



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.defra.gov.uk

Your ref:
Our ref: RFI 6175
Date: 6 February 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Software Development

Thank you for your request for information about software development in Defra, which we received on 11 January 2014. As you know, we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

We have answered your questions below:

As a percentage, how much of the department's total software development is created externally by a 3rd party? - 100%

As a percentage, of all the software that is developed by a third party externally...

- o How much do you deploy and manage using your own IT systems? – 0%
- o How much is managed by the third party as a service to your department (either front or back-office)? – 100%

As a figure in GBP (£), how much money did the department spend in the last 12 months on outsourcing software development? - £6.04m



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Do you have any specific Service Level Agreement metrics around the number of bugs, or errors that are acceptable in a given piece of software when it returns from the outsourcers? If so, please give detail of these metrics

The standard specific criteria for Acceptance of systems are:

- All severity 1 and severity 2 errors have been documented and resolved;
- All agreed outstanding severity 3 and 4 errors have been documented with an action plan for their resolution/ closure.

Error Severity Classifications:

- Severity 1 - System failure. No further processing is possible until the problem is resolved. For example, the error is critical to application availability;
- Severity 2 – Unable to proceed with the selected function or dependants. For example, an application sub-system is available but a key component is unavailable or functionally correct and a workaround is not available;
- Severity 3 – Restricted function capability, however processing can continue. For example, a non-critical component is unavailable or functionally incorrect and a workaround is available;
- Severity 4 – Minor cosmetic change. For example, usability, screen or report errors that do not materially affect quality and correctness of function, intended use or results.

How do you measure the quality of the software when it returns from the outsourcers? e.g. deep testing, Application Programme Interface (API) effectiveness, memory load balancing. Please give detail, or advise if no measurement takes place – Functional user acceptance testing against baselined requirements.

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 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 Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex B 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


Email: is.communications@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

Copyright

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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