much has your Department spent on hiring private PR firms during (i) 2009/10 and (ii) 2010/11? For any spend above £10,000 please state the amount spent, the name and address of the PR company and the project they were paid to work on.

Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I confirm that the Department of Communities and Local Government holds the information that you have requested and that I am able to provide you with the following information.

The Department has published its administrative costs for marketing and communications conducted through the Department's Communication Directorate for both years in its Annual Report and Accounts 2010/11 (at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/annualreport1011>) page 129. In addition the Department has published its spend for 2009/10 on public information activity (at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/corporate/pdf/1684008.pdf>). The total for the year 2009/10 spent on projects was £9,924,833. The equivalent figure for 2010/11 was £897,682.

The Department's press officers are now part of the Department's External Communications Division. This comprises staff members working on a combination of press, marketing, news planning, digital/social media output, speechwriting and other communications activities.

The Division currently (September 2011) employs 24 members of staff, comprising 19 full-time press officers, 1 full-time and 1 part-time member of staff working on marketing and campaigns activity, 1 full-time speechwriter and 2 part-time news planners. In addition, three members of the Division are on maternity leave.

For the financial year 2010/11, the number of full-time equivalent staff working in the External Communications Division was 39.18 in total. In 2009/10 the equivalent figure was 45.58 in total. However this last figure is based on certain assumptions about where posts would have been located as the new organisational structure took effect from April 2010.

The Department spent a total of £505,796 on contracts with external PR firms in 2009/10 and £0 in 2010/11. All PR activity is now undertaken 'in house'.

The information on contracts above £10,000 for 2009/10 is shown in the table below:

Net spend	PR company	Project
2009/10		
£116,323	Blue Rubicon 5 th Floor, 6 More London Place, London SE1 2DA	Home Buying and Selling campaign
£42,558	Blue Rubicon (as above)	Energy Performance Certificates campaign
£203,333	Media Moguls 3 rd Floor, Howarine House 5-6 Empire Way Wembley Middlesex HA9 0AX	Fire Kills Minority Ethnic campaign
£93,415	On Demand PR and Marketing 27 Lawrie Park Avenue, London SE26 6HA	Places Database
£50,167	Camargue Group Limited 7 Bayley Street, London WC1B 3HB	Spend by the National Housing and Planning Advice Unit – an independent advisory body now abolished

During 2009/10, the Department also conducted public relations activity in-house and through the News and Public Relations Unit of the Central Office of Information.