



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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

Your ref:
Our ref: RFI6163
Date: 10 January 2014

Dear

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Government Procurement Card spend

Thank you for your request for information about Government Procurement Card spend, which we received on 8 January. We have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked for:

Details of all Government Procurement Card spend within the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs between 28 June 2007 and 11 May 2010 broken down by date, each item of expenditure and team.

Details of all Government Procurement Card spend by the office of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs between 28 June 2007 and 11 May 2010 broken down by date and each item of expenditure.

In response:

We want to be as open as possible in answering requests. The FOIA itself also requires us to help people obtain the information they are looking for. Unfortunately, the amount of information you have requested is very substantial, and gathering it together would involve a significant cost and diversion of resources from the Department's other work.

Section 12(1) of the FOIA allows us to refuse a request for information if we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit, which currently stands at £600. On the basis of our estimates, we consider that the cost would exceed this limit and, as such, we are refusing your request in its current form.



Preliminary work shows that your request would produce around 130,000 transaction lines. Each line would need to be checked manually to see if it needed redacting and also to ensure the wording of the description was clear. The data would then need to be reviewed at a senior level before being released. The cost of Defra staff time would thus be significantly above the £600 limit.

However, if you were to make a new request for a narrower category of information, it may be that we could comply with that request within the appropriate limit, although we cannot guarantee that this will be the case.

The best way we can help you is to ask you to consider narrowing down your request to focus more clearly on the precise information you are seeking. You could, for example:

- consider reducing the time period in your request, noting that it is unlikely that we could produce one month's data within the cost limit unless transactions below a set value were excluded
- explain more fully and precisely the kind of information you are looking for
- as the request covers the work of a number of business areas, consider asking for information on a specific business area.

We would also like to make you aware that Defra has been publishing all transactions over £500 made on a Government Procurement Card since April 2010 as part of the government's Transparency Agenda. The data is publicly available on the internet at <http://data.gov.uk/dataset/defra-gpc-spend-over-500-pounds>

Please note that if you modify your request, we will handle it as a new request and so the 20-working-day deadline for responding to requests would then commence from the date that we receive the modified request.

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

Pam Beadman

T: 01904 455658

E: pam.beadman@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex

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