



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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

██████████
██

Our ref: RFI 6520
Date: 16 May 2014

Dear ██████████

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Pilot Badger Cull Costs

Thank you for your request for information about the costs of the pilot badger cull, which we received on 16 April. 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 asked when will the full Costs of the Badger Cull Pilots, including Year 1 breakdown for NFU/Police/ Defra/Natural England/AHVLA in each zone be collated and published?

You also asked Defra to provide an estimated date for this information to be made available in the public domain? You said that Defra was presently hiding behind the Environmental Regulations to unreasonably withhold this information from Public/Media/Parliamentary scrutiny.

The costs of the pilot badger culls which took place in 2013 are not yet finalised so a figure cannot be provided. When the figures are finalised, they will be published. Regulation 12(4)(d), material which is still in the course of completion, unfinished documents or incomplete data applies.

The Regulation and Public Interest Test

Regulation 12(4)(d), material still in the course of completion or incomplete data:

Defra is still collating the costs incurred from the pilot culls as final invoices are being submitted and reviewed. Details of the costs will be released in due course.

Defra understands the public interest in all aspects of controlling bovine TB and the badger culls. However, the department is not in the position of being able to release the finalised figures. Releasing figures before they are completed and audited could mislead the public if they have to be corrected at a later date. This runs counter to the purpose of freedom of information which is to inform and provide clarity. It is prudent to wait until the finalised figures are available for release. Defra cannot provide an estimate of the date when the figures will be released as all the necessary paperwork has not yet been completed.

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 have attached 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