

## FOI Release

### *Information released under the Freedom of Information Act*

**Title:** Cost of responding to FOI requests and the number of requests received since 2005

**Date of release:** 2 May 2013

#### **Information request**

The total estimated cost of responding to Freedom of Information requests in each financial year since the act's introduction [see note]

The total number of requests received in each financial year since the act's introduction - including where possible the total requests answered in full, the total answered partially and the total refused

The current number of FTE posts for which the primary function is to oversee, respond to or co-ordinate obligations under the Freedom of Information Act.

Note: Please make clear in your response how you arrive at a cost total. For instance, staff time, resources used etc.

#### **Information released**

In response to the three separate questions above:

1. We do not hold information on the total estimated cost of responding to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests in each financial year since the Act's introduction. This information is not routinely recorded when responding to any FOI request.

2. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) does hold information relevant to this question. However, under section 21 of the FOI Act, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is already reasonably accessible to you. You can find the information you have requested up until 31st December 2012 on the Ministry of Justice's (MOJ) website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/series/government-foi-statistics>.

The statistics from 1st January 2013 will be published in the future at the same address given above. This information is therefore exempt under section 22 (the information is intended for future publication). Section 22 is a qualified exemption and we have therefore considered the public interest test. There is a public interest in knowing the details of FOI requests as this leads to greater transparency in government. However, given the necessary preparation and administration involved in publishing the information, we consider that, the best use of public resources would be directed to pulling this information together, ensuring the information is accurate and published in a consistent and comprehensive format, rather than in a piecemeal fashion. Having considered the public interest, the department's decision is to withhold the requested information.

3. The Security & Information Rights (SIR) Unit includes a complement of eight FTE posts for case advisers (HEO grade) and two FTE posts for team managers (SEO grade) who administer and provide advice on FOI, EIR and subject access requests made under the DPA to staff in BIS. These figures include one current vacancy at HEO grade. There is one FTE post for the Head of the SIR Unit (Grade 7) but please note the wider unit also covers other work as well as information rights. The team also provides a shared service to the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) to process and advise on their requests.