



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Your ref: RFI 6155
Date: 30 January 2014

Dear [REDACTED],

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Costs of the Pilot Badger Culls in 2013

Thank you for your request for information about badger cull costs, which we received on 7 January. We have handled your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

The EIRs apply to requests for environmental information, which is a broad category of information defined in regulation 2 of the EIRs. Public authorities are required to handle requests for environmental information under the EIRs. They give similar access rights to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You requested details of the total cost to government to date of the extended pilot culls of badgers carried out in Gloucester and Somerset in 2013. You asked that the costs be broken down by area (Gloucester, Somerset) and the following categories

1 - Monitoring of the cull

2 - Coordination

3 - Badger population surveys, including hair trapping surveys

4 - Policing costs

The Department has not yet received the final costs from the relevant forces. However, Avon and Somerset Constabulary estimate that their costs for the original six week cull are likely to be in the region of £500,000. Gloucestershire Police estimate that their costs for the original six week cull and the eight week extension are likely to be in the region of £1.7m.

5 - Farmer costs for shooting/cage trapping.

6 - Licensing costs incurred by Natural England

7 - Other costs

The information you requested in parts 1 to 3 and 5 to 7 is being withheld as it falls under regulations 12(4)(a), information not held at the time of the request. The detailed costs to Defra of the pilot culls will be released to the public once they have finalised and audited according to normal procedures. Defra and its agencies have incurred a variety of costs over a long period of time and they are still in the process of being collated.

The Regulation

Regulation 12(4)(a): Information is not held when the applicant's request is received. This is a qualified exception, which usually means that a public authority is required to conduct a public interest test to determine whether or not information should be disclosed or withheld. However, the Information Commissioner, who is the independent regulator for requests made under the EIRs, takes the view that a public interest test in cases where the information is not held would serve no useful purpose. Therefore, in line with the Information Commissioner's view, Defra has not conducted a public interest test in this case.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the EIRs, 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 an annex 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,

Defra TB Programme

Email: ccu.correspondence@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