

Thank you for your email of 19 April requesting information about the Department's expenditure on external consultants in the financial year 2010/11.

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

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

Financial Year 2010/11

1. Expenditure on external consultants	£13.4M
2. No of Consultancy days	Exempted (see below)
3. Highest daily rate	£1822 (paid to company not individual)
4. Name of consultancy firm (3)	PA Consulting
5. Name of the consultant (3)	Exempted (see below)
6. Permanent staff wage bill	£95M

Unfortunately it will not be possible to provide you with the number of consultancy days in the last financial year. This is because this information is not held centrally and would involve examining every invoice. I estimate the cost of locating, retrieving and extracting this information relevant to your request would exceed £600 and we are not obliged to provide information if the cost exceeds £600.

The name of the consultant is exempt from disclosure under section 40(2) of the FOI Act which states that information is exempt from disclosure if it is personal data and its disclosure would breach any of the data protection principles in the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998. Under the first data protection principle, personal data can only be disclosed where this would be fair and lawful and in accordance with at least one condition in Schedule 2 of the DPA. The Department takes the view that the individual concerned would have had no reasonable expectation that their personal data in this case would be likely to be made publicly available. Furthermore, the Department takes the view that there is no particular public interest served by the disclosure of this information which would override the individuals' expectations of and right to privacy. We therefore consider that disclosure would be likely to breach one or more of the data protection principles and that the exemption at s.40(2) of the FOI Act therefore applies to this information.

PA Consulting advised on the FireControl contract which was cancelled by the present government in December 2010. Please see the press release here: [Fire Minister Bob Neill calls time on FiReControl - Fire and resilience - Department for Communities and Local Government](#)

Since 24 May 2010, the Department has drastically reduced its spend on Consultancy. This has been achieved through contract renegotiations,

terminations and adherence to Cabinet Office controls on Consultancy spending. Spend has reduced by approximately 67% in the last year, and any new or ongoing requirements are put under very hard scrutiny before approval to commence, or continue is given.

Please note that the costs of permanent staff in the Central Department are paid from our administration budget. It excludes any staff paid from programme, Ministers' and special advisor's salaries, agency and casual staff costs. These figures are in the process of being audited for the 2010-11 Departmental Resource accounts.