

Thank you for your email of 26 May 2011 requesting copies of transaction data from Government Procurement Cards (GPC) held by the Department for the last six years. The full text of your original question is at Annex A. Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Department holds GPC transaction details for the central Department (Department for Communities and Local Government- DCLG), the Government Office (GO) Network and Residential Property Tribunal Service (RPTS) for some of the period requested. However it will not be possible to supply details of the GPC expenditure for 2005-06. This was because the Department did not exist at that time.

These records have been presented as three separate spreadsheets, one for each of the organisations above:

DCLG GPC transactions 2006 to 2011.xls

Government Office GPC transactions 2006 to 2011.xls

Residential Property Tribunal Service GPC data 2006-2011.xls

These records show the basic details of the transaction. They include the date of purchase, the amount and the merchant or supplier. They also give the merchant category which is a broad description of the type of good purchased.

Unfortunately it will not be possible to provide you with the level 2 and 3 or enhanced transaction details as this information is not held. Obtaining more details of the goods or services purchased would involve going back to local records. I estimate the cost of locating and retrieving these records would significantly exceed £600. The Department is not obliged, by virtue of s.12 (1) of the FOI Act, to comply with a request where the appropriate limit of £600 would be exceeded.

This is a large volume of data going back over six years. It is unlikely in many cases that the reasons or context for individual items of expenditure could now be established. This will particularly be the case with the Government Office Network which (as noted below) has now been closed. However to add some context I have looked through some of the DCLG transactions in 2010-11 and supplied more details of the expenditure in the attached table '**GPC selected transaction 10-11.xls**'.

As recommended by Sir Philip Green's report into Government efficiency, the Department is putting in place more robust checks and balances over the use of the Government Procurement Card. All spend is subject to approval by line management and monitored centrally to ensure it is justified. The Department is committed to transparency in the use of the Government Procurement Card.

You may note, though, that total spending through the GPC for the DCLG has halved between 2008-09 and 2010-11. The Department has reduced the amount of cards it holds in the past Financial Year from 69 to 40 and has

reduced both transaction and overall credit limits to manage spend more effectively.

The abolition of the Government Offices was announced in the Coalition Government's Spending Review in October 2010. The GO Network closed at the end of March 2011. Functions formerly undertaken by the GO Network have now ceased, with the exception of a small number which transferred elsewhere.

The Residential Property Tribunal Service is the umbrella organisation for the five regional offices called Rent Assessment Panels which provide an independent, fair and accessible tribunal service in England for settling disputes involving private rented and leasehold property. Most of their items ascribed to hotels and leisure centres relate to rooms hired locally for tribunal hearings.

The Residential Property Tribunal Service has transferred to the Ministry of Justice on 1 July 2011.