



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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

[redact]

Your ref:

Our ref: RFI 5720

Date: 11 September 2013

Dear [redact]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Money written off

Thank you for your request for information about the amount of money written off during the last six financial years by the department, which we received on 14 August 2013. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I enclose a copy of the information you requested. The table included at Annex C provides details of *cash losses* as reported in the Annual Report and Accounts for the Core Department only.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA, 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 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

[redact]



Annex A

Copyright

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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

Annex C

A CASH LOSSES	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		2012/13	
	No. of Cases	Total Value £	No. of Cases	Total Value £	No. of Cases	Total Value £	No. of Cases	Total Value £	No. of Cases	Total Value £	No. of Cases	Total Value £
i) Losses by theft, fraud, arson, sabotage or gross carelessness			1	530	1	1,280,015	1	3,324	1	95		
ii b) Charges to control totals to clear inexplicable or erroneous debit balances.												
iii) Major losses due to fluctuations in exchange rates or revaluations in currencies and write-offs			1	2,716			2	3,267,589	1	583,445	2	1,918
iv) Losses arising from overpayments of pay; pensions and allowances; under deductions of social security	9	8,478	12	8,084	1	299			1	433,687	1	10
Total	9	8,478	14	11,330	2	1,280,314	6	3,271,232	25	1,024,358	27	20,382

Details of cases over £250,000

2009/10 £1,280,015 intended for the payment of a supplier was stolen from Defra when funds were fraudulently misdirected to a third party's bank account. At the time of write off there was little prospect of full recovery. There has subsequently been a court case and prosecutions made.

2010/11 £3,235,584 was written off to correct over-recognition of EU reimbursement for the 'Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance' (FIG) 2000-2006 scheme in a past period. This does not constitute a real loss of income. There is no loss to the public purse.

2011/12 £583,445 was written off to correct over-recognition of EU reimbursement in a past period. This does not constitute a real loss of income. There is no loss to the public purse.

2011/12 A currency loss of £433,687 was incurred on the European Fisheries Fund which is part-funded by the European Commission. The loss was caused by a 5% drop in the value of the euro against sterling in the time between the claim submission by Defra and reimbursement by the Commission.