



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

**Department of Energy & Climate
Change**
3 Whitehall Place,
London SW1A 2AW
E:finance.foipq@decc.gsi.gov.uk
www.decc.gov.uk

Your ref:
Our ref: 13/0877

1st August 2013

RE: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your email of 5th July 2013 requesting information on travel claims by staff in the Department of Energy and Climate Change.

You specifically asked for the details of all travel expenses claimed by members of staff since 2011 including information on:-

- the mode of transport taken
- the company who owns the transport
- where the journey was to and from
- which member of staff claimed it
- how much was claimed and
- the reason for the journey.

The Departmental spend on travel between April 2011 and March 2013 is £223k.

We are unable to provide all of the information you asked for however i.e the names of claimants, owners of transport and reasons for journey.

The cost of complying with your request to provide information on the Department's total spend on travel would exceed the cost limit of £600 provided under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act ('the Act'). 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. The Act provides that we are not obliged to comply with requests where the estimated cost of complying would exceed this limit.

Given the volume of data that would fall under the scope of this identifying and gathering the information would likely involve a significant cost and a significant diversion of resources from a number of teams. This exercise is estimated to take longer than the 3.5 working day limit.

It requires a considerable amount of effort to ensure that the financial information which is published does not contain information of a personal nature

(so that it complies with the Data Protection Act) and is presented in a way which is understandable and transparent to the public.

This part of your request therefore will not be processed further. You may however, wish to refine your request by narrowing its scope by being more specific about what information you particularly wish to obtain, including any dates or period of time relevant to the information required.

Claims for travel are made in exceptional circumstances where it has not been possible to book through the Department's travel service provider (see Annex attached). I have provided information centrally held and broken down as detailed in the table below:-

Mode of Transport	2011-12		2012-13	
	£(k)	No. of claims	£(k)	No. of claims
Air	3.0	25	19.0	¹ 90
Rail	28.2	948	23.8	622
Taxi	46.2	1,136	42.5	842
Other ² travel	24.6	744	7.6	480
Car Hire	1.1	19	0.3	4
Mileage Allowance	15.8	308	10.7	185
Total	118.90	3,180	103.90	2,223

¹ 65 of the flights were U.K./Domestic

² may include accommodation and other miscellaneous costs

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.

Annex FOI 13/0877

- All flights were made in the course of business.
- The nature of DECC's work necessitates international travel. One of DECC's four key priorities is "to drive ambitious action on climate change at home and abroad". In order to fulfil this objective, officials engaged in the international energy and climate change arena have to undertake overseas travel to engage with international bodies and stakeholders.
- From 1 April 2012 all government departments use one of two pan government contracts for booking travel, as determined by the Cabinet Office and depending on the balance of rail and air travel. Prior to that DECC used a supplier on the Office of Government Commerce framework contract. Both contracts involve a fee based on the volume of bookings made. We cannot establish the booking fees paid on flights as they are part of a wider fee for other types of travel bookings.
- Use of mandated suppliers ensures that the most cost effective and suitable flights are identified.
- DECC's Travel and Subsistence policy provides that:
 - staff should only travel if it is absolutely necessary
 - subsistence claims will be based on actual costs
 - all travel bookings must be made through the official suppliers
 - standard or economy class must be used unless there is a clear business need for a higher class to be approved
 - all claims will need to be approved regardless of grade