



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

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

By email

**Our ref:** RFI 5937

**Date:** 11 November 2013

Dear [REDACTED]

### **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: BALANCE OF COMPETENCES REVIEW**

Thank you for your request for information about the Balance of Competences Review which we received on 14 October 2013. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

In response to your question:

Did the Department directly contact/approach any specific organisations/groups/individuals and ask them to submit evidence for the balance of competences between 1 May 2010 and 22 July 2013? If so which organisations/groups/individuals were approached and what criteria were used to determine which groups/individuals/organisations would be directly approached?

Between May 2010 and July 2013 Defra published two Calls for Evidence, one for the Animal Health and Welfare and Food Safety Report (jointly produced with the Food Standards Agency) and another for the Environment and Climate Change report which is being jointly produced with the Department of Energy and Climate Change. Defra contacted a wide range of organisations, groups and individuals via various methods and therefore does not hold the full list of stakeholders who have been contacted.

For both Calls for Evidence, Defra had a proactive engagement plan as we were keen to receive a wide range of views. We invited people to a number of stakeholder workshop events held at the Department, across all the Devolved Administrations and in Brussels. In addition, Defra used a range of communication tools, such as online forums, Twitter and Citizen Space. As both of Defra's reports in this period were jointly produced, other Government departments also sent out requests for evidence to organisations, groups and individuals on our behalf. The purpose of this outreach activity was to update stakeholders on the Review, gather evidence from attendees at workshops and encourage people to submit written evidence. During the normal course of business colleagues from across Defra also discussed the Review with a range of stakeholders at other pre-existing events.

As the Animal Health and Welfare and Food Safety Report has been published you are able to view the full list of respondents along with their responses online at:



[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/224724/ALL\\_evidence.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/224724/ALL_evidence.pdf)

As stated in the Calls for Evidence, we requested evidence from “anyone with relevant knowledge, expertise or experience”. We invited industry, trade organisations, academics and civil society organisations to workshops with a focus on those who were likely to have knowledge of animal health and welfare and food safety as well as the environment and climate change.

Further information on the Balance of Competences Review can be found at [www.gov.uk/review-of-the-balance-of-competences](http://www.gov.uk/review-of-the-balance-of-competences).

I attach an annex giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service that you have received (see Annex A).

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Defra Balance of Competences Review

[balanceofcompetences@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:balanceofcompetences@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

## **Annex A**

### **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](mailto: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