



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Defra HR
9 Millbank
c/o Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR
T: 08459 335577
helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.defra.gov.uk

Your ref:
Our ref: RFI 5894
Date: 29 November 2013

Dear,

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: EXTERNAL MEDIA TRAINING COURSES

Thank you for your request for information about external media training and Parliamentary Select Committee training courses, which we received on 9 October 2013. As you know, we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked:

“How many (a) civil servants and (b) ministers have been sent on external media training course in each of the past three years?

How much has been spent sending (a) civil servants and (b) ministers on external media training course for each of the past three years?

How many (a) civil servants and (b) ministers have attended National School of Government training courses on appearing before Parliamentary Select Committees in each of the past three years?

How much has been spent sending (a) civil servants and (b) ministers to National School of Government training courses on appearing before Parliamentary Select Committees for each of the past three years?”

We want to be as helpful as possible in answering requests. However we are unable to provide a reply for the 3 years from April 2010 to March 2013 for any of the above categories. 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 and divert resources from the Department's other work. As most of the information required to answer this question is not stored centrally and the National School for Government closed in March 2012 we consider that the cost of gathering all of the data you require would exceed this limit and, as such, we are refusing these parts of your request.



The easily accessible information we have on the number of (a) civil servants and (b) Ministers attending Civil Service Learning media training courses since April 2013 is as follows:

(a) Civil Servants – 7

(b) Ministers – 0

The total spends for (a) Civil Servants is £1,672.

The total spends for (b) ministers is nil.

These figures are for core Defra.

The FOIA also requires us to help people obtain information they are looking for. In such cases, we usually offer the requester the opportunity to make a new request for a narrower category of information. However, as the information is not held centrally, there does not appear to be a way that your request could be narrowed that would enable us to provide an answer.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

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,

Ann Tarran

Direct Line 020 7979 8583

Email ann.tarran@defra.gsi.gov.uk

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