



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

T: 08459 33 55 77
helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.defra.gov.uk

[redacted]

Your ref:
Our ref: RFI 5595
Date: 22 July 2013

Dear [redacted]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: DEPARTMENTAL SPEND ON LEGAL COUNSEL

Thank you for your request for information about departmental spend on legal counsel, which we received on 24 June. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

The information we have available is shown in the table below. The figures are rounded to the nearest hundred thousand and are likely to include payments in relation to Defra arms length bodies as well as the core department. We have no central record of the subject matter each individual piece of work relates to.

Defra's legal team transferred to the Treasury Solicitors Department (TSol) on 1 September 2011 after which legal services, including counsel, have been funded through a block fee arrangement. Information about how much of that block fee was spent on legal counsel from that point in time and for the period in question is not held by Defra.

Period	£'000
2011/12 (to 31 Aug)	410
2010/11	393

For clarification, legal 'counsel' is taken to mean barristers engaged to conduct specialist legal work in support of the departments legal adviser. These individuals are drawn from lists of panel counsel which are maintained by the Attorney General. Further information, including the lists and standard hourly rates of pay can be found on the TSol website at www.tsol.gov.uk/attorney_generals_panel_of_counsel.htm.

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 sincerely,

[redacted]

Annex A

Copyright

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs or logos) can be also used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.

Most documents produced by Defra will be protected by Crown Copyright. Most Crown copyright information can be re-used under the [Open Government Licence](#). For information about the OGL and about re-using Crown Copyright information please see [The National Archives website](#).

Copyright in other documents may rest with a third party. For information about obtaining permission from a third party see the [Intellectual Property Office's website](#).

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