



Department  
of Energy &  
Climate Change

**Department of Energy & Climate  
Change**

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[www.decc.gov.uk](http://www.decc.gov.uk)

**Your ref:**  
**Our ref:** FOI 13/1248

30<sup>th</sup> September 2013

## **RE: Freedom of Information**

Thank you for your e-mails of 9<sup>th</sup> September 2013 requesting information on away-days.

Specifically you asked:-

1. How much money has the Department of Energy and Climate Change spent on civil service away days and team building exercises since May 2010?
2. How often are these away-days and/or team building exercises?
3. Who takes part in these away-days and/or team building exercises?
4. What kinds of activities take place on these away-days and/or team building exercises?

We do not have information for all events, and it is not feasible to gather information so far after the events took place as we do not hold this information centrally. In order to provide you with the information on the scale that you have requested would require consulting all of the teams involved.

Section 12 of the FOIA makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

We estimate that it will take us in excess of 3.5 working days to determine appropriate material and locate, retrieve and extract the information in reference to your request. Your request therefore, will not be processed further.

From available information however, I am able to provide you with details of the amount spent on such events as shown in the table below. To compile this data we have reviewed the accounting records to identify events described as away-days, offsite meetings and team events:

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14*	Total
£(k)	£(k)	£(k)	£(k)	£(k)
63	28	33	0.6	125

\*to end June 2013

Such events are typically held off-site due to the Department's restricted accommodation. Away days are an investment by teams in planning, improving performance or enhancing skills and business relationships. The change of environment and the time spent together without distractions allows teams to focus on their challenges. While facilitators are not always used, they provide structure and purpose to the day. They are used very successfully in the private and public sector as a productive means of meeting a team's objectives.

### **Appeal Procedure**

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be sent to: Information Rights Unit (foi@decc.gov.uk) or by post to Security & Information Rights Unit (DECC Shared Services), Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, Victoria 3, 5th Floor, 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.