



[REDACTED]

Our ref: RFI 5761

11 September 2013

[REDACTED]

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: DEFRA CONSULTATION LIST
E-MOVEMENT REPORTING SYSTEM FOR SHEEP**

I am responding to your request of 22 August regarding the list of consultees used for Defra's consultation on an electronic movement reporting system for sheep goats and deer published on our consultation web page¹. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

The list shows the organisations that were e-mailed the link to that page when it was published. As you will appreciate this is a public consultation and so any individuals or organisations are able to respond regardless of whether or not we have sent them the link to the consultation.

You have queried the inclusion of an organisation – Animal Aid – in the list and requested:

- i). Copies of any procedures or processes used by Defra to determine who is included in consultation lists, including any selection criteria and any criteria that would cause individuals or entities to be excluded.
- ii). Any documentation, emails, correspondence or approvals used specifically in relation to selecting the consultees.
- iii). Copies of Animal Aid's previous interest in this subject which caused them to be included

I will answer your requests in turn.

- i). Defra does not issue central guidance to staff detailing a procedure or process and associated selection / exclusion criteria to be used to decide who is invited to respond to a public consultation. It is up to each policy team to draw up a list based on their knowledge of stakeholders.

¹ <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/farming/05a57241>

- ii). No documented deliberations took place as to the appropriateness or otherwise of including Animal Aid on this consultation list. In a work planning meeting it was decided that it would be compiled from lists used for consultations conducted in 2009 (introduction of electronic ID for sheep) and 2007 (introduction of double tagging). As well as including usual stakeholder organisations concerned with sheep issues those lists would have included individuals, organisations, etc who had requested to be consulted. We have no way of knowing now whether the inclusion of Animal Aid then was due to a direct request from them then. We did not conduct an analysis of who had responded to those consultations.

- iii). We have examined our records that exist from 2007. They do not throw any light on why Animal Aid was included in the double tagging consultation. We have not retained paper or electronic copies of responses to the 2007 consultation on double tagging so cannot confirm that they did not respond to that consultation. They did not respond to the 2009 consultation on sheep EID.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA, and in keeping with the government's Transparency Agenda, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the above information released to you will now be published on 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 an annex giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service that you have received. If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me.

Yours

Yours sincerely


Livestock Identification Team

Annex A

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Annex B

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 Mike Kaye, Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: 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