



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

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**Department of Energy & Climate
Change**

3 Whitehall Place,
London SW1A 2AW
www.decc.gov.uk

Our ref: FOI2014/28205

5 January 2015

Dear **Redacted**

Re: Freedom of Information Request

Thank you for your email of 9 December in which you asked for the following:

"I would like to make a Freedom of Information request regarding the Ministerial Team of Ed Davey, Amber Rudd, Matthew Hancock and Baroness Verma. I wish to know of any journeys on DECC business (and also BIS in the case of Mr Hancock) undertaken by each of the above in Ministerial cars, and any other mode of transport which they do not pay out of their own pocket, the length of each journey, and the cost of each journey."

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'), you have the right to:

- know whether we hold the information you require
- be provided with that information (subject to any exemptions under the Act which may apply).

I can confirm that the Department holds information within scope of your request. However, this information, which applies to details of journeys, is withheld under Section 35(1)(d) of the FOIA. This exemption applies to information which relates to the operation of a ministerial private office. In considering this exemption we have balanced the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information. We recognise that there is a general public interest in ensuring that private offices operate efficiently, that they use resources appropriately, and in ensuring that ministers are provided with the administrative support in order for them to do their jobs effectively. This includes practical and personal arrangements for the Minister in order for him to conduct business effectively.



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We have also considered this request under Section 38 (1) (a) and (b) Health and Safety. Information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to endanger the physical or mental health of any individual, or endanger the safety of any individual. As above, in considering this exemption we balanced the public interest in withholding further details of this information against the public interest in disclosing the information. We have concluded that it would not be appropriate to disclose specific details of individual journeys made by any ministers in the Department because the information could be used to establish a pattern of movements which could endanger the safety of ministers and the driver.

Having considered these exemptions carefully, we have concluded that the public interest falls with withholding specific information about individual journeys made by Ministers. I am however able to provide some general information about journeys made by Ministers and the costs involved.

I can advise you that the Department has only one government pool car assigned to it. The car is managed by the Department and used by all the Ministers. Ministers frequently use the car to make journeys between the Department, the Houses of Parliament, external events, airport/train terminus and their homes.

Please see below the total amount paid to the Government Car Service for the use of the car between:

- 2010/11: £131,272.97
- 2011/12: £36,687.79
- 2012/13: £87,070.46

For the years between 2008 and 2010 please click on the links below:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090716/wmstext/90716m0009.htm>

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101028/wmstext/101028m0001.htm#10102827000372>

Other car hire and taxi services:

- 2009/10: £303.74
- 2010/11: £20,999.89
- 2011/12: £31,786.60
- 2012/13: £8,140.97

Details of ministerial rail travel are as follows:

- 2010/11: £8.6k
- 2011/12: £2.1k



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- 2012/13 £2.8k

The details of overseas travel by ministers are published quarterly, and can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=department-of-energy-climate-change&publication_type=transparency-data

The Department was established in October 2008, there is no information before this date.

The Ministerial Code states that ministers are permitted the use of a government car for official business and for working on official papers during journeys between home and work. See page 23, of the Code. Click link at <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/ministerial-code-may-2010.pdf>

Appeals 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 addressed to the Information Rights Unit (foi@decc.gsi.gov.uk).

Information Rights Unit (DECC Shared Service)
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills
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.

Yours sincerely,

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